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ABSTRACT

As smartphones have become an integral part of the everyday life of many, we have seen a proliferation of private messaging groups in mobile apps such as WhatsApp. One characteristic of group messaging is the constant presence of multiple simultaneous lines of talk – even more so than in the dyadic mode. In this article, we explore the linguistic and technologically afforded practices of managing simultaneous lines of talk – topics, sequences, larger activities - in mobile group messaging. Specifically, we analyze (i) how new lines of talk are initiated next to already existing ones, (ii) how two prior messages are responded to consecutively, and (iii) how non-adjacent messages are responded to. Our data consist of Finnish instant group messaging, and the analysis was conducted using the Conversation Analytic method. Our study complements previous studies on the management of multiple lines of talk in mobile messaging, and more generally, multiactivity in social interaction. In particular, it presents new insights into how practices such as 'and'-prefacing, action-labelling and platform-provided reply-marking are utilized for organizing parallel activities.

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1. Introduction

As smartphones have become an integral part of everyday life – they have moved from being useful to being necessary – we have seen a proliferation of private messaging groups in various mobile apps such as WhatsApp, Facebook Messenger and Slack. Messaging groups are set up not only for friends and family but also for school and workplace-related interactions, sport teams, hobby clubs, and so on. It is thus becoming increasingly common in mobile messaging that one is, and perhaps is expected to be, constantly available not only for other individuals but for entire groups across social spheres. (See Ling, 2017). Among young people in particular, group messaging has practically replaced SMS and voice calls and become the most important technology-mediated form of communication (Thulin, 2017). In Finland, 97 percent of people aged 16 through 24 use mobile messaging applications (Statistics Finland, 2019).

Previous studies have observed that mobile messaging apps may be used not only for near-synchronous interaction – for rapid, chat-like exchanges – but also for asynchronous, more slow-paced interaction with lag time between messages (e.g. Baron, 2013; Lyons and Tagg, 2019; also König, 2021). That is, mobile messaging is employed for both "focused gatherings", where participants have each other's full attention for a period of time (cf. Goffman, 1961: 17-18), and more distanced interactions, advanced concomitant with other things, on and off (Baron, 2013: 139–141). Either way, interaction in mobile messaging is typically in a "continuing state of incipient talk" (cf. Schegloff and Sacks, 1973), ready to be resumed whenever, as reflected in the lack of openings and closings (Meredith, 2019: 251). Young people especially treat messaging groups as "always-open meeting places where one can 'hang out' and socialize with friends between face-to-face gatherings" (Thulin, 2017: 11).

In this article, we focus on one characteristic aspect of group mobile messaging: the management of multiple simultaneous lines of talk (i.e. topics, sequences, larger activities). Previous studies have shown that simultaneous lines of talk are typical of multiparty conversation, in both online and offline settings (on spoken interaction, see Egbert, 1997; on chat rooms, see Werry, 1996; Zitzen and Stein, 2004). In online settings, they are arguably even more common, because messages stay on the screen either for some time (as in chat rooms) or remain permanently accessible (as in messaging). This allows users to respond to even remote messages and to participate concurrently in several discussions. Indeed, previous studies have shown that concurrent lines of talk occur frequently even in dyadic messaging (see e.g. Meredith, 2014; König, 2019). However, while in dyadic messaging participants "work towards settling on a single topic at a time" (König, 2019, 626), group messaging has no such tendency, as we demonstrate in this article. Moreover, the diverging of participants into two or more separate groups (i.e. "schisming"), which is considered typical of public chat room interaction (see Werry, 1996), does not properly characterize group messaging, in which the inclusive creation and maintenance of social ties between

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group members ("connected group presence"; Thulin, 2017: 12) is arguably more at stake.

Our aim in this article is to analyze the resources and practices through which simultaneous lines of talk are collaboratively organized and coordinated by the interactants. We address the following research questions: (i) How do group messaging participants initiate new lines of talk next to the already existing one(s)? (ii) How do they respond consecutively to two prior messages? (iii) How do they respond to a non-adjacent prior question or other initiating action? Our study complements previous studies on management of multiple topics, sequences and larger activities in mobile messaging (see Meredith, 2014; König, 2019) and, more generally, multiactivity in social interaction (see Haddington et al., 2014). In particular, it presents new insights into the use of such practices as 'and'-prefacing, action-labelling and platform-provided reply-marking in group messaging.

Our data consist of a Finnish student theater group's WhatsApp messaging, which we analyze in a Conversation Analytic framework. We consider the data particularly interesting with regard to participation roles, as in addition to the actors, the group also has two directors and a vocal coach. However, the participants are also friends who spend time together outside the rehearsal. This results in group messaging that includes both casual and more institutional lines of talk. Although our analytic focus is on the linguistic practices of messaging interaction, the ways in which language is used are tightly intertwined with how other semiotic modes (such as emojis and photos) and the features of the messaging application are used. That is to say, our analysis is multi-semiotically and technologically informed.

We begin this article by introducing our framework (Section 2) and our data and method (Section 3). Our analysis first focuses on the initiations of parallel lines of talk (Section 4), then on responding to two prior messages (Section 5), and finally on responding to a non-adjacent message (Section 6). In the last section we discuss our findings and potential future directions for research on group messaging (Section 7).

2. Coherence and management of sequences, topics and activities in online interaction: conversation analytic perspectives

Conversation Analysis (CA), the theoretical and methodological framework of our study, aims to describe "the intertwined construction of practices, actions, activities, and the overall structure of interaction" (Stivers and Sidnell, 2013: 2). The CA approach has been successfully applied in the research of technology-mediated interactions since its beginnings in the 1960s (telephone conversations in particular), and online written interaction since the 1990s (for an overview, see e.g. Meredith, 2019). CA of online interaction, sometimes referred to as *Digital CA*, approaches technology-mediated interaction from a relatively clean slate – in its own right, not as a deviation from "ordinary" conversation – and takes into account the platform-specific technological affordances and their impact on the organization of conversation (see e.g. Giles et al., 2015; Arminen et al., 2016; Meredith, 2019).

CA conceptualizes coherence as a joint achievement of the interactants. One of the basic, profound questions in CA is how are successive turns formed up to be "coherent" with the prior turn (or some prior turn), and what is the nature of this coherence? (Schegloff, 2007: xiv). In consequence, CA examines coherence above all by reference to the notion of *sequential organization*, which refers to "any kind of organization which concerns the relative positioning of utterances or action" (Schegloff, 2007: 2).

Arguably the most basic and fundamental type of sequential organization posited in CA is the *adjacency pair* in which a particular type of first-pair part (FPP) makes relevant a particular type of

second-pair part (SPP). Paradigm examples of adjacency pairs are QUESTION–ANSWER, REQUEST–GRANTING/DENIAL and INVITATION–ACCEPTANCE/DECLINING. CA has shown how adjacency pairs offer for a framework of inter-subjective understanding that is "constructed and sustained on a turn-by-turn basis" (Sidnell, 2010: 66). In addition, CA studies have revealed multiple ways in which the base parts of adjacency pairs can be extended with, for example, pre-invitations (e.g. *Are you busy tonight?*) and other pre-expansions (Schegloff, 2007).

As previous research has shown, adjacency pairs are a powerful source of coherence also in many forms of writing-based online interaction (Meredith, 2019: 245–248). However, in these environments that do not typically allow two-way simultaneity, the adjacent placing of messages does not guarantee that the messages are in actual sequential relation with each other.[1] Instead, adjacency may be "disrupted" by messages belonging to another sequence (Herring, 1999), and ostensibly adjacent messages may, in subsequent repair sequences, turn out to be "phantom adjacency pairs" (Garcia and Jacobs, 1999). As Garcia and Jacobs (ibid., 353) put it, the turn-taking options in many platforms "provide for the posting of a *future* message rather than for a next message" (italics added). Consequently, the responsive relations in these platforms are often secured by using such means as reply-marking, lexical repetition and other tying techniques (i.e. practices of creating cohesive, topic-organizing links to a prior turn; Sacks, 1992), as well as addressing a co-participant (see e.g. Werry, 1996; Örnberg Berglund, 2009; Virtanen and Kääntä, 2018; also Section 6). However, one should not forget that also in spoken conversation FPPs and SPPs may be separated from each other by, for example, an insert expansion (see Schegloff, 2007). Thus, in CA the *adjacency* of the pair-parts refers to the interactional relevancies set by the initiating action: an FPP in first position sets an expectation of an SPP in second position, regardless of whether or not it comes directly after. However, in online interaction the reasons for the separation of FPP and SPP are surely more often related to the technological properties of the online platform than the expansion of adjacency pairs.

Although an increase in the number of participants surely increases the probability of multiple simultaneous sequences, disrupted adjacency also seems to be a common feature of dyadic online conversations (e.g. König, 2019). One reason for this might be that the users are able to increase the tempo of interaction by writing messages in overlap instead of waiting for each other to finish. In addition, as participants often contribute to these conversations on and off – as afforded by the persistence of messages in the platform – they accomplish more by sending a batch of messages at one go (see Cherny, 1999: 153; Herring, 1999; Baron 139–141; 2013, see also König, 2019 and Section 5).

Although the various aspects of sequential organization are, without a doubt, fundamental sources of coherence in talk-in-interaction, they do not cover the whole ground. First, as Heritage and Sorjonen (1994) have demonstrated, orientation can also be to the wider activity context. They specifically showed that the English *and* as a question preface is a resource for invoking and sustaining an orientation to the question as part of a larger activity or course of action (ibid.). As we demonstrate in Section 5, an important function of 'and'-prefacing in instant messaging is to separate two or more lines of activity within complex responsive turns that respond to multiple FPPs in separate messages.

Second, issues related to topicality – the content of talk – can also play an important role in forming coherent successive turns-at-talk. Topical coherence, however, is not studied in CA as a static, content-

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[1] The lack of two-way simultaneity (or full synchronicity) in online platforms means that users are unable to monitor one another's message composition process – they only see the finished product once it is posted (e.g. Garcia and Jacobs, 1999: 347; Arminen et al., 2016: 295–296). Full synchronicity would of course be technologically easy to implement, as evidenced by some of the early chat systems (see Anderson, Beard & Walther 2010). It seems that fully synchronic platforms are generally disliked.

Table 1
Number of messages and uses of reply-marking per participant.

	Elsa	Aino	Piia	Satu	Kalevi	Niklas	Ilona	Sakke	Julius	Ella	Karo	Aleksi	Riina	**Total**
Messages	284	256	193	267	139	140	322	108	155	111	471	111	281	**2838**
Reply-markings	1	35	17	23	6	19	27	15	9	13	26	3	34	**228**

related phenomenon but as practices that "conversationalists use to generate, to locate, to pursue and to resist talk on a topic" (Sidnell, 2010: 226). For example, topics may be shifted in a smooth, stepwise manner or disjunctively, without a link to what has been said before (Maynard, 1980; Jefferson, 1984; Button and Casey, 1985). However, as Couper-Kuhlen and Selting (2018, 315) stress, "managing topicality in conversation is always a collaborative, interactive phenomenon. It cannot be done alone." Thus, if one party initiates a topic, it remains a mere topic candidate if the other party does not follow the lead. Moreover, doing on-topic talk can be considered its own activity type in which participants "show respect for a topic" by using anaphoric reference forms and other tying structures as the primary "glue" between turns (Sacks, 1992, vol 2: 535–546; also Sidnell, 2010: 223–225 and Section 6 in this article).

In many writing-based online platforms, participants' orientation to discussing one topic at a time is not as strong as in spoken interaction. Multiple topics may also arise in dyadic settings because multiple actions are packaged in a single message or writing is done in overlap (Meredith, 2014: 186–195). In this connection, we would like to note that some CA notions that refer to the topic management practices of spoken conversation should be utilized cautiously when working with messaging and related forms of online data that are prone to multi-topicality. For example, terms such as topic-change and topic-shift (Maynard, 1980) are somewhat ill-fitting in their orientation, as they suggest that one topic is changed to another instead of introducing it as an additional topic next to the prior one(s). Indeed, recent studies have demonstrated that new topic management practices have emerged in online talk. For example, König (2019) shows that in dyadic messaging multiple FPPs can be responded to in either chronological or reversed order and goes on to argue that the choice between the two is a method for foregrounding a particular topical line.

While sequence and topic are analytically distinct notions, we would like to emphasize that in practice they are often interrelated and go hand in hand, as a sequence is 'on topic', and on-topic talk forms a course of action that is constituted through adjacency pairs (Couper-Kuhlen and Selting, 2018: 312). Indeed, Couper-Kuhlen and Selting (2018: 354) have questioned the idea that strictly casting the analysis in either topicality or sequentiality is an analytic necessity. In this paper, we use the notion *lines of talk* to refer to a set of messages that are linked to each other topically, sequentially and/or in terms of larger activity.[2] Our choice of term reflects our primary interest in exploring how multiple simultaneous interactional foci are managed in group messaging within one common message feed. Although many specific practices have certainly evolved to serve either topic, sequence or activity management, the three are also closely related, and we show that it might be advantageous to also examine them in parallel.

Finally, we would like to explicate how we use the notions of turn and message in this article. We define message as a unit of transmission: it consists of one or more visual-verbal elements (e.g. written language, emojis, photos, hyperlinks) sent to the system and displayed to others as its own unit (see also Markman, 2013: 542–543; Marmorstein, this volume). However, *message* cannot be equated with *turn* because turns can be composed of multiple messages. Previous studies have referred to this form of composition as *turn-splitting* (Zitzen and Stein, 2004) and *chunking* (Baron, 2013; Markman, 2015). Still, determining whether two or more consecutive messages by the same user constitute one turn or multiple turns is not always straightforward. In our analysis, we use the notion of message when we wish to emphasize a technological aspect of messaging and, correspondingly, the notion of turn when an interactional aspect is more at stake.

3. Data and method

Our data come from a Finnish student theater's WhatsApp group with 13 members: 10 actors, a director, an assistant director, and a vocal coach (ages 20–29). The data, consisting of 2,838 messages (see Table 1), was gathered in late 2018–early 2019 by a member of the group. We received the exported data as a text file that contained the verbal messages (including emojis) and minimal metadata for each message (user name and time stamp). Non-verbal content such as videos and pictures were included as attachments. In addition, the uses of the platform-provided reply-marking were manually added to the data. Reply-marking allows users to quote an earlier message and visually mark the current message as its response. This feature, which we analyze more closely in Section 6, was used in 228 messages. As Table 1 shows, the number of times the participants utilized it in the data varies considerably. For example, although Elsa, the director of the play, is among the group's most active posters, she only used the feature once.

In the data examples, the uses of the reply-marking are marked in the third column with an arrow, followed by the identifying number of the responded message (e.g. "→ 1"). We have anonymized the data by replacing the participants' names and other identifying data, such as place names, with pseudonyms. Each member of the group gave us their written consent.

During the data collection period, the group was rehearsing for a show premiering in early 2019. The messaging group was active daily, except for the Christmas holiday. All the group members use the messaging group for casual chat, for arranging get-togethers and for dealing with urgent issues (such as being late or sick). In addition, the directors and the coach frequently adopt their institutional role by informing and reminding the actors of the weekly rehearsals and the overall schedule. They also instruct them and give directions. This dual nature of the data – the coexistence of casual and institutional conversation – is one element that results in recurrent simultaneous lines of talk and thus motivates the choice of this particular group as our data. By restricting ourselves to this group only, we also choose to foreground group-specific practices and interactional dynamics. This does not, however, mean that the practices described in this article would not occur in any other data.

As is common in CA work, our research process began with an unmotivated looking of the data. The purpose of this was to identify interactional problems that are also relevant to the participants' themselves (see Sacks, 1984: 27). After a while, we realized that many of the phenomena that had caught our initial attention had something to do with topic or sequence management. We also noticed that two or even three lines of talk were often simultaneously active in the platform. This led us to formulate the candidate phenomenon to be investigated as the *management of multiple topics and sequences.* Next, we decided to inspect the phenomenon more closely by building collections of initiating

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[2] We would like to emphasize, moreover, that the *talk* in *lines of talk* in this article refers specifically to online talk. In CA literature *online talk* is widely used to refer (also) to written and visual online interaction (see e.g. Paulus et al., 2016; Meredith, 2019). For readability, in this article we prefer the shorter form *lines of talk* over the more exact form *lines of online talk*.

messages (see Section 4) and responding messages (see Sections 5 and 6) in multi-topic and multi-sequence environments.

When analyzing the individual cases, our guiding question was "why that now" (see Sacks and Schegloff, 1973). That is, we examined the use of a particular resource or practice in a particular message relative to others' prior and subsequent contributions. Above all, we sought to reveal the participants' understanding of their own and others' conduct by closely analyzing the composition and position of their messages (see Schegloff, 2007). The cases that we selected for analysis in this article represent practices and resources that we consider most representative of the data.

4. Initiating a parallel line of action

In this section, we analyze how new, additional lines of talk are initiated while at least one previous line of talk is still active as well as how, and to what extent, these initiations are taken up by the others. The analysis gained its impetus from our initial observation that some of the initiations in our data contain a misplacement marker such as *muute*(*n*) 'by the way' or *btw*, while others utilize attention-getting devices such as *hei* 'hey' and action labels such as *muistutan* 'I'd like to remind [you]'. We begin with misplacement markers and then take a look at the use of the other two devices.

In studies of spoken interaction, misplacement markers have been described as markers that "display an orientation by their user to the proper sequential-organizational character of a particular place in a conversation, and a recognition that an utterance that is thereby prefaced may not fit, and that the recipient should not attempt to use this placement in understanding their occurrence" (Schegloff and Sacks, 1973: 92). Thus, they convey a participant's orientation to smooth, linked transitions between sequences and other lines of action.

Although the typical function of misplacement markers in spoken conversation has been described as initiating side-sequences that suspend a prior sequence (Couper-Kuhlen and Selting, 2018: 344; see also Jefferson, 1972), in messaging their use typically does not cause other participants to stop participating in the prior line (s) of talk – nor is there a practical need for it, as written language and other visual semiotic modes make it much easier to participate to multiple lines of talk. Thus, in messaging interaction, misplacement markers are typically used for acknowledging other active line(s) of talk and for signaling that the initiated line of talk is not topically, sequentially and/or otherwise related to it or them. Example 1 demonstrates this. An hour and a half before message 1, Riina, one of the actors, had posted a message asking whether anyone would be interested in meeting up before rehearsals. Some of the group members responded and accepted the invitation. In message 1, Riina can be seen as primarily informing those who have so far promised to join her. In message 4, Niklas introduces a new line of talk with misplacement marker *muuten*.

Example 1

1	16:24:18	RIINA	Itse puksutan junalla paikalle 🚃	*I'll be coming by train 🚃*
2	16:25:19	KALEVI	Niin tai siis tuun kotoa suoraan harjoituspaikalle	*Yeah, or I mean I'll be coming to rehearsal straight from home*
3	16:25:32	RIINA	Okeoke	*Okey dokey*
4	**16:31:22**	**NIKLAS**	**Tein muuten aivan jäätävän meemin**	***By the way**, I made an excellent meme*
5	16:31:30	NIKLAS	Pääsette nauttimaan siitä illalla	*You'll get to enjoy it this evening*
6	16:31:31	ILONA	Ei käyny hyvin eli oon siellä varmaan viideltä!	*A few problems, so I'll probably be there at five!*
7	16:31:38	SAKKE	Voisin lyöttäytyä kaakaolle, pääsin luennolta vähän aikasemmin. Käväsen tos ruokalassa syömässä keittolounaan ja liityn sit sinne mis ootte =)	*I could join you for a cocoa, as my lecture ended a bit early. I'll grab some soup for lunch in the cafeteria and then join you wherever you are =)*
8	16:31:43	ILONA →4	Siitä aamuisesta? XD	*About this morning? XD*
9	16:31:49	NIKLAS	Kyllä!	*Yes!*
10	16:32:07	SAKKE →5	Melkonen cliffhanger 😩	*Quite a cliffhanger 😩*
11	16:32:41	AINO	Julius hämmentyy	*Julius will be confused*
12	16:33:35	RIINA	((an emoji riddle based on Julius' name; omitted for anonymization))	
13	16:34:25	SATU	Ää, en kestä odotuksen tuskaa!	*Ooh, I'm so dying to see it!*
14	16:34:33	SATU	Riina, meetkö missä?	*Riina, where are you right now?*

Example 2

1	19:48:59	Sakke	Mitä valokuvakäsittelyn aatelia täältä yhtäkiä löytyykään 😆 Julius vois kirjottaa kirjan noista seikkailuista	*What excellent photo processing skills!* 😆 *Julius could write a novel about these adventures.*
2	**19:49:33**	**Piia**	**Hei onko joku vielä kuvauksissa? Jätin ehkä mun hiusharjan siihen tietokonepöydälle s o s**	***Hey, is anybody still at the photoshoot? I may have left my hairbrush on the computer table s o s***
3	20:07:05	Satu	((photo of a hairbrush))	
4	20:07:16	Piia	Oui!	
5	20:07:19	Piia	♡	
6	20:13:03	Elsa →1	Kehitettiin juliuksen kaa jo teoria et Mihail on oikeesti joku aikamatkajaa joka on käyny nois kaikissa paikoissa sillee forrest gump tyylisesti	*Me and julius developed a theory that Mihail is actually a time traveller who has visited all those places in a forest gump kind of way*
7	20:14:05	Niklas →1	Kiitän ja kannatan! 😄	*Thanks and I agree!* 😄

Messages 1–3 (and many before them) belong to the 'get-together' line of talk: Riina says she will take the train and join the others (message 1), while Kalevi clarifies that he cannot make it and will come directly to the rehearsals (message 2). In message 4, Niklas, who has not been active for hours, joins the conversation. However, he does not contribute to the prior line of talk. Instead, he makes an announcement about having made a meme. The unrelatedness of the message in relation to the prior talk is reflected and construed by using the marker *muuten* 'by the way'. Niklas' announcement makes relevant a response that treats the message as news(worthy) (see e.g. Koivisto, 2017; Couper-Kuhlen and Selting, 2018: 275). Niklas immediately continues with message 5 that reveals the time of the meme's release (not until the evening). In this way, the first announcement could be (re)interpreted as a teaser: the meme is not immediately accessible even though it has been announced.

Niklas' messages are followed by Ilona's and Sakke's contributions (messages 6 and 7), which continue the previous activity of arranging a get-together. According to the timestamps, the messages are most likely produced simultaneously with Niklas' turns. However, both participants immediately continue by producing further messages that contribute to Niklas' meme. First, Ilona, using the reply-marking, offers a candidate understanding of what the meme is about (message 8), while Sakke, using the same affordance, produces an evaluation, displaying his excitement (message 10). In message 11, Aino contributes to the meme uptake, while in messages 13 and 14 Satu contributes to both lines of talk.[3] By producing the responses in separate messages, that is, by utilizing the

practice of turn-splitting (see Section 5), she indicates that the responses belong to different lines of talk.

Thus, in Example 1, misplacement marking is used to initiate a completely new line of action that is not related to the prior talk. However, unlike in spoken conversation, the initiation is not taken up by others as an attempt to close or suspend the current topic or activity. Rather, it is treated as an additional, and as such an unproblematic, line of talk. Moreover, the multiple lines of talk are managed smoothly and effortlessly in the responses by using "born-digital" practices such as reply-marking and turn-splitting (see also Sections 5 and 6).

Next, we explore the characteristics of those stretches of talk in our data in which a parallel line of talk is initiated by using an attention-getting device. As the name suggests, attention-getting devices aim to secure the attention of the addressee (Schegloff, 1968: 1080). Paradigm examples are 'hey' particles in various languages (for English, see Norrick, 2009: 881–882; for Finnish, see Pihlajamaa, 2019). In messaging, typographic attention getters such as repeated upper-case letters can also be used.

Previous studies have repeatedly highlighted the use of attention-getting devices for launching new courses of action and redirecting talk (see e.g. Sidnell, 2007: 392; Norrick, 2009: 881–882; Pihlajamaa: 24–29, 2019). In our data, when initiating an additional line of talk, *hei* marks a transition to an immediate concern. In comparison to misplacement markers, it does not display the participant's acknowledgement of the prior line(s) of talk. Rather, it focuses on the immediacy or timeliness of the issue as a reason for initiating a parallel topic or sequence. Example 2 serves as a case in point. Previously in the conversation, Niklas has shared a series of humorous photo manipulations that depicted one of the characters of their show (Mihail) witnessing historical events such as the death of Osama bin Laden. The photos invoked displays of laughter from the others, shown particularly by laugh emojis. In message 2, Piia initiates a new line of talk by prefacing her message with *hei*.

The excerpt begins with Sakke's message in which he contributes to the playful evaluation of Niklas' photos. Next, Piia initiates (or intervenes with) a new line of talk by producing an implicit

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[3] As can be observed from the responses to the meme announcement, primary news value is given to the possible theme or topic of the announced meme, not to the creation of the meme in general. Indeed, Niklas and others have posted in-joke memes to the messaging group many times before. Against this context, it could even be argued that posting a meme is an omnirelevant action for the members of this group – it does not need to be motivated or accounted for (cf. Sacks, 1992, vol 2: 594–595). As Miltner (2014) among others has noted, in-joke memes are important devices that facilitate a sense of in-groupness through the utilization of exclusively shared knowledge between the group members.

request or plea for help (see message-final *s o s*): she had left her hairbrush at the rehearsal and now asks whether anyone is still there. The message-initial attention-getter (*hei*) emphasizes that the request is an immediate concern. The particle *vielä* 'still' strengthens the feeling of urgency: it might be too late already ('hey is anybody **still** at the photoshoot?'). In message 3, following fifteen minutes later, Satu produces an SPP by sending a photograph of a hairbrush and thus indicating fulfillment of the request. Piia then produces a sequence closing third by first confirming her ownership of the hairbrush in the picture (message 4) and then expressing her gratitude (message 5).

Five minutes later, Ella sends a message in which she picks up the previous line of talk regarding Niklas's photo manipulations (message 6) by using reference forms that tie back to those in message 1 (*Julius* [1] – *julius* [6]; *noista seikkailuista* 'about these adventures [in the picture]' [1] – *nois kaikissa paikoissa* 'all those places [in the picture]' [6]) (see Sacks, 1992, vol 2: 541; Sidnell, 2010: 223–226). Thus, she is doing topic talk Section 6. Finally, Niklas, the poster of the photo, joins in and also responds to message 1 (message 7).

With regard to how the additional request sequence affects the progression of the prior line of talk, both turns that follow the sequence utilize reply-marking to secure a responsive relation to a turn preceding it. This technological feature makes it possible for the intervening sequence to be altogether ignored in turn design and treated as "sequentially deleted" (see Jefferson, 1978: 229; also Section 6). As a point of comparison, in spoken conversation verbal back-connecting devices and/or resumption search markers (i.e. 'where were we?') are typically used when returning to a line of talk that goes further back than the just-prior turn (see Schegloff, 2007: 23–24; Couper-Kuhlen and Selting, 2018: 345–346).

As a third linguistic resource type used in the initiations of parallel line of talk, we introduce the category of action labels. In our data, its use illustrates a distinction between casual and institutional talk. Defined broadly, action labels are metalinguistic vocabulary used to categorize or describe one's own or others' conduct, either proactively (e.g. *I **inform** you*) or retroactively (e.g. *she **in-***

***formed** me*). Their proactive use is a form of reflexive conduct, bringing the aspects of intentionality and accountability in the interaction to the fore. (Sidnell, 2017.) In our data, proactive action labels are used to frame the transition to a new, parallel line of talk as a noteworthy and accountable, on record move. The directors and the vocal coach of the group especially use action labels for initiating institutional activities such as informing and reminding. This feature also distinguishes the activities from the surrounding activities of casual chat. Example 3 demonstrates this. In the preceding talk, many of the group members had wished one of the actors, Karo, happy birthday. In the example, Piia, the vocal coach, first continues this line of activity but then moves on to informing by using an action label.

Piia's first message contributes to congratulating Karo. In her second message, she introduces a new line of action by switching to the coach role with certain deontic rights (see Stevanovic, 2013) – she now gives reminders and instructions to the actors. The new, institutional line of action is initiated in its own message with a proactive action label in the initial position. The label categorizes the conduct as reminding (*muistutan* 'I'd like to remind [everyone]'). This formulation has two important functions. First, it separates the message from the previous one in terms of action type (congratulating vs. informing) and, furthermore, in terms of conversation type (casual vs. institutional). Secondly, it marks the conduct as "announced" and accountable action. Specifically, Piia displays that she is now fulfilling her duties as a coach: she is explicitly making the actors aware that she is 'once more' giving a reminder of their homework. By implication, the responsibility is now shifted to the actors – she cannot be accused of neglecting her duties.

As is typical of the institutional talk in our data, Piia's reminder is not responded to in the subsequent messages. This is not treated as problematic or deviant. In the excerpt, the discussion continues with two messages from the main director Elsa. Similarly to Piia, she begins by congratulating Karo but then shifts to informing (or giving advice) in an institutional role. Institutional talk is continued in message 4, posted ten minutes later. In messages 5 and

Example 3

1	10:52:23	PIIA	Monia onnitteluja Karo ♡	*Many happy returns Karo ♡*
2	**10:54:13**	**PIIA**	**Muistutan vielä kerran huomisesta läksystä! Ottakaa sanoituksenne mukaan paperilla [...]**	***I'd like to remind_everyone once more of the homework for tomorrow! Everyone, bring a printout of your lyrics with you* [...]**
3	11:40:53	ELSA	Onnea Karo! Nauti päivästäsi 🎉🎉 Ja hei huomasin että vielä tänään voi ilmoittautua mukaan opiskelijajärjestön speksiin [...]	*Happy birthday, Karo! Enjoy your day 🎉🎉 And hey, I noticed that there's still time today to sign up for the show at the student theater* [...]
4	11:51:07	ELSA	JA! HUOMHUOM! Tanssipäälliköt pitää halukkaille näyttelijöille kertaustunnin koreoista nyt la 10-12 [...]	*AND! NB NB! The dance directors will do a run-through of the choreos with those who want this Saturday 10-12 am* [...]
5	11:52:29	RIINA	Oi onnea Karo ♡♡	*Happy birthday Karo ♡♡*
6	11:52:47	RIINA →4	Madonnasta vai molemmista?	*Of Madonna or both?*

6, Riina, one of the actors, contributes both to the casual and institutional lines of talk. The first message contributes to congratulating, while the second initiates a repair sequence concerning the choreography run-through that Elsa informed the members of in message 4. Thus, out of the various institutional issues of which Piia and Elsa inform the group, Riina acknowledges only the one that she considers problematic. This demonstrates how institutional messages of the reminding and informing type do not necessarily make a response conditionally relevant in group messaging. Previous studies have made similar observations in workplace e-mails (see Skovholt and Svennevig, 2013).

To conclude, this section has examined how parallel lines of talk are initiated in group messaging. It showed that, depending on the linguistic resource, initiation may be explicitly marked as a digression from prior talk (by misplacement markers), or motivated by the timeliness of the issue (by attention-getting devices). Moreover, we observed that the leaders use proactive action labels to accomplish *for the record* institutional actions and to separate them from the on-going casual talk. Overall, the use of these resources in contexts that there already have an active line of talk indicates that the digression is intentional and not caused by, for example, writing overlap as might often be the case in dyadic messaging (see Meredith, 2014: 197).

Our observations of co-participants take up digressions indicate that simultaneous lines of talk are an integral part of group messaging. That is, additional lines of talk are progressed in a fluid, routine-like fashion by utilizing such messaging practices as turn-splitting and reply-marking. Moreover, we noted that institutional actions of certain type may have a low response relevance in group messaging (cf. Stivers and Rossano, 2010).

Next, we shall take a closer look at how multiple lines of talk are managed in responding turns.

5. Responding to multiple lines of talk

In this section, we investigate instances in which the same participant responds successively to two different lines of talk. We concentrate on two features of two successive responses: (1) Whether the responses are produced in a single message or in two successive messages, and (2) Whether the responses are linked by the particle *ja* 'and'. We argue that these two choices are means of regulating the flow of the conversation by displaying an orientation to the mutual relationship between the two responses and between the two lines of talk.

Previous studies of messaging have observed that two (or even more) consecutive responses by the same participant may be produced in a single message or in a cluster of messages posted in close succession (Zitzen and Stein, 2004: 1012; König, 2019). According to Zitzen and Stein (2004), the latter practice is "often used for shifting topics and/or addressing different participants" and "is frequently found in multi-threaded chat conversation". Following Zitzen and Stein (2004), we refer to this practice as *turn-splitting*.[4] However, as we demonstrate, it is not always clear whether two consecutive SPPs by the same participants constitute a split turn or two separate turns.

In addition, when the participants in our data respond to two FPPs consecutively, they often link their consecutive SPPs using connective element *ja* 'and'. Previous studies of spoken interaction have shown that prefacing a turn with 'and' can serve to indicate that the turn and the action(s) it accomplishes belong to some larger agenda-based activity or course of action (Heritage and Sorjonen, 1994). In what follows, we argue that when responding

to two prior FPPs, 'and'-prefacing is a practice for displaying an orientation to a *response agenda*, that is, signaling an intention to respond to two pending but unrelated FPPs consecutively. Thus, 'and'-prefacing manages multiple lines of talk by bridging a gap between two SPPs that are unrelated but nevertheless produced successively (cf. Turk, 2004). Moreover, we propose that 'and' also serves a similar purpose also when it message-internally conjoins two SPPs that are produced within one message.

We begin with Example 4, which contains two responses that are produced in two different messages, the latter of which is also prefaced by *ja*. Before the extract, Elsa, who is the director of the play, has informed everyone that they will not have a reading rehearsal on that day as scheduled. They will have other kinds of exercises instead, but no-one is obliged to attend. This leads to one actor informing the group that he will not be coming, after which Ella inquires who is still coming (message 1). The focus of the analysis is in Sakke's messages 11 and 12.

Ella's inquiry (message 1) receives several responses from the other actors, including Karo who informs the group of when she is coming (message 6). Two minutes later, however, she posts again (message 7) and announces that she has hurt herself and will be taking it easy at the rehearsal. The message combines the activities of informing, as evidenced by the action label *ilmoitan* 'I inform', and troubles telling (see Jefferson 1988), as evidenced by the empathetic responses from others (see messages 8 and 12). Nearly 40 min after Elsa's informing, Sakke enters the discussion by posting two messages. In the first, he responds to Ella and confirms that he is also coming (message 11). In the second, posted less than two minutes later, he responds to Karo with a display of empathy (message 12). By producing the responses in separate messages, Sakke is treating the responses as different issues, that is, as belonging to different lines of talk (see also Zitzen and Stein, 2004: 1012). In addition to turn-splitting, Sakke prefaces his latter response with *ja* 'and', which invokes a sense of response agenda: the respondent displays that more than one response is pending and that he is now producing them one at a time. In other words, the 'and'-prefacing indicates that the successive responses belong to a series of pending responses.

Next, we turn to Example 5 in which two different FPPs are responded to with two separate messages, of which the latter message is not initiated with *ja* (messages 3 and 4).

The example begins with Karo posting a meme on Christmas stress based on a photo from the group's rehearsals (message 1). In message 2, Riina produces an affiliative response followed by a turn-unit which is treated as a departure by using the marker *PS*. In this turn-unit, the focus shifts to a more personal issue: Riina reveals that her parents are coming to the premier. Satu responds to Karo and Riina in two separate messages. In the first, Satu comments on Karo's meme about Christmas shopping stress, showing appreciation and displaying that she shares the feeling conveyed by the meme. The second response appears only 12 s after the first one. In this message, Satu displays a positive reaction to Riina's news. By contrast to Example 4, the message is not prefaced with *ja* 'and'. The omission of *ja*-prefacing suggests that the two responses are produced irrespective of each other, without them belonging to a shared response agenda. This interpretation is supported by the fact that Satu's first response (message 3) was posted only 27 s after Riina's message 2. By comparison, in Example 4 the cluster of two responses was posted with a considerable delay to both FPPs (appr. 30 min). Thus, it might well be that Satu started to respond to Karo's message 1 while Riina was still typing her message. If this is indeed the case, there are grounds to argue that the consecutive SPPs in messages 3 and 4 do not necessarily constitute a split turn but two single turns. Unfortunately, the logfile data does not provide information of writing overlap. Arguably, in

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[4] However, as Zitzen and Stein (2004) demonstrate, there are many types or uses of turn-splitting. For example, syntactic units of a simple turn accomplishing only one action may be transmitted in their own messages for the effect of holding the floor (ibid. 1008; see also Markman, 2015: 65–66).

Example 4

1	16:41:13	ELLA	Keitä on siis tulossa? Mä oon jo matkalla 😊	*So who's coming? I'm already on my way 😊*
((4 messages responding to Elsa and Ella omitted.))				
6	16:43:08	KARO	Mä tulen n. 18.30 !!	*I'll be there about 18.30 !!*
7	16:45:09	KARO	Ilmoitan jo nyt että pyllähdin eilen yliopiston portaissa lähtiessäni ja nilkkani hieman meni siinä rytäkässä😅Oon nyt tuen kanssa liikkeellä kun se ei mennyt liian pahasti, mutta ihan tarpeeks pahasti😫Otan siis muutamat treenit iisiä nyt tän kaa..	*I have to inform you that I fell yesterday on the stairs of the university when I was leaving and I hurt my ankle a bit😅I'm now going about with an [ankle] brace because it wasn't too bad, but bad enough😫So I'll be taking it easy for a couple of rehearsals..*
8	16:46:01	ELLA	Voi ei :<	*Oh no :<*
((2 messages to and by Karo omitted.))				
11	**17:18:57**	**SAKKE**	**Tulossa oon! ::)**	***I'm coming! :)***
12	**17:20:22**	**SAKKE**	**Ja voi hitsi, et siin kävikin lopulta noin pahasti karo, et tarttesit tuet ja kaikki :/ mut hyvä että muu kroppa pysy kunnossa**	***And darn it, that it was so bad after all karo, that you needed a brace and all :/ but it's good that you didn't injure anything else***
13	17:36:52	KARO	Esitin rohkeaa sulle ja kaleville eilen ku löysitte mut sieltä chillaamasta 😄	*I was acting brave in from of you and kalevi when you found me chilling there 😄*

places, our study would have benefitted from screen capture data (cf. Meredith 2019: 246 and references therein).

Next, we turn to two cases that contain responses to two different FPPs in one message. In the first case, the responses are produced in one message, which consists of one sentence. The response-parts are conjoined with *ja*. Previous studies, particularly on text messages, have referred to this message design pattern as "package" (Hutchby and Tanna, 2008). Package design was common in SMS conversations in the early 2000s, possibly because SMSs were often charged per message (ibid.), but smartphone messaging has the opposite tendency: users prefer to post multiple messages in succession (König, 2019: 614 and references therein). Our data seems to confirm this general preference, but it also seems that packaging may be favored in SPPs in certain multi-

Example 5

1	12:38:18	KARO	((A meme on Christmas stress, based on a photo from the rehearsals.))	
2	12:39:16	RIINA	Jep 😄 PS. Mun vanhemmat osti liput enskariin ja hulluna alkoi jännittämään!	*Yup 😄 PS. My parents bought tickets to the premiere and now I'm feeling really nervous!*
3	**12:39:43**	**SATU**	**Siis tunnelmani tällä hetkellä nimenomaan**	***That's exactly how I feel right now***
4	**12:39:55**	**SATU**	**Hyvä Riinan vanhemmat!**	***Go Riina's parents!***

Example 6

1	22:24:24	Aino	((A photo of a pig origami.))	
2	22:25:20	Riina	Parantumisia ja lepoa sulle Aino! 😌 PS. Ihana 🐷	*Get well soon and rest Aino! 😌* *P.S Lovely 🐷*
3	22:25:41	Karo	Paranemisia! 👀 ♡	*Get well soon! 👀 ♡*
4	22:38:11	Kalevi	Paranemisia Aino!	*Get well soon Aino!*
5	22:38:52	Kalevi	Halusin myös jakaa teille tämän hetken ennakkotehtäväfiilikset: ((Instagram link))	*I'd also like to share my current feelings about the preliminary assignment with ou: ((Instagram link))*
6	22:41:26	Riina	Apua, mikä tyyppi 😆 Tsemppiä tehtävien vääntöön!	*Oh my god, look at that a guy 😆* *Good luck with the assignments!*
((11 messages omitted.))				
18	**22:54:14**	**Niklas**	**Paranemisia Aino ja tsemppiä Kalevi!! 😃👊**	***Get well soon Aino and good luck Kalevi!! 😃👊***

activity contexts. Example 6 demonstrates this. It begins with a photo message by Aino. The others know, presumably due to an interaction that has happened outside of WhatsApp, that she is sick.

Aino's photo message is followed by get-well wishes from Riina, Karo and Kalevi (messages 2–4). In message 5, Kalevi initiates an additional line of talk by sending a link to an Instagram picture in order to convey his feelings about a preliminary assignment he is working on. The additional line is initiated by an action label and additive connective (*haluaisin myös jakaa* 'I'd also like to share'). Fifteen minutes after Kalevi's messages, Niklas responds to both Aino and Kalevi in one message (message 18). The first SPP wishes Aino well. The response is built around the same *paranemisia* phrase (lit. 'recoveries') as the others' previous parallel SPPs. This creates a tie not only to the FPP but also to the other's

parallel SPPs (see Section 6). The second response also expresses a wish, now directed at Kalevi. Thus, and in contrast to Examples 4 and 5, the two SPPs are now rather similar and connected in terms of the actions they accomplish. We suggest that this connectedness is reflected in and construed by the packaging of the two responsive well wishes into one message. Moreover, the conjoining of the wishes with 'and' suggests that they belong to the same response agenda ('Get well soon Aino and good luck Kalevi!! 😃👊').

We end this section with Example 7, which contains two SPPs packaged into a single message but without 'and' in between them. We argue that the omission of 'and' displays an orientation to the SPPs (and the overarching sequences) as merging or interlocking, that is, as connected in terms of activity. In the example, Sakke and Niklas ask whether the others could pick up the belongings

Example 7

1	20:38:05	Sakke	En tiedä aukeaako toi, mut löytyy kun hakee mimmit räppää :) hei mun juomapullo jäi sinne, sellanen sininen lasiputeli, arvostan jos joku voi sen napata mukaan =)	*I don't know if that opens, but you can find it by searching chicks rapping :) hey I left my bottle there, a kind of blue glass bottle, I'd appreciate it if someone could grab it =)*
2	20:43:48	Niklas	Hei perhana soikoon multa jäi sinne oikeestaan kaikki mahollinen 😂	*Hey bloody hell I actually left pretty much everything possible there 😂*
3	20.44.45	**Kalevi**	**Saken pullon voin ainakin napata. Mitä siulta Niklas jäi?**	***I can grab Sakke's bottle at least. What did you leave Niklas?***

they left at the rehearsal space (messages 1 and 2). In message 3, by producing a package response, Kalevi volunteers to help both of them.

In message 1, Sakke first continues a prior line of talk but then initiates an additional line of talk – a request sequence – by using *hei* as an attention-getting device (see Section 4). Five minutes later, Niklas initiates a parallel request sequence in a similar manner. However, whereas Sakke specified the item he had left behind ('a kind of blue glass bottle'), Niklas says he left "pretty much everything possible" behind. Within a minute, Kalevi sends a message in which he produces SPPs to both Sakke and Niklas. He responds in chronological order, first promising Sakke he would fulfill his request and then asking Niklas for clarifications on the items he had left. As with Example 6, we argue that the connectedness in terms of activity is signaled by the use of the packaging technique. However, the SPPs are now produced in their own graphological units (i.e. sentences), as signaled by the full stop and initial capital letters. The omission of 'and' between the SPPs seems to furthermore display an orientation to the SPPs as tightly intertwined and interlocking: the two requests are now being taken care of at the same time and as a single combined project. One can even argue that the first SPP is partly also addressed to Niklas, by the promise that 'at least' (*ainakin*) Sakke's bottle will be 'grabbed'. Thus, it is implied that Niklas' request may also be fulfilled.

To conclude, in this section we have shown that turn-splitting and 'and'-prefacing are practices utilized in multi-party messaging to respond to two different FPPs and to regulate the relationship between responses and the lines of talk. The use of turn-splitting displays an orientation to the strands of discussion as more or less disconnected from each other. 'And'-prefacing, in turn, serves to bridge the gap by indicating a response agenda, that is, an aim to respond to multiple pending FPPs at one go. When both practices are used, the two lines of talk are treated as highly disconnected. The opposite case – when neither of the practices are utilized – creates the impression that the participant is responding to two FPPs that are tightly intertwined and interlocking, that is, closely connected in terms of topic and/or action.

6. Responding to a non-adjacent first pair part

In this section, we focus on adjacency pairs in which the SPP is produced at a distance from respect to the targeted FPP. This means that between the adjacency pair parts are other, unrelated messages belonging to other line(s) of talk or responding in parallel to the same the FPP. The SPPs in focus can thus be interpreted as pending responses to still active or re-activated non-adjacent FPPs. Here, we are especially interested in how exactly these more or less distant SPPs are formulated and designed to secure the connection to the targeted FPP. Both platform-provided reply-marking and linguistic resources are employed in the data, such as addressing the recipient or recycling the core lexical elements of the FPP (see also Meredith, 2019).

In many of the non-adjacent responses in our data, only the reply-marking is employed to tie the response to a non-adjacent FPP. In these cases, the linguistic design of the responses resembles the design of those produced adjacently – that is, no explicit linguistic tying devices are used. Thus in terms of turn design, the immediately preceding turn(s) appear as "sequentially deleted" (see Jefferson, 1978: 229; also Section 4). However, the use of reply-marking does not necessarily mean that the connection of the pending SPP and targeted FPP would otherwise be lost. The mere syntactic and action-specific fittedness often creates a sufficient link to the targeted FPP, and the reply-marking mainly confirms this. We demonstrate this by analyzing Example 8. Prior to the extract, some of the group members have agreed to meet downtown for a coffee. Ilona asks in message 1 for more specific suggestions for a place to meet.

Message 2 by Ella is not a response to Ilona's inquiry. Instead, it is an SPP to an earlier FPP in which Ilona first invited the others to join her for a cup of coffee. Julius' message 3, which comes ten minutes later, in turn, is a response to Ilona's message 1. By using the reply-marking, Julius shows that he is aware of the non-adjacent position of his response in the sense of temporal distance (a gap of 15 min) and/or spatial distance (another message in between) (see König 2019: 616). The linguistic formulation of the message is done as if it was produced as an adjacent SPP; lexical tying techniques are not employed. The noun phrase *joku kiva kahvila* ('some nice café') gives minimal requested information to a question-word interrogative that seeks specific information (Fox and Thompson, 2010), and the adverb *mielellään* 'preferably' appears as responsive to Ilona's request for preferences. Even though the answer is not morphosyntactically fitted to Ilona's turn – it should be in the illative case (*johonkin kivaan kahvilaan* 'some-ILL nice-ILL cafe-ILL') to match the question word *mihin* 'where'-ILL – the relation to the question in message 1 is unambiguous. Moreover, Ella's just-prior turn does not make a response relevant, at least not

Example 8

01	16:21:35	Ilona	Ihanaa nähdä pian 😍♡ mihin mennään onx toiveita	*Lovely to see you soon 😍♡ where are we going do you have any preferences*
02	16:26:53	Ella	Mä en pääse ku oon tosiaan menossa kattoon pikkusiskon wanhoja 💃 mutta hyviä hupeja teille 😊	*I can't make it cause I'm going to see my little sister's prom 💃 but have a good time you guys 😊*
03	16:36:01 Julius →1		**Joku kiva kahvila 😁 mielellään jostain keskustan liepeiltä, kun mul on tosiaan matkalaukku raahattavana**	***Some nice café 😁 preferably somewhere downtown, cause I have a suitcase to lug around***
04	16:55:08	Elsa	joo käy	*yeah that's fine*

Julius' response. In this sense then, then, the response would be unambiguous even without the visual-technological tying. Thus the main motivation for its use here seems to be to demonstrate the writer's awareness of the visually non-adjacent position of the SPP and possibly also the temporal gap between the pair parts.

Example 8 represented a case in which a response to a non-adjacent FPP relied mainly on the reply-marking provided by the messaging platform. The next one, Example 9, offers a more complicated case in which lexical tying and visual response-marking are used variably and in successive FPPs that all respond to the same SPP. Thus, it appears that some users prefer to use response-marking, whereas others do not (see also Table 1 in Section 3). To get a better grasp of the reasons behind the variation between users, alternative methods such as interviews and analyses of screen capture data would be needed to complement the logfile-based analysis (see also Section 5). The example is representative of our data in that questions (both institutional and casual)

addressed to everyone are very common in the group. As the analysis shows, the subsequent SPPs are lexically tied not only to the FPP but also to the previous SPPs, displaying an orientation to responding as a multi-party activity that produces a series of SPPs.

The example begins with two messages by Elsa, the director of the play. She inquires whether the actors already have all parts of their costumes ready for the performance. Elsa first asks the actors to report whether something is still missing (message 1) and then makes another request by also asking those who already have everything in order to inform her of this (message 2). The latter message can thus be read as doing response mobilizing (see Stivers and Rossano, 2010).

Subsequently, five actors give positive responses to Elsa's inquiry. Elsa acknowledges most of the answers with a particle response (such as *jes* in message 4). The first two responses utilize reply-marking and lexical tying. In message 3, Ilona produces an SPP by simply recycling the inquiry's formulation *kaikki ok* 'every-

Example 9

01	13:14:47	ELSA	Läpäreissä pisti silmään et kaikilla teillä ei oo viel kaikkia vaatteita,kertokaa mulle mitä teiltä puuttuu (ja mahollisesti jos tiiätte onks se hallinnassa vai ei) ja koostan sit listan minnalle joka ei tiiä ihan tarkkaan mikä tiimiläisten tilanne.	*In the run-through I noticed that not everybody has all their clothes yet, tell me what you're missing (and possibly if you know whether or not it's sorted) and I'll compile a list for minna who doesn't know the exact situation of the team members.*
02	13:16:34	ELSA	ja laittakaa tähän kans kuittaus jos teil on kaikki ja kaikki ok niiden kaa	*and also let me know here if you have everything and they're all OK*
03	13:17:05	ILONA →2	Kaikki ok!	*Everything OK!*
04	13:17:38	ELSA	jes	*yes*
05	13:18:43	RIINA →2	Vähän korjauksia vielä, mutta muuten ok😊	*A little bit of fixing left, but otherwise ok😊*
06	13:19:20	ELSA	jees	*yep*
07	13:20:10	ALEKSI	Mulla ehkä pitäis fiksata sen mun paidan istuvuutta, muuten kaikki ok	*My shirt's fit maybe needs to be fixed, otherwise everything ok*
08	13:20:17	ELSA	jeeps	*yep*
09	13:34:29	ILONA	Ootteko vapaana 16–18? Ruokaa? Sirkushuveja?	*Are you guys free 16–18? Food? Circuses?*
10	13:34:43	AINO	Mä liityn huveihin!	*I'll join you for the circuses!*
11	13:35:05	KALEVI	Miulta löytyy kaikki vaatetus!	*I have all the clothing!*
((Nine messages omitted that progress the line of talk initiated by Ilona in message 9.))				
21	13:58:45	NIKLAS	Kaikki vaatteet ok! 👍	*All clothes are ok! 👍*
22	13:58:58	ELSA	hyvä	*good*

thing ok' (cf. message 2). In message 5, Riina reports what still needs to be done with her costume ('a little bit of fixing'). She concludes with the phrase *muuten ok* 'otherwise ok', which lexically connects the response not only to the FPP but also to Ilona's parallel SPP. The remaining three responses continue the use of lexical tying but, for one reason or another, do not employ reply-marking. In message 7, Aleksi responds by using a pattern that is very similar to Riina's (cf. message 5): He first reports what is still unfinished and then concludes with *muuten kaikki ok* 'otherwise everything ok'. Interestingly, the response is also prefaced with a first person pronoun (*mulla* 'in my possession', lit. 'I'-ADE), which can be seen as setting a contrastive focus and as building a further link to the prior SPPs in a list-like sequence.

In message 9, Ilona launches a new, unrelated line of talk by asking if anyone wants to join her for pre-rehearsal leisure activities. The turn consists of a pre-invitation ('are you guys free 16-18′) and two possibilities for activities to choose from ('Food? Circuses?'). In message 10, Aino responds by accepting the latter alternative ('I will join you for the circuses!'). In message 11, Kalevi joins in the conversation. He does not, however, respond to Ilona's invitation, but gives an answer to Elsa's prior inquiry. He deploys lexical tying by recycling the quantifying element *kaikki* 'all, everything'. He also explicates the whole that is being referred to (*kaikki vaatetus* 'all the clothing'). This choice is presumably motivated not only by the non-adjacency of the targeted FPP but also by the fact that Ilona's intervening FPP also makes a positive response relevant. Had Kalevi not used the explicit lexical tying, he could have been at risk of being misinterpreted. Moreover, as Elsa's question is an institutional one (presented in the role of director), it may be expected that the answers are given are as unambiguously as possible.

Kalevi's message is followed by nine messages that contribute to the 'bread and circuses' line of talk, initiated by Ilona. After this there are no posts for almost 20 min. Finally, in message 21, Niklas joins in and responds to Elsa's inquiry about clothing. He too recycles Elsa's original phrase *kaikki ok* but appends *vaatteet* 'clothes' into it (*kaikki vaatteet ok*). This formulation creates an additional link to a prior parallel SPP by Kalevi and, moreover, displays an orientation not only to the FPP but also to the other SPPs preceding it. Niklas does not use the reply-marking either.

In sum, the analyses in this section show that SPPs that are not adjacently produced, are typically accompanied by visual-technological and/or linguistic tying techniques. With regard to linguistic tying, we demonstrated that in multi-party messaging, links can also be made to prior SPPs that respond to the same FPP. This builds sequential coherence based on parallelism among messages that do similar responsive work. More generally, we observed that robust tying techniques are used in multi-party messaging regardless of whether or not there is an actual risk of misinterpretation. It is particularly interesting that the reply-marking that licences linguistically minimal remote responses is often used as an extra safety belt even in cases in which the linguistic and action-specific fittedness creates a sufficient link to the targeted FPP. In some cases, the response-marking seems to highlight the temporal (and visual) distance between the pair parts, whereas in other cases it mainly invokes the sense of a busy, multi-party message feed that is likely to cause disrupted adjacency (see Garcia and Jacobs, 1999). The latter pertains to the SPPs that are posted almost immediately after the FPP.

7. Discussion and conclusions

This paper has examined how multiple lines of talk – topics, sequences, larger activities – are managed in a mobile messaging group consisting of 13 members. As our analyses showed, group

messaging has adopted and evolved practices that allow for fluid and relatively effortless management of parallel activities within one common message feed. We also showed that participants do not treat multiple lines of talk as distractive, burdening or otherwise problematic. Rather – as messaging is often done "on and off" – they allow for efficient interaction in which participants can accomplish more at one go and then go offline again for a while. Arguably, the ease of managing multiple lines of talk in messaging is based on message permanence, which releases messaging from the temporal restrictions of spoken interaction. Indeed, in many forms of spoken interaction the presence of multiple lines of talk can lead to activities needing to be restarted, halted, paused, postponed, sometimes even abandoned – all which is related to the ephemeral nature of spoken language (see Haddington et al., 2014: 24–27).

In our data, the participants perhaps most clearly orient to several lines of talk when responding to more than one prior message consecutively (see Section 5). By resorting to a specific kind of responding practices, the participants may show an orientation to either separateness or interwovenness of the responses as well as the overarching lines of talk. With regard to initiations of additional lines of talk (see Section 4), we also observed that depending on the practices used, the participants can treat their initiation as a departure from the existing line of action, for example by using a misplacement marker. However, initiations can also be accomplished without acknowledging the other active line(s) of talk. We specifically observed that initiations formulated as urgent or institutional in nature can ignore the aspects of ongoing activity.

The practices and resources through which multiple lines of talk are accomplished in messaging appear as partly adapted, partly emergent. As we have shown, many (if not all) of the linguistic devices used in our data to manage activities are widely acknowledged and described in classic CA literature that deals with spoken interaction. Examples include misplacement markers, attention-getting devices and 'and'-prefaced turn design.[5] However, as prior studies have shown, in spoken interaction these devices are predominantly used for managing single courses of action, one at a time. In messaging interaction, by contrast, multiactivity appears as a norm, and linguistic devices are observably adapted to serve this purpose – they have become associated with new interactional practices. For example, misplacement markers are not used in our data to change one activity to another, as opposed to in spoken conversation, but rather to initiate an additional line of talk to be progressed in parallel with the prior one(s). Similarly, we showed that 'and'-prefacing is a resource that has been adapted in messaging to manage multiple lines of talk particularly in responses. In contrast, many previous studies on spoken interaction have described it as a coherence building device within one line of activity.

With regard to the practices and resources that have emerged as a reaction to the affordances of online platforms, our study confirms the findings of previous studies that a message as a transmission unit – or as a "pre-designed generic template" as Jovanovic and van Leeuwen (2018: 690) put it – is a basic and fundamental resource in organizing multiple lines of talk in messaging. That is, we demonstrated that participants in our data follow the principle that if two actions are not topically or sequentially connected to each other, they are produced in separate messages. However, as we argued, the opposite case – for example, producing two responses in a single message – is as important a practice for

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[5] Although each language offers a unique set of linguistic resources, it seems that many of the basic practices and resource types related to topic and sequence management are not unique to a specific language or culture. For example, the categories of misplacement markers or attention-getting devices are, in light of previous studies, not a unique feature of the Finnish language, nor is turn-splitting a unique feature of Finnish messaging interaction. However, we cannot say that all of these are absolute universals either.

managing multiple activities, as it displays orientation to the actions as interlinked and more or less intertwined.

An important aspect of sequential organization in current messaging platforms such as WhatsApp is the availability of reply-marking. However, the division of labor between automated and "manual" practices such as tying techniques still requires further research. In light of our data, one factor that complicates the analysis is that some users are very keen to utilize platform-provided reply-marking, whereas others may not use it even when responding to a very distant message. In other words, it is obvious that individual preferences and skills affect the use of platform-specific tools in sequence management. However, it is not easy to analyze these factors using CA methods alone – complementary approaches are needed, such as participant interviews (cf. Meredith, 2019: 253).

An additional aspect that requires future research is the differences in response relevance between action types in mobile messaging (cf. Stivers and Rossano, 2010). In our data, for example the director's and the vocal coach's announcements and reminders as well as the actors' informings of being late are typically not responded to – they are low in response relevance. Personal newstellings and meme amusements, in contrast, typically do receive responses, although not from all the participants. Thulin (2017: 12) also points this out in her interview-based study: the responsibility to respond in group messaging is placed on the group rather than the individual. That is, "there is usually someone else who has a little more time, and one can wait and see whether someone else is responding if one is busy at the moment" (ibid.). Furthermore, our data includes playful demands that are made extremely response-relevant by producing them "chorally" (cf. Lerner, 2002); a prime example is a case where several participants demand a new meme from another participant by posting exactly the same message one after another. It seems, then, that group messaging also opens up new dimensions for the study of the conditional relevance of responses.

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