

Imaginary customers and public figures: Visual material as stimuli in studies of address practices

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Abstract

This chapter proposes and evaluates new data collection methods that use visual material to analyze address practices. The methods are illustrated by two experiments. The first experiment used photographs as part of Discourse Completion Tests for exploring self-reported uses of address forms in service encounters in Helsinki and Tallinn. The second experiment, which simulates an encounter with a celebrity, was conducted using life-size photographs in a Finnish shopping center. While such test data cannot replace authentic discourse as reported use does not necessarily match actual use, the two data sources can complement each other. Using visual material also attracts respondents who might not be accessed by traditional methods such as interviews and questionnaires.

Keywords

address, methods, Discourse Completion Test, visual material, Finnish

1. Introduction

This chapter presents ways to improve and diversify methods of studying address practices and analyzes how the methods are perceived.¹ The focus is on the role of visual material and its potential for making tests more realistic for informants. Tests can never replace the study of authentic language use because reported use does not necessarily coincide entirely with real usage (see, for example, Garrett 2010: 25–26; Trudgill 1972: 185–194; Vaattovaara 2004: 425–430). However, different purposes require different methods, and different methods complement each other. Analyzing representative samples of authentic interactional situations requires a substantial expenditure of resources and time, as we can see in recent studies concerning the use of address forms in old and new media, doctor-patient interaction, everyday conversations, and service encounters (e.g., Havu et. al. 2014; Hultgren 2017; Moyna & Rivera-Mills 2016; Norrby et. al. 2015; Norrby & Wide 2015). When researchers need to obtain a quick overview of address practices in a particular society, or a map of the most relevant factors for deeper analysis, alternative methods and databases may prove to be more efficient. Therefore, in spite of their shortcomings, surveys such as the Discourse Completion Test (DCT) can be useful. Because of its effectiveness in collecting comparable material extensively and quickly (see section 2), the DCT has been chosen for further development in this study.²

2 DCT is not the only alternative method for collecting data without complicated arrangements; fieldnotes, for instance, share many of the same advantages. However, DCTs were chosen for development, because some

The ideas presented in this chapter have been developed and implemented within the framework of a Finnish research project led by the author, and they will be discussed in the light of certain new types of pilot studies in which the ideas have been tested. First, photographs of imaginary clients were used in questionnaires to study the reported use of address forms in service encounters (section 3). The photographs were related to hypothetical scenarios. Second, visual material was utilized in an experiment conducted in a shopping center. In this experiment, life-size, full-length photos of six Finnish public figures were used (section 4). Passers-by were asked to select one of the figures and to imagine that they would meet that person in the shopping center. During this encounter, their task was to address the person and ask his or her permission to appear together in the same photo.

As I have already explained, the aim of the chapter is to present new instruments of data collection for the analysis of address practices and to demonstrate how these lesser-known methods have been implemented in practice. The analytical focus will be on evaluating experiments from a methodological point of view rather than on the concrete results, which will only be presented to illustrate the merits of the methods under discussion. I will begin by briefly introducing the Finnish forms of address and their development, because in the absence of context, the motives for the case studies may remain unclear. This contextualization is complemented by the presentation of the research project that served as the basis for the experiments.

of their limitations can be dealt with. (For a comparison of different methods of data collection, see Yuan 2001.)

2. Background

The case studies presented in sections 3 and 4 focus predominantly on address practices in Finnish. First, I will demonstrate that addressing is worth studying in Finnish and the types of questions that are relevant. As the use of titles is limited to a few formal contexts (Havu et al. 2014: 319–327; Yli-Vakkuri 2005: 194–197), I will concentrate only on the opposition between T and V forms. The review of Finnish address practices will be followed by the presentation of the research project.

2.1 Addressing with T and V forms in Finnish

To express the opposition between informal (T) and formal (V) forms, Finnish uses pronouns, verb inflection, and possessive suffixes (Table 1). V forms are identical to second person plural (2pl) forms, although there are some past tense forms in which second person singular (2sg) V forms and 2pl forms are differentiated by verb inflection (2sg V form: *olette kirjoittanut* ‘you have written’; 2pl form: *olette kirjoittaneet* ‘id.’). Pronouns can be omitted when the person is marked by verb inflection or possessive suffixes. In colloquial varieties, it is typical to mark the person by pronouns, whereas they are often dropped in standard Finnish (Helasvuo & Laitinen 2006: 175–183).

Table 1. T and V forms in Finnish.

	T form	V form	Translation

Pronouns	<i>sinä</i> (non-standard, dialects: <i>sä, sää, sie, siä</i>)	<i>te</i>	‘you’
Verbal person marking	<i>(sinä) kirjoitat kirjoita</i>	<i>(te) kirjoitatte kirjoittakaa</i>	‘you write’ ‘write!’
Possessive suffixes	<i>(sinun) talosi</i>	<i>(teidän) talonne</i>	‘your house’

Compared to many other European languages, address practices in contemporary Finnish can be characterized as informal (Isosävi & Lappalainen 2015b; Yli-Vakkuri 2005). T forms were historically basic forms used in all situations and with all types of addressee until the eighteenth century, at least among ordinary people. Since the eighteenth century, V forms have been favored when addressing people of higher status (Paunonen 2010: 332–335; Yli-Vakkuri 2005: 190). The use of T forms has increased rapidly since the end of the 1960s, and T forms have replaced V forms that were previously much more common in formal contexts and with people in higher social positions. The favoring of T forms spread from Sweden to Finland; in Sweden, T forms have replaced V forms almost completely (Fremer 2015; Norrby et al. 2015: 125, 132–134).

This change, however, has not been as radical in Finland as in Sweden. Despite the replacement of V forms with informal T forms in Finnish schools and universities, V forms are still preferred and used in

many service encounters, particularly with elderly customers (Lappalainen 2015: 87–91; Nyblom 2006; Rouhikoski 2015: 197). However, addressing middle-aged customers (approximately 40 to 60 years old) is more complicated. Companies have adopted different strategies in their practices, and some of them advise their personnel to favor V forms with all customers. This increase in V forms has not been confirmed by any previous studies, but several observations have been presented concerning their re-emergence (for instance, Nojonen 1999). However, in the media, the dominance of V forms has been in decline at the same time (Lappalainen 2016; Nuolijärvi & Tiittula 2001: 585–591). Moreover, it is relevant to note that in addition to T and V forms, speakers can use implicit forms of address, such as “zero person” constructions and passive forms. These constructions do not have a specific subject and, therefore, the speaker does not need to choose between T and V forms (Helasvuo 2006; Laitinen 2006; Yli-Vakkuri 2005: 191–193).

The attitudes of Finns to the different forms of address vary widely. People of the same generation (especially those born in the 1940s) may have opposing opinions. While some may prefer informal T forms because they feel old if addressed with V forms, others may feel insulted by T forms if they regard them as too intimate (Lappalainen 2015: 80–82, 99–100; Paunonen 2010: 357–365).

2.2. Research project

The research project, entitled “How to address? Variation and change in address practices”, was partly motivated by confusion among the general public about the choice of the appropriate variant. The main objective of the project was to examine both the authentic use of address forms and

attitudes towards address practices in Finnish and other languages such as Estonian, French, Hungarian, and Swedish. Furthermore, the contrastive aspect was present in many of the project's case studies (Holttinen 2016; Isosävi & Lappalainen 2015a; Jalli & Pajusalu 2015). The sub-projects, each one including several case studies, focused on three areas: (1) (traditional and social) media; (2) service sector and nursing; and (3) intercultural relationships. The research questions varied according to languages and databases, but the choice between T and V forms was a topic that connects several case studies.³

The primary aim of the overall project was to combine different approaches and to develop new methods for the analysis of address practices. The chapter describes experiments that utilize visual stimuli in order to advance the study of the reported use of address forms and the conceptions relevant to them. The aim is to guide informants to base their choice of address form on the person they see in the picture instead of the various mental images they may have of an imaginary interlocutor. I will explain how this has been achieved in practice and how the use of visual material can improve previous methods. The experiments were implemented by students under the author's supervision, but they were planned together in the research group consisting of senior and junior researchers. The results of these pilot studies must be regarded as preliminary. Before proceeding to these studies and their evaluation, I now turn to past research that has utilized either DCT or visual material to analyze reported use and/or language attitudes.

3 For more information on the project, see <http://blogs.helsinki.fi/puhutteluhanke/?lang=en>.

3. The Discourse Completion Test and visual material in previous research

The Discourse Completion Test (DCT) consists of scripted dialogue that represents various scenarios, and is preceded by a short prompt that describes the setting and situation (for example, see Blum-Kulka et al. 1989; Labben 2016: 69–70). The participants' task is to respond to each scenario. Most of the research has concentrated on requests and other phenomena related to politeness. DCTs are particularly used in cross-cultural studies for the sake of comparability. The method was originally developed by Shoshana Blum-Kulka for the comparison of native and non-native speakers of Hebrew (Blum-Kulka 1982; see also Blum-Kulka et al. 1989). The tests have been conducted primarily in writing (for example, see Blum-Kulka et al. 1989; Ogiermann 2009; Pajusalu et al. 2010), but they may also be implemented orally (for instance, see Peterson 2010; Rintell & Mitchell 1989).

The advantage of the method is its quick and easy implementation for large numbers of respondents. It is challenging to obtain a sufficient number of occurrences in several wide-range linguistic contexts in a short period of time. The data collected by the DCT cannot be equated with authentic speech, but previous results indicate that the data are generally consistent with naturally occurring interaction. DCTs also produce stereotypical responses that reveal systematic cultural differences that can be interpreted as differences in norms in the communities under comparison (Beebe & Cummings 1996: 75; Kasper 2000: 328–330; Ogiermann 2009: 195).

As with all methods, the DCT has its limitations. In tests that include questions concerning how the respondent would react to a particular object, event, or action, the replies tend to be poor predictors of how the person actually behaves when faced with such objects, events, or actions (Breckler 1984; Garrett 2010: 43). Although DCTs seem to uncover some prototypical tendencies of the phenomenon in focus, they fail to elicit the full range of formulas found in authentic discourse. They may therefore reflect more the norms that are aspired to rather than authentic use (Beebe & Cummings 1996: 80–81; Golato 2003; Wolfson et. al. 1989). In addition, researchers have noted the insufficiency of social and situational information in a situational prompt (Billmyer & Varghese 2000: 518–519; Douglas 2000: 57–58). As Billmyer and Varghese (2000: 519) point out, when provided with insufficient contextual information “respondents are left to their own devices to invent one of their own situations, which could vary considerably from respondent to respondent, or more likely, not to invent one at all.” The overall objective of their study was to improve the DCT method. For this reason, they enriched the contextual information (for example, the gender of the interlocutor, and the frequency of interaction) by complementing the written descriptions in the questionnaire.

Previous research has determined that several factors affect the process of selecting an address form (e.g., Clyne et al. 2009). Although DCTs have attempted to consider many of these (such as age, familiarity, and imposition, that is, how easy or difficult it is to carry out a request; for example, see Ogiermann 2009; Peterson 2010), all of the relevant factors cannot be included in written descriptions without them becoming excessively long and burdensome to the respondents (Labben 2016: 77–78). One relevant aspect of the intertextual information is the interlocutor’s physical appearance. This has been repeatedly commented on in recent

questionnaire and interview databases collected in Finland (Lappalainen 2015: 81). The easiest way to explore the effects of the interlocutors' physical appearance is to use pictures as part of the test.

The potential of physical appearance to affect attitudes has been previously recognized in sociolinguistic studies. In most cases, the effect of appearance has been compared to that of accent, but it has been claimed that accent has a stronger effect than appearance (Garrett 2010: 91–93). On the basis of some psychological experiments, however, it can be concluded that the interlocutor's auditory and visual characteristics are strongly linked when the person is the object of evaluation (Zuckerman et al. 1991). This has been witnessed in tests involving the orientation of respondents' interpretation of audio material by using various types of photos (for example, Campbell-Kibler & McCullough 2016; Kang & Rubin 2009).

A few case studies have tested the use of photographs or other visual material in DCTs, but these types of tests are still uncommon. For instance, videos and DCTs have been combined in a handful of studies that focus on the differences between L1 and L2 user responses (Bardovi-Harlig & Dörnyei 1998; Schauer 2009; Zuskin 1993). Some limitations of DCTs can be avoided by replacing a questionnaire with video-recorded role-plays (Siebold 2012). It seems that the only study on address research in general that has used visual input is by Kneřová (1995; cited in Lehečková 2015: 201–202), which focused on the differences between Czech and German address practices. Her informants were shown eight photographs and were subsequently asked to report how they would address the people in the photos.

4. Experiment 1: Imaginary customers

The first experiment involves using photographs as part of a DCT study. The reported results are based on two pilot studies (Ypyä 2014; Lepik 2016).

4.1. Aims and implementation

Janica Ypyä's study (2014) focuses on the conceptions and attitudes towards address forms that are held by pharmacists, who in Finland are professionals required to complete academic training. The aim of the study is to determine how pharmacists report the way they address different types of customers. In other words, do they use T forms, V forms, or forms without explicit reference to the interlocutor? The data were collected by questionnaires that included three parts: (1) background questions that refer to age, gender, and place of residence of the respondent; (2) the DCT with photos of imaginary customers; and (3) direct questions concerning the respondents' language use and the instructions they received from superiors or teachers during their education. The respondents also had an opportunity to give feedback on the questionnaire.

Ypyä's DCT consisted of eight photographs with two scripted scenarios per picture (see the two first points in Figure 1). Each scenario included a short description (e.g., "The customer gives you a prescription of two medicines") and a question to which a respondent had to react (e.g. "What do you say to him?"). The scenarios were not always the same for each photograph, but the total of eight different scenarios were used in different combinations, each scenario occurring twice during the questionnaire. Each picture also had two set questions: the respondents were asked to estimate the age of the person in the photograph and to report

other conclusions they were able to draw on the basis of the photograph. These two questions were presented with every photo. The people in the photos represented various age groups and ethnic backgrounds, and were wearing different types of clothing. Figure 1 illustrates the combination of a DCT (translated into English for the sake of this chapter) and a photograph. Ypyä's data consist of 30 replies from pharmacists working in the Helsinki region.

Customer 6.



- The customer gives you a prescription. How do you ask for his Kela card (= a social insurance card)? _____
- The customer gives you a prescription of two medicines. What do you say to him? _____
- How old do you think he is _____
- What other conclusions can you draw about him _____

Figure 1. Example of Ypyä's questionnaire.

Ramona Lepik (2016) adopted the same approach in her study. Her target group was the check-in staff working in the harbors of Helsinki and Tallinn, and her main objective was to examine address practices in their responses. In addition, her study incorporated a comparative aspect in that the informants were more or less bilingual and they were given the possibility of replying in Finnish, Estonian, or both. The questionnaires were available to all informants in either Estonian or Finnish. The comparison between

these cognate languages is relevant because their address norms differ radically. For example, Estonian uses V forms more frequently than Finnish (Jalli & Pajusalu 2015: 116–118).

The structure and the idea of Lepik’s questionnaire resembled Ypyä’s (Figure 1). Lepik’s questionnaire included eight photos of imaginary clients with three scripted scenarios in each case. Six different scenarios were used in different combinations. The respondents were also asked to guess the nationality of the person in the photo (Finnish or Estonian) as well as the person’s age. Figure 2 illustrates the set questions, scenarios and photos Lepik incorporated in her questionnaire. The total number of respondents was 44, which included 22 replies from Finland and 22 from Estonia.

Customer 3.



- What is your estimation of the nationality of the customer? Finnish/Estonian
- How old do you think she is _____
- You notice that the customer’s passport has expired. What do you say to her?
 Fi. _____
 Est. _____
- The customer’s retaining fee has not come through. What do you say to her?
 Fi. _____
 Est. _____
- You give the ticket to the customer. What do you say to her?
 Fi. _____
 Est. _____

Figure 2. An example of Lepik’s questionnaire

Both DCTs were prepared by taking fieldnotes (by Ypyä and Lepik) in pharmacies and harbors, and the questionnaires were tested by potential respondents. Written permission was requested and obtained for all the

photographs used in the studies. Lepik took photographs of real passengers in the harbors, whereas Ypyä's photographs were taken among her acquaintances and those of the author of this chapter.

4.2. Evaluation

When evaluating the advantages of the method, it is important to note that both experiments produced credible results: the division of T and V forms in the questionnaire data resembles T/V variation in authentic service encounters (cf. Hakamäki 2017; Havu et al. 2014: 319–327; Lappalainen 2015: 87–99; Rouhikoski 2015: 197). Age seems to be the most relevant variable in the Finnish data. As in authentic situations, the older the customers, the more probable it was that the respondents would report using V forms of address with them, whereas T forms were selected mostly with younger customers.⁴ The variation in the reported usage of T and V is illustrated in Figure 3, which is based on the research by Ypyä on pharmacists. The customers (C) are ordered from youngest to oldest, as estimated by the respondents.⁵ The columns indicate the number of respondents (N = 30) who used either T or V forms with each imaginary customer. The number of implicit address forms (e.g., passive forms and zero person constructions) is not included in Figure 3, but these forms were

4 Age differentials between the customers and the pharmacists are not entirely insignificant, but the age of the customer is more crucial for the choice between T/V (Ypyä 2014: 19–20).

5 C2 = Customer 2 (etc.); the number refers to the order of the photographs in the questionnaire. The gender (F = female, M = male) and the estimated age (average) are in brackets.

used mostly with C8, a middle aged woman (12/30 respondents), which can be related to special difficulties in choosing a proper form in the case of this customer. By contrast, implicit forms were rare in the case of the youngest customer (C2) (3/30 respondents), as well as with a Roma woman, identified as such through her traditional dress (C5).

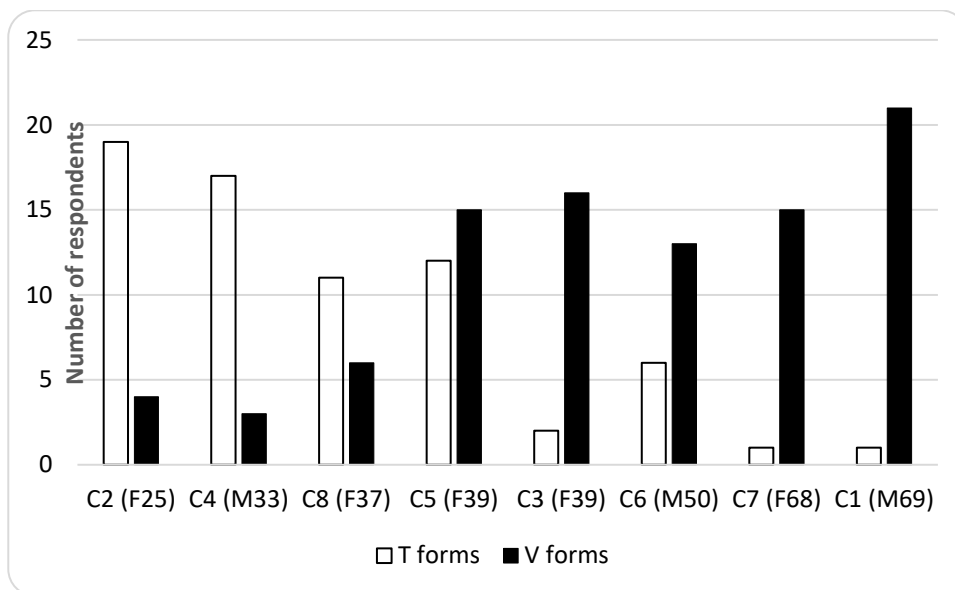
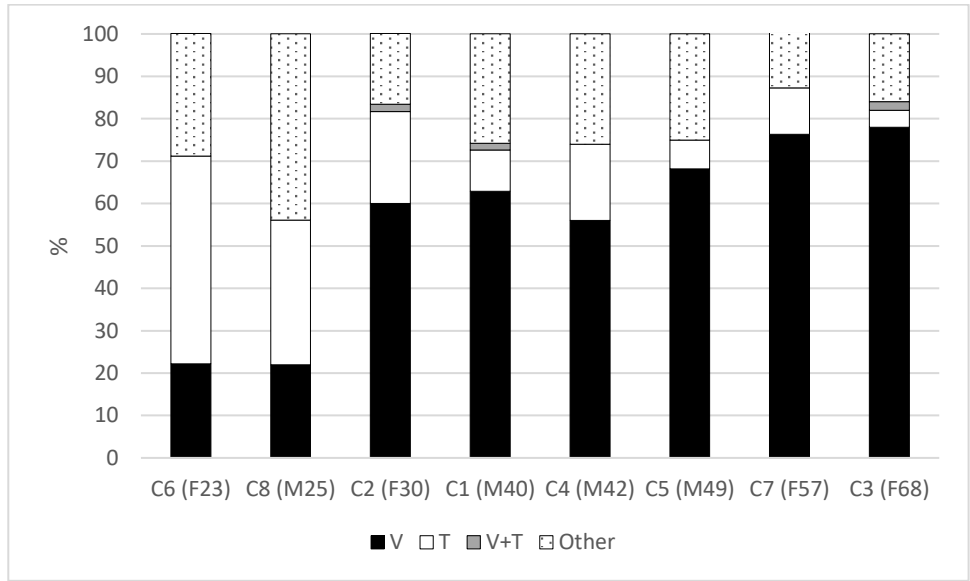
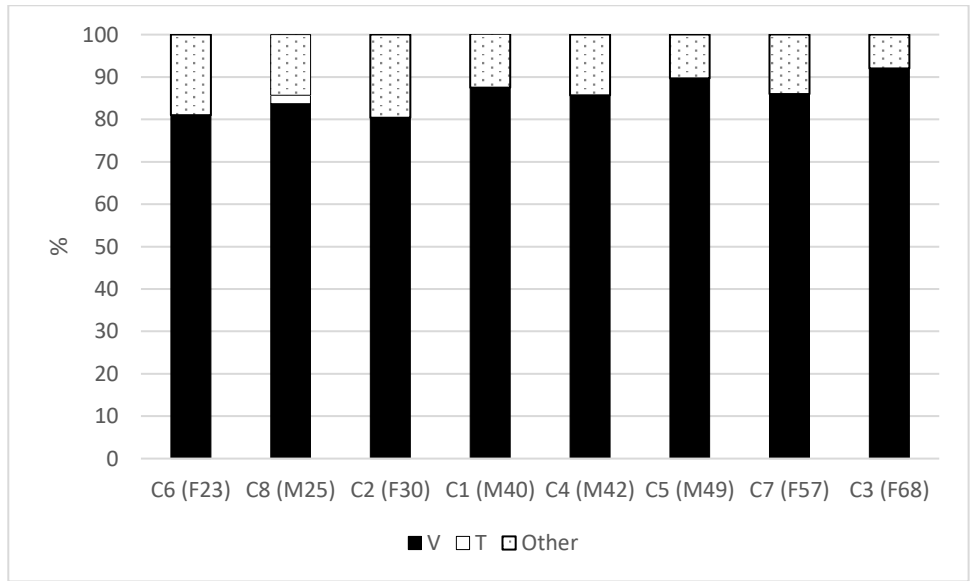


Figure 3. Total number of T and V forms per customer (Ypyä 2014).

The second advantage of this method reveals obvious cross-cultural differences between Finnish and Estonian respondents (see Figures 4a and 4b). While in Finnish the form of address is dependent on the customer's estimated age in the encounters reported, when the staff at Tallin harbor communicated in Estonian and were therefore oriented to Estonian norms of address, they used only V forms (and forms without any explicit T/V choice) with all customers regardless of their age. There was only one exception to this, namely C8 who is addressed once by a T form (see Figure 4b).



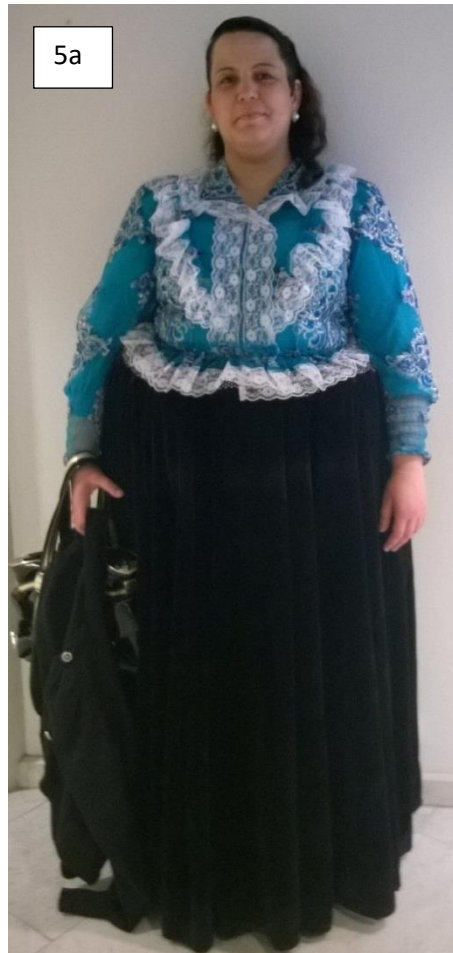
a. Finnish responses



b. Estonian responses

Figure 4. Proportion of different address forms per customer in responses of the check-in staff in Helsinki and Tallinn harbors (Lepik 2016).

Based on feedback, the third advantage of the method seems to be that very few respondents were conscious of the aim of the study, which means they were not able to manipulate their responses to please the researchers (Garrett 2010: 45). Instead, the feedback shows that some of Ypyä's respondents harbored complete misconceptions about the purpose of the study. In the middle of the data collection, our research group was informed that some pharmacists had refused to reply because they were convinced the secret aim of the study was to expose them as racists. In addition, several respondents commented in the last section of the questionnaire that they treated all their clients in the same manner, regardless of their appearance or social/ethnic background. However, when they were asked which factors affect their language use, they repeatedly mentioned appearance and other social variables. The misconception must have arisen from the pictures of two people whose ethnic background differs from the majority: a Romany woman (C5) and an African background woman (C3) (see Figures 5a and 5b). In order to correct these wrong impressions and to obtain a sufficient number of replies, our research groups was obliged to write an accompanying letter in the middle of the process. The letter expressed our conviction that pharmacists serve all their clients politely and equally, but that there are different ways to express friendliness and politeness that are dependent on the client's background. This written explanation attached to the questionnaire was successful in deterring negative feedback.



a. Roma woman, C5



b. African background woman, C3

Figures 5. Photos of two imaginary customers (Ypyä 2014)

This issue taught us that it is important to carefully formulate the description of the study objective so that it is sufficiently clear without revealing too much. Moreover, the selection of the photographs must be considered thoroughly. In this case, the photographs of the Roma woman and the immigrant woman provoked wrong impressions of the purpose of the study, and they could have been omitted in this kind of pilot study. The problems that were encountered in the first case study regarding the pharmacists were avoided in the second case study. The accompanying letter was attached to all the questionnaires and the selection of the photographs was based on careful consideration. Only photographs of

stereotypical Finns and Estonians were used, which meant that ‘ethnic group’ was not one of the variables studied.⁶

A second issue that demands consideration is the variation in the scripted scenarios that were used with the photographs. As mentioned at the beginning of section 3, the scenarios that related to imaginary customers were not identical; rather, six or eight scenarios were combined in different ways. The aim of the variation was to increase respondents’ motivation to answer all the tasks. In principle, it is possible to use either the T or V form, or to avoid using them in every case and, in that sense, all the scenarios are comparable. However, some actions are more a matter of routine (for example, asking for a customer’s reservation number before boarding in the harbor) and in these cases, it can be more typical to use forms without explicit address marking (e.g., *saisinko varausnumero* ‘Could I get a reservation number?’) (Lepik 2016: 30–31). Thus, it is not only the social variables, but the nature of the action that can affect the choice of the address form (Rouhikoski 2015).

5. Experiment 2: Public figures in a shopping center

The second experiment analyzed addressing celebrities. The experiment was conducted during the largest public science festival in Finland, the Science Forum, in January 2015. The main objective of this forum is to introduce the latest results of research to the general public. Most of the

6 In more extensive studies, there would be no reason for excluding ethnic minorities, who form an integral part of Finnish society.

events are organized in the premises of the University of Helsinki, but the Science Forum also offers events in other places, such as shopping centers, as is the case with the experiment described here.

5.1 Aims and implementation

The experiment had two aims, the first of which was to introduce our project (see section 1.2) and research to the public, while the second was to collect data and test new methods. In order to attract the attention of busy people visiting the shopping center, we decided to use visual material in the form of full-length photos of a few famous Finns. The idea was to determine people's conception of their own use of address forms by asking them to report how they would address these Finns if they met them in the shopping center. They were assigned the task of requesting permission to take a photograph with the famous person. To help recruit voluntary respondents, all participants were offered a photograph of them and their favorite (cardboard) figure taken by a professional photographer.

The arrangements consisted of four stages: (1) selecting the potential public figures; (2) searching for suitable photos; (3) obtaining permission from the public figures and the photographers or owners of the photos; and finally (4) printing the real-size, full-length photos. The aim was to include celebrities who could potentially be addressed in different ways and who were widely known and somehow sufficiently interesting for people to want to be in the same photo with them. Furthermore, to attract participants from a variety of backgrounds, it was important that the figures represented different domains, such as politics, sports, and music. This latter objective was achieved, as is evident from the following list. The figures are listed in ascending order, from the youngest to the oldest:

1. Musta Barbaari, a rap artist and bodybuilder with an immigrant background (male, b. 1990)
2. Paula Vesala, a pop singer (female, b. 1981)
3. Teemu Selänne, a former NHL ice-hockey player (male, b. 1970)
4. Alexander Stubb, the Finnish Prime Minister in January 2015 (male, b. 1968)
5. Tarja Halonen, a former president of Finland (female, b. 1943)
6. Hannes Hynönen, a well-known war veteran (male, b. 1913)⁷



7 Hannes Hynönen could be described as an ordinary man, but he had received publicity just before the event. He had been invited by the President of Finland to the Finnish Independence Day celebrations in December 2014, and he had gained a lot of media attention due to his sympathetic behavior.

Figure 6. The printed figures in the shopping center (from left to right): Hannes Hynönen, Musta Barbaari, Paula Vesala, Tarja Halonen, Teemu Selänne and Alexander Stubb

While it would be self-evident in many languages that most of the figures would be addressed with V forms (see Clyne et al. 2009: 39–80; Isosävi & Lappalainen 2015b), this is not the case in Finnish. Some hypotheses were posited when selecting these prominent people. One was that the respondents would probably use V forms to address both Tarja Halonen and Hannes Hynönen. This is due to Halonen's former position as a president of Finland, and Hynönen's advanced age. The other famous Finns, Musta Barbaari, Teemu Selänne, and Paula Vesala, are relatively young and represent the more informal domains of music and sports, which would make them the most likely candidates for T address. When it comes to Alexander Stubb, it was difficult to predict which form people would use to address him, because, on the one hand, the formal form would be expected due to his status as the Prime Minister of Finland, but on the other hand, he is young (from the perspective of Finnish addressing patterns) and his image is less formal than that of many other politicians.

The experiment was conducted in early January 2015. A team of three research assistants, the photographer, and the author were on duty in the Kamppi shopping mall in center of Helsinki for four hours each day for two days. One of the assistants stopped passers-by, another acted as interviewer, and the third operated the video-camera. When a person volunteered to participate in the experiment, he or she was then asked to select one of the celebrities. At this point, the second assistant also asked permission to video-record the interview for research purposes, and, on getting a positive

reply, she conducted a short interview. Extract (1) illustrates how the interview took place.

(1) *elikkä siis kysymys kuuluu sillee et jos Paula Vesala tulis sua vastaan tossa Kampin kauppakeskuksessa ni miten pyytäisit häneltä että voi-voiko päästä samaan kuvaan*

‘So the question is, if you came across Paula Vesala here in the Kamppi shopping mall how would you ask her to have your picture taken with her?’

After the interview, the photographer took a photograph of the participant with the celebrity he or she had selected. The participant was later able to download the photograph from a webpage by using a password (see also Manderbacka 2017: 14–18).

5.2 Evaluation of the experiment

The experiment achieved its aims in various ways. First, our team succeeded in recruiting a sufficient number of participants of diverse backgrounds. A total of 104 interviews were video-recorded. The distribution between women and men was relatively even (47 men and 57 women), and the participants’ age ranged from children to participants who were over 70 years old.⁸ Although no background information was

⁸ Some interviews had more than one participant. As a consequence, the total number of females and males is larger than the number of interviews. The ages of the participants were not requested, but are based on the estimations of the research group. We interviewed only the children who

collected, on the basis of short discussions with the informants it became evident that they represented different social groups. Even groups that have little or no contact with educational institutions, are thus not typically available for studies of this kind were present in the shopping center and willingly participated in our study. We can therefore conclude that the experiment recruited various types of people better than many online surveys in which women and educated young adults are often over-represented (e.g. Peterson & Vaattovaara 2014: 255–256)

The second finding is that the preliminary results display systematic differences in addressing different public figures (see Figure 7). These differences reflect similar tendencies concerning social variables as previous studies based on surveys and analysis of authentic discourse (cf. Lappalainen 2015: 80–82, 87–91; Paunonen 2010: 340–365). Although some of the participants approached the task with humor, the attitude of the majority was sufficiently serious. In some cases the voice quality of the recording was not clear enough to understand, and in other cases, the participants did not produce replies in which address forms could be analyzed. For these reasons, the analysis is based on 84 cases. As the total number of occurrences for each individual public figure is low (8–22), conclusions must be drawn carefully. In addition to the T and V forms, Figure 7 depicts the number of other, more implicit, forms of address (for instance, the zero person construction) for each public figure.⁹

had their parents with them and whose parents gave consent for their participation.

⁹ Although these occurrences do not include any T/V address, addressing may have been directed unambiguously to the figure by using personal

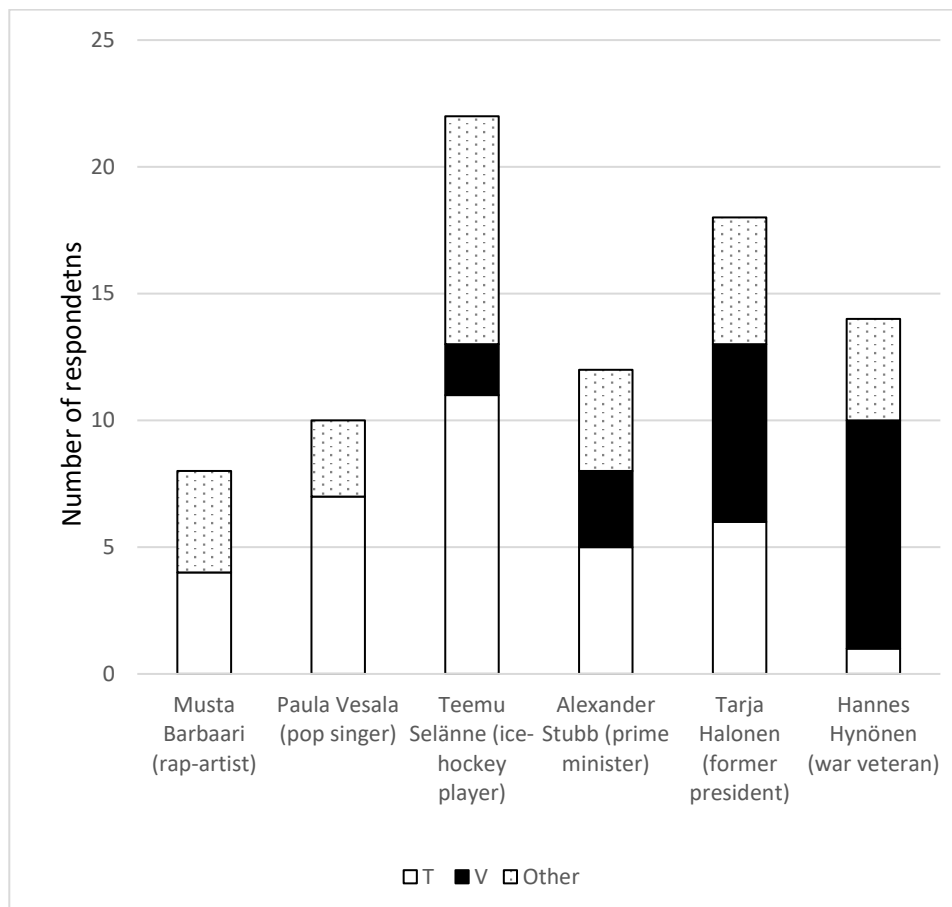


Figure 7: Totals (N) for each form of address employed to address Finnish public figures at the shopping mall (cf. Manderbacka 2017: 30).

The results show that every celebrity is addressed with T forms at least once; V forms, in contrast, are not used with either Musta Barbaari or Paula Vesala. Only the oldest celebrity, Hannes Hynönen, is addressed predominantly with V forms, although V forms are also typical with Tarja

names or nominal terms, e.g., *mitäs **Musta Barbaari** otetaanko selfie* ‘What’s up, Musta Barbaari? How about a selfie?’

Halonen. The proportion of forms other than T and V is noticeably high for Musta Barbaari and Teemu Selänne, who are generally addressed using T forms (Manderbacka 2017: 30–39).

Finally, the experiment offered a good opportunity to inform the public about academic research. They were interested in our experiments, and because of that, they wanted to discuss it with us and ask about linguistic topics in general. Many people were surprised that we were working in the shopping mall and that we were interested in their opinions and conceptions.

If we now consider the disadvantages and problems encountered during the experiment, the first difficulty lies in making arrangements prior to the event. The implementation was simple, but it required extensive work before the experiment to get permission to use photos and prepare the props. However, it would be relatively easy to repeat the same concept. Second, recruiting a sufficient number of voluntary participants was challenging, and their attention had to be captured by actively presenting the experiment. Many people initially reacted positively to the invitation to participate in the study, but they then rejected the offer due to their tight schedules. The shopping mall is connected to both an underground station and a bus station, and many people hurry through the center only in order to catch a train or a bus. The third disadvantage was the noisy environment, which sometimes made the transcription and analysis of the relevant turns in the interviews difficult or even impossible. That said, although the recordings cannot be used for prosodic analysis, they are satisfactory for studying address forms.

Finally, some of the data had to be discarded because not all participants produced address forms. Instead of talking directly to the photograph of the public figure, they began to report to the interviewer what they would say

to the figure they had chosen, referring to him or her using only third person forms. In some cases, the interviewer managed to guide participants to use address forms by formulating the question again, in some cases not. Interaction between the interviewer and interviewees must be analyzed more carefully, but it is obvious that the interviewers got better over time, which most likely had an effect on how informants reacted (Manderbacka 2017: 21–23, 46–48).

6. Conclusion

The number of studies on address practices in authentic interaction has increased recently (e.g., Havu et al. 2014; Norrby et al. 2015; Norrby & Wide 2015). This is a welcome development because the majority of studies has focused on reported usage of address forms and attitudes towards their use (Clyne et al. 2009; Suomela-Härmä et al. 2013). However, various perspectives and databases are still needed for analyzing the use of address forms as well as changes in their use. All the methods must be discussed critically, considering their advantages and disadvantages and searching for solutions to the problems particular methods raise.

In this chapter, I have shown how methods such as questionnaires and interviews employed to analyze reported use of address forms can be further improved by using visual material as stimuli. On the basis of the respondents' comments in the questionnaires (Ypyä 2014: 14–17), the photos help them to imagine how they would address their interlocutor (cf. Breckler 1984). When the two pilot studies are compared, DCTs are seen to work well for collecting data among a particular target group, whereas the shopping mall concept easily attains a wide range of

participants. In addition, an imaginary conversation between the informant and a public figure may come closer to an authentic situation than a written reply in a questionnaire.

So far, the methods have been used in relatively small-scale studies, but these pilot studies already convincingly demonstrate that they can open up new research avenues and reach new informants. Both concepts presented demand careful preparation and must be developed further, but after testing, the same format can easily be repeated several times. DCTs and the simulation using life-sized figures cannot replace the collection of fieldnotes, the analysis of authentic interaction, or the usage of focus groups, but these new methods can complement them. Although these experiments have been developed to study address practices specifically, the methods are not restricted to that purpose only, but can also be used to explore other linguistic phenomena.

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