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# “Congratulations, You’re on TV!”: Middle-space Performances of Live Tweeters during the FIFA World Cup

## Abstract

Social television has transformed the traditional role of the television viewers by providing ‘ordinary people’ access to the public stage. This article describes how public access to television affected the dialogues of Finnish tweeters on Twitter during the massive media event of the FIFA World Cup. Through the lens of digital conversation analysis, the study shows how the media publicity of tweets changed the direction of the interaction between tweeters and transformed their roles vis-à-vis the television show, making one of them into a ‘media flasher’ and the others viewers of his or her performance. The publicity was constructed as important through noticings, congratulations, and compliments, and in their responses to these actions the participants oriented to dilemmatic expectations of agreeing with the previous speaker and displaying modesty and authenticity. The activities of live tweeters can be seen as middle-space performances where ordinariness and celebrity are intertwined.

## Key words

Social television; live tweeting; broadcast talk; Twitter; media event; FIFA World Cup; digital conversation analysis

## 1 Introduction

Since media events have traditionally been viewed as fostering interaction among audiences, the integration of social media into television viewing in the case of sport mega events seems a natural line of development. While television once enabled access to the event, making it a main resource for interpersonal discussion as well as for a feeling of collective participation (Dayan and Katz, 1994: 94, 131), social media has transformed those living-room discussions or imagined relations with fellow watchers into a more widely visible interactional reality (Harrington et al., 2013: 405). Nowadays, television viewers can use different kinds of dual screens (e.g. laptops or smartphones) as additional media to complement their television viewing experience and express opinions or talk with other viewers about media events as they happen. In particular, *live tweeting* during media events has become an important practice for both audiences and producers, since Twitter as a channel enhances an important feature of media events – the feeling of ‘liveness’. (Bennett, 2012)

This study focuses on the participatory, interactive, and dialogical use of the combination of a traditional mass medium and social media, often called *social television* (e.g. Wohn and Na, 2011; Giglietto and Selva, 2014) in the context of FIFA World Cup broadcasts put out by Finland's national public service broadcasting company (Yle) in 2014. This paper demonstrates how social television constructs a shared virtual interaction space and how the audience of a media event act, react and interact in this space. A key feature in merging television and Twitter is the shared hashtag, in this case *#ylemmfutis* 'yleworldcup', that confirms the shared attention in the event, constructs a common ground for discussion and extends access not only to a wider Twitter audience but also, potentially, to the television audience.

Recently, social television has been studied by many researchers, who have provided insights into the use of Twitter during live television broadcasts mainly in the contexts of politics, sport and entertainment. A vast amount of research has used big data and focused for instance on mapping the networks of specific hashtags and peak uses of Twitter (e.g. Highfield et al., 2013; Alonso & Shiells 2013), as well as the content and tones of tweets during programs (e.g. Wohn and Na, 2011; Highfield, 2013; Giglietto and Selva, 2014; Yu & Wang, 2015). Much less attention has been paid to the actual core of social television, i.e., to the intersection between the traditional television broadcast and its tweeting audience. Only a few studies have investigated how the social media comments of the audience are (or are not) integrated into television shows by focusing on the parts of broadcasts where tweets are unfolded on screen. While Kroon Lundell (2014) has shown that webcasts produced by sports broadcasters have replaced one-way broadcasting with a more interactional form, the producers of traditional television have not exploited the full potential for interaction enabled by technological settings (Kroon Lundell, 2014; Laursen and Sandvik, 2014) and, as van Es (2016) notes, tweets on the television screen during broadcasts are often used more as an overlay than integrated into the television show itself. In this study, we approach tweets on the screen from a different perspective since we focus on the impact of television publicity on the subsequent interaction between peers on Twitter.

Although earlier studies (Wilson, 2011; Bennett, 2012; Highfield, 2013) have shown that public attention, including retweets and replies from fellow tweeters as well as tweets on the television screen during the program, may be the main reward for tweeters, there has been no detailed investigation of the effect of public attention on the interaction between tweeters. In this paper, we seek to fill this gap by investigating, through a case study, how the public access to television affects dialogues on Twitter. We approach the question in relation to audience participation shows

and reality TV and discuss the live tweeting practices as *middle-space performances* (Thornborrow 2015). The concept has been used to refer to practices that participants produce in reality TV shows, but it seems also to be appropriate for describing the social television talk, since live tweeters are engaged not only in the work of watching television but also in ‘the work of being watched’ (Thornborrow, 2015: 35, 44). According to Couldry (2003: 48), the crucial assumption is that media presence elevates one’s status, and therefore, as Thornborrow (2015: 44) notes, people in media are not doing performances of the ordinary but rather performances of the staged self. We ask how the ‘extended publicity’ (i.e. television publicity) shapes the interaction of live tweeters, how they orient to publicity, and how they perform themselves and treat others at the intersection of Twitter and television. This research problem will be approached through the lens of digital conversation analysis, which will be used as a methodological tool to show the ways participants in the situation ‘do interaction’.

## 2 Social television talk: breaking the frames of broadcast interaction

According to Hutchby (2006: 18), broadcast talk is a specific type of institutional talk characterized by the fact that its audience is separated from the production of the talk by space (and time). Thus, media talk is always necessarily *a performance* displayed not only to a studio audience but also, and primarily, to a home audience (Hutchby, 2014: 87). Chovanec (2015: 70) uses the concept of a *dual frame of reference* to emphasize the layered nature of interaction in public media. The first frame consists of the interlocutors in a studio discussion, but as soon as this interaction is mediated it becomes a media product that is consumed by a home audience, which constructs the second frame of interaction. In this frame, the studio discussion is echoed privately with co-viewers by the home audience but, traditionally, they have had no access to the first frame interaction. (Chovanec and Dynel, 2015: 6)

However, there is a long history of different kinds of audience participation shows where the audience is made visible (Hutchby, 2006: 39–40). Radio phone-ins, television talk shows and, later, reality television have been viewed as blurring the opposition between producers and audience (Livingstone and Lunt, 1994: 36) by letting ‘ordinary’ people have access to the public stage (Hutchby, 2006: 40; Thornborrow, 2015: 4). In all these cases, the one-way communication from

producers to audience has changed so that the previously passive audience has taken the role of producer and thereby been allowed into the first level interaction (Chovanec and Dynel, 2015: 6). However, when crossing from non-media to media (Couldry, 2003:51), the participants of audience engage in the ‘work of being watched’ (Thornborrow, 2015: 44) that affects how they perform themselves. Bignell (2005: 67) calls this state of being watched *a middle space* where participants take a role between ordinariness and celebrity. Thus, although the participation of audience in talk shows or reality TV shows is often seen as a performance of being ordinary, the television itself has the power to transform ordinary people into celebrities (Thornborrow, 2015: 35, 39; Couldry, 2003: 119–120).

In the age of digital media, the participation of audiences has become even more visible, and further blurred the distinction between professionals, experts, and lay participants (Thornborrow, 2015: 5). There is a vast amount of possibilities to be in public, and Twitter, for example, has been viewed as enabling *micro-celebrity practices* in which its users see themselves as public persona (Marwick, 2013: 114). O’Sullivan and Carr (2017) use the term *masspersonal communication* to refer to the intersection of mass and interpersonal communication, which is typical of, but not restricted to, social networking communication. Marwick and boyd (2010: 129) see social media audiences as differing from a faceless broadcast audience in that the audience of social media i.e., *the networked audience*, contains familiar faces as well: it is potentially both public and personal.

When used simultaneously with watching television, the social networking service Twitter provides a live channel for discussions and creates a *virtual lounge room* (Highfield et al., 2013), where a home audience can ‘do’ watching television together in real time, relocating their interpersonal conversation from the private to the public sphere (Giglietto and Selva, 2014). In live broadcasts, television viewers are encouraged to use a dedicated hashtag to participate and communicate through dual screening (Vaccari et al., 2015) either with each other or, across-the-frame, with producers (Chovanec, 2015: 72), thus potentially changing the dialogue from asynchronous, somewhat quasi-conversation to synchronous, live interplay between television and its users (Laursen and Sandvik, 2014). By adding a hashtag into their tweet, tweeters categorize it as a performance of, for example, watching televised football, and at the same time make it accessible not only to a broader Twitter audience but also, potentially, to a vast television audience (Papacharissi, 2012). This intersection of Twitter and television can be seen as a middle space between ordinariness and celebrity.

### 3 Data and methods

The data consist of tweets with the show-specific hashtag (*#ylemmfutis* ‘#yleworldcup’) and Yle broadcasts during the FIFA World Cup 2014 in Brazil. The hashtag was used as an official identifier that marked a tweet as part of a TV discussion and involved the tweeter to be part of a broad television audience. During the World Cup, viewers were encouraged to tweet using the hashtag *#ylemmfutis*, with “the best tweets” getting published on the screen and rewarded in the studio with jerseys, for example. Although the official hashtag basically enabled interaction with the broadcast, actual interaction between the studio and the audience remained little more than notional because the tweets on the screen were rarely acknowledged in the studio discussion.

The focus of this study is on the parts of broadcasts where tweets were displayed at the bottom of the television screen, as well as on the comments those public tweets received on Twitter. We began by collecting the tweets that were published on television during the FIFA World Cup. After that, we looked for those slightly over 200 tweets on Twitter by using a Twitter search tool, and selected those tweets that had got at least one comment on Twitter. From those 82 tweets we sifted out those that had received at least one comment specifically regarding the television appearance of the tweet. As a result, the number of tweets we analyzed in detail was 39. Through analyzing tweets on television and the comments on them in Twitter it is possible to elucidate what happens to dialogue forms in the nexus of television and Twitter, i.e., how the interaction changes when it circulates along the continuum of private and public spheres. Although all of the tweets with the *#ylemmfutis* hashtag are public, we have anonymized any details that might identify those involved.

Methodologically we rely on *digital conversation analysis* (Giles et al., 2015), which uses the concepts of conversation analysis in the analysis of technologically mediated communication. In particular, we use the concepts of adjacency pair and turn design. In conversation analysis, interaction is seen as a series of sequentially organized actions. That is, each turn of talk is understood in the context of the previous turn and sets the context for the next turn. Adjacency pairs (Schegloff and Sacks, 1973) are pairs of turns, such as question and answer of invitation and acceptance/rejection, that have an especially strong sequential relationship: a particular type of first pair part sets a normative expectation for a particular type of second pair part in the next turn.

In online settings, as Honeycutt and Herring (2009: 1-3) note, sequences are often disrupted by intervening messages, and there are specific ways, such as the @ sign, for maintaining coherence.

Also, sequential expectations are usually less normative (Page 2012). Page (2012) argues that Twitter often resembles broadcast talk, where participants are talking about the same topic at the same time rather than talking to each other. These characteristics can be seen in our data as well. However, in this study, we concentrate on moments where tweets are directed to particular recipients and where Twitter is therefore used interactively (see, Dayter, 2016: 15).

By ‘turn design’, conversation analysts mean the ways interactants shape their contributions to fit the sequential position, their intended action, and the recipient (Drew, 2012). In this respect it is important to note that in many online contexts the interaction takes a written form. As Arminen et al. (2016: 296–297) note, such a medium offers, to some extent, different affordances and constraints from face-to-face interaction. While in face-to-face interaction embodied resources are very important, users in digital media use punctuation (including emoticons), which may have partly similar functions to the embodied aspects of talk such as intonation, gaze and gestures. (Maiz-Arevalo, 2013: 52; Giles et al., 2015: 48)

Social television is seen in this article as an interactional unity that should be analyzed as such. In other words, television is a resource for further conversation on Twitter, and tweets with the dedicated hashtag can be discussed by hosts and experts in the television studio. This means that Twitter communication does not take place separately but is embedded within the activity of watching football together on television in real time. (See Reeves and Brown, 2016: 1055)

## 4 Analysis

In this article, we will argue that the media publicity of tweets changes the direction of the interaction between tweeters and transforms their roles vis-à-vis the television show, making one of them into a ‘media flasher’ and the others viewers of his or her performance. To begin with, in the next section, we will show that there is a shift in the frame of the interaction when the tweet unfolds on television: attention shifts from the content of the tweet to the media appearance itself. After that, we will examine how the publicity is constructed as important through three kinds of actions: noticings, congratulations and compliments. Then, we will look at responses to these actions and consider how the participants deal with dilemmas connected to modesty and authenticity. In the last section, we will show how the interactional patterns analyzed in this article construct middle-space performances where ordinariness and celebrity are intertwined.

Examples in the analysis are presented through screenshots from Twitter. The tweet that was published on television is presented at the top and the responses, which were visible only on Twitter, can be seen below that. Since the interest here is to examine how the dialogue changes and evolves after the television publicity, the emphasis is on the responses, and the television tweet is not always included in the example.

## 4.1 Publicity as shifting the frame of interaction

Television publicity plays a crucial role in the interaction between live tweeters. The extract below shows how the nature of the interaction changes when the tweet circulates from Twitter to the television screen, and then back to Twitter. It demonstrates how, before the tweet unfolds on the television screen, the discussion centers on the content of the tweet, but as soon as it is displayed on public mass media the publicity of the tweet becomes more important.

### Extract 1a

**EK**  
@k

Seuraa

On se jotenkin näille kisoille tyypillistä, että Kolumbian hyökkävällä 4-2-2-2:lla mennään pitkälle. Puolustamalla ei juhli. #ylemmfutis

TYÖKÄYS  
1

14.38 - 28. kesäkuuta 2014

4 1

**EK**  
@k  
It's somehow typical for this World Cup that the offensive 4-2-2-2 of Colombia goes far. No one wins by defending #yleworldcup

Vastaa

**II** @ii  
@k - 28. kesäkuuta 2014  
Ja samalla varsin tervetullut tuulahdus ainakin näin perusseuraajan silmin.

**EK** @k  
@ii - 28. kesäkuuta 2014  
Ehdottomasti. Aina se on katsojaystävällisempää kun mennään lujaa ja maaleja syntyy.

**VB** @vb  
@k - 28. kesäkuuta 2014  
@k onneks olkoon!;

**EK** @k  
@vb - 28. kesäkuuta 2014  
@vb Kiitos! Aurinko ja risukasa :)

**II** @ii  
@k And at the same time a breath of fresh air in the eyes of a casual viewer like me.

**EK** @k  
@ii Absolutely. It is always more viewer-friendly when going fast and scoring goals.

**VB** @vb  
@k Congratulations!;

**EK** @k  
@vb Thank you! The dog and its day :)



As an action, EK's original tweet could be seen as an assertion that, according to Vatanen (2014: 2019), is a turn in which the speaker "claims something about the world" and implies some kind of an opinion about that state of affairs. The first reply to the tweet (by II) continues the topic that EK has begun with his<sup>1</sup> assertion, as can be seen in the turn-initial particle *ja* 'and'. In fact, he produces an assessment of the state of affairs as asserted by EK that presupposes the truth of the assertion. In the third turn, EK produces an expected second pair part to an assessment, (see, Pomerantz, 1984), an agreeing second assessment. The agreement is signified with the intensifier *ehdottomasti* 'absolutely'.

During their interaction, the tweeters abandon the shared hashtag, but still their interaction constructs the frame of watching television football together. This watching frame is produced by their word choices such as *perusseuraaja* 'a casual viewer' and *katsojaystävällinen* 'viewer-friendly'. What they do here is negotiate the notion of entertaining television football.

The next sequence (between VB and EK) in Extract 1a looks different. What we see here is easily recognizable as an adjacency pair consisting of a congratulation as a first pair part, and thanking as a second pair part. Just on the basis of the Twitter interaction, however, it is difficult to see what EK is being congratulated on. It becomes understandable, though, when seen in the context of what is happening in the television studio. The congratulation uses television as a resource and orients to it as a mutually available context for the tweeters. The relevant turn of television is presented as Extract 1b.

#### Extract 1b

Studioisäntä: Ja sitten palkitaan päivän tviitti ja se palkitaan Kolumbian pelipaidalla. Sen on lähettänyt EK ja se kuuluu näin: [reads tweet] Mut eiks näin oo kuitenkin et yksittäisiä pelejä voidaan voittaa hyökkäämällä mutta mestaruudet puolustamalla?

Host: And then we'll reward the tweet of the day and it'll be rewarded with a jersey of Colombia. It is sent by EK and it goes like this: [reads tweet] But does it say that it's possible to win single games by attacking but the champions only by defending?

As we can see, the tweet becomes part of the studio discussion. However, the across-the-frame interaction produced between television and Twitter is still somewhat quasi-interactive, since there is no (visible) possibility for the tweeter to produce a third turn. However, as we see in Extract 1a, the television discussion acts as a sequential context for VB's congratulation on Twitter, which

assumes that the participants in the situation are oriented to a shared action: ‘doing’ watching television together. Thus, if we compare the sequences in Extract 1a, we can see that the first one uses the initiating turn (i.e. the content of EK’s tweet) as the primary context for the interaction, whereas the primary context of the second sequence is the tweet’s appearing on television. We can say that the frame of the discussion is transformed.

Ron Scollon’s (1998) notion of ‘with’ and ‘watch’ can be used to clarify this shift of frame. He uses Goffman’s term ‘with’ to refer to a grouping of more than one person whose members are perceived to be together, and ‘a watch’ to refer to a specific form of social interaction constituted by a group of people (watchers) with some spectacle as a central focus of their social activity (Scollon, 1998: 92). In the present data, we can see what Scollon (1998: 94) calls ‘a transformation of with into the watch’. The viewers of television football are – in relation to each other – the with, but as soon as a tweet unfolds on television, the tweeter becomes a spectacle by ‘posing’, i.e. appearing on television, and at the same time the other members of the audience become watchers of the poser. In other words, all the watchers of televised football become potential spectacles when they add a shared hashtag to their tweets, and this role of spectacle is actualized when the audience acknowledge “the public pose” and make an announcement about it.

## 4.2 Celebrating publicity through noticings, congratulations and compliments

In this section, we analyze the shifts of interactional frame more closely by investigating the types of sequences tweeters construct after the public appearance of a tweet (Table 1).

	typed response	implicit response	non-response	in total
<b>Noticings</b>	15 (60%)	7 (28%)	3 (12%)	25 (51%)
<b>Congratulations</b>	10 (59%)	5 (29%)	2 (12%)	17 (35%)
<b>Compliments</b>	6 (86%)	1 (14%)	0	7 (14%)
<b>In total</b>	30 (61%)	14 (29%)	5 (10%)	49 (100%)

**Table 1.** Sequences on Twitter after television publicity of one’s tweet.

There are three kinds of first pair parts that recur in the data: *noticings*, *congratulations* and *compliments*. As we already noted, the expectation for a second pair part in online discussions is not normative in the same way as it is in face-to-face interaction. In our data, the responses to noticings, congratulations, and compliments can also be roughly divided into three categories. Firstly, the co-participant may provide a “typed” response, that is, a separate written tweet. These responses

usually constitute proper second pair parts similar to those in face-to-face interactions, such as thanking as a second pair part of a congratulation or a compliment. Secondly, the co-participant may construct an *implicit response* (see, Maíz-Arévalo, 2013), which in this context means favoriting. Favoriting shows that the recipient has noticed the first pair part and takes a generally positive stance towards it. Finally, in some cases there is no response at all. In our data, however, non-responses are quite rare (see Table 1).

#### 4.2.1 Noticings

Harvey Sacks (1992: 90) introduced the concept of *environmental noticings*, that is, articulating the fact that one has noticed something in the physical environment. In the present data, tweeters tend to notice something on television, and thus they use television as a local resource for conversation (see Sacks, 1992: 92). Since the tweeters are using the shared hashtag *#ylemmfutis*, the television becomes part of their contextual configuration (Goodwin, 2000; Gerhardt, 2012: 51). Gerhardt (2012) shows how the viewers of football in the same space can use different kinds of verbal and body-behavioral markers (i.e., contextualization cues such as interjections or gaze) to show their complete orientation to the television and back to the focused talk-in-interaction.

In our case, however, the co-watchers are not physically co-located, and they therefore use different devices for pointing out the relevant context for their noticing and making them noticeable to co-participants as well. In the data, tweeters, firstly, use attention-getters such as *katos* ‘look’ or *kappas* ‘well well’. Secondly, they explicitly refer to the media text (*telkkarissa* ‘on TV’, *ruudussa* ‘on the screen’, *lähetyksessä* ‘in the broadcast’) or point to the context through deictic markers of co-presence (*tämä/tää* ‘this’, *toi* ‘that’). Extract 2 is a case in point.

#### Extract 2

OS @s

Ilokseni nään heti Litmasen studiossa. Toivottavasti päätyy komentoimaan myös selostuskoppiin. #mmfutis #ylemmfutis

8.45 - 16. kesäkuuta 2014

Seuraa

OS @s  
I'm delighted to notice that Litmanen is in the studio. Hopefully he ends up commenting in the announcer's booth too. #worldcup #yleworldcup

Twittaa vastauksesi

L @d · 16. kesäkuuta 2014  
Vastauksena käyttäjälle @s  
@s katos, pääsit telkkariin

OS @s · 16. kesäkuuta 2014  
@d haha en huomannu :D Mikä twiitti pääsi?

L @d · 16. kesäkuuta 2014  
@s toi jolle replysin

OS @s · 16. kesäkuuta 2014  
@d katos niinpä näkyy. #tuttutvsta

L @d @s look, you're on TV

OS @s @s haha I didn't notice :D Which tweet?

L @d @s the one I replied to

OS @s @d well well, so it looks like. #asseenontv

In this case, L uses the attention-getter *katos* 'look'. It is used to indicate that the speaker has suddenly become aware of something and attempts to draw the attention of the recipient (Hakulinen and Seppänen, 1992: 536). *Katos* functions here as an indexical that points to something in the environment. Then, after the attention-getter, the noticing announcement *pääsit televisioon* 'you got on TV' marks television as the relevant context for the recipient to search for the referent.

In the present data, the second pair parts of noticings seem to be acknowledgements that confirm tweeters' shared gaze. Often, the respondents of noticings also explicitly comment on whether they have noticed the item on television themselves. In Extract 2, OS first produces a laugh token and an explicit informing of not having noticed the tweet on the screen. Then there is a side sequence in which OS asks L to specify the relevant tweet, after which he produces a proper second pair part in which he acknowledges the noticing and displays a shared gaze.

The main function of noticings in the present data seems to be announcing and appreciating the television publicity of tweet(er)s. Thus, there is an orientation toward it being important for tweeters, firstly, to be on television and, secondly, to be aware of their television appearance.

Extract 3 illustrates how both of the participants display their orientation to the function of the noticing.

### Extract 3

**JE** @je  
Jamesin naamasta luettavissa millä tunteella tämä matsi pelattiin. Aivan uskomattoman hieno jalkapallo-ottelu! #mmfutis #ylemmfutis  
14.58 - 4. heinäkuuta 2014

**JE** @je  
It can be read on James' face how emotional this match was to play. What an incredibly great football game! #worldcup #yleworldcup

**RS** @rs  
@je pääsit telkkariin tällä twitillä

**JE** @je  
@rs Kappas! Itseltä meni ihan ohi. Kiitos tiedosta. #hetkijulkisuudessa

**RS** @rs  
@je ei mitään oli sen verran tuttu kuva ruudussa :D

**RS** @rs  
@je you were on TV with this tweet

**JE** @je  
@rs well well! I totally missed it. Thank you for the information. #themomentinpublicity

**RS** @rs  
@je no problem just saw a familiar face on the screen :D

Firstly, the relevance of noticing can be seen in the turn of the initiator. He uses a transitive verb *päästä* 'to get, be allowed', which implies that the tweet was intended for television appearance and succeeded in that purpose. The recipient accepts the noticeable character of the publicity by registering the noticing with *Kappas* 'well well', which indicates that something unexpected has happened, and by *kiitos tiedosta* 'thank you for the information', which indicates the relevance of the noticing.

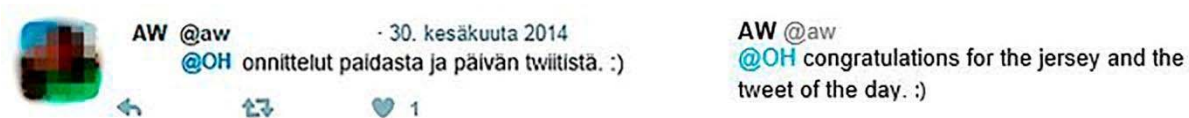
Tweeters may also reply by just clicking the favoriting ('like') button.<sup>2</sup> In this way, they construct a minimal effort response to the turn of noticing (West and Trester, 2013: 145) which, however, conveys that they feel positively about the noticing.

## 4.2.2 Congratulations

Another recurring first pair part in the data is congratulating, which is an action that celebrates a co-participant's achievement or some news that is particularly good for the co-participant (Pudlinski, 2008; Frith, 2012). Congratulations also express solidarity and support between interlocutors

(Dayter, 2016: 118). The typical congratulation in the data is produced with *onneksi olkoon/onnea* ‘congratulations/congrats’, either by itself or together with an explicit reason for the congratulation, like in Extract 4, below.

#### Extract 4



In the data, tweeters tend to congratulate one another after a public appearance on television for two reasons: for being rewarded in the broadcast or, simply, for ‘getting on television’. Extract 4 represents the first case. The reason for the congratulation is introduced by referring to the prize (*paidasta* ‘for the jersey’) and to the tweet (*päivän twiitistä* ‘for the tweet of the day’).

Congratulations in this context make thanking relevant in the next turn (for congratulations and thanks in another context, see Maynard, 1998: 366–367). However, as we discussed in the case of noticing, the congratulation can also be followed by favoriting the tweet, as is the case in Extract 4. In most cases, however, the second pair parts of congratulations are realized as verbal appreciation tokens (*kiitos/kiitti* ‘thank you’/‘thanks’, see Extract 5). As Leech (2014: 208) notes, the positive event worth congratulating can be either something achieved by the recipient or some good fortune over which the recipient had no control. In the previous extract, (4), the action of the tweeter is made visible in the congratulation and so the winning can be interpreted as an achievement. The next example (Extract 5) illustrates how the response to the congratulation turns the winning into a fluke.

#### Extract 5



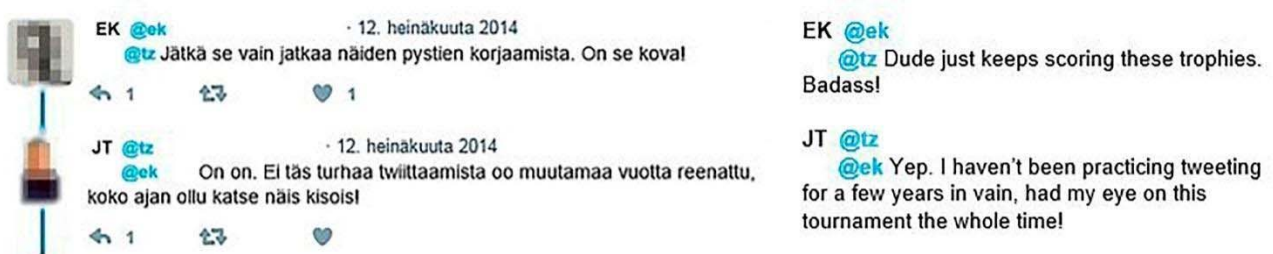


In Extract 5, EK accepts the congratulation with *kiitos!* ‘thank you!’, and after that he shows how the achievement of getting publicity should be interpreted. With the words *aurinko ja risukasa*, which literally mean ‘the sun and a pile of brushwood’, he is referring to the Finnish proverb *paistaa se päivä risukasaankin* ‘every dog has its day’, which recasts the reward or publicity as a lucky, extraordinary incident.

### 4.2.3 Compliments

Since compliments are seen as enhancing or maintaining social links, it seems obvious that they are likely to be present in social networking sites, where the social solidarity function takes center stage (Maíz-Arévalo, 2013: 50). There are compliments in our data as well. They are usually expressed with a positive adjective (e.g. *hieno* ‘great’, *varteenotettava* ‘worthy’; on the structure of Finnish compliments, see Etelämäki et al., 2013: 464–469) and oriented either to the tweeter or to the tweet. Like compliments generally (Golato, 2005: 96), compliments in the present data are often interwoven with other actions. The next extract (6) illustrates a combination of a noticing and a compliment, where the noticing is used as a preliminary that leads up to the main action (see Schegloff, 1980: 113).

#### Extract 6

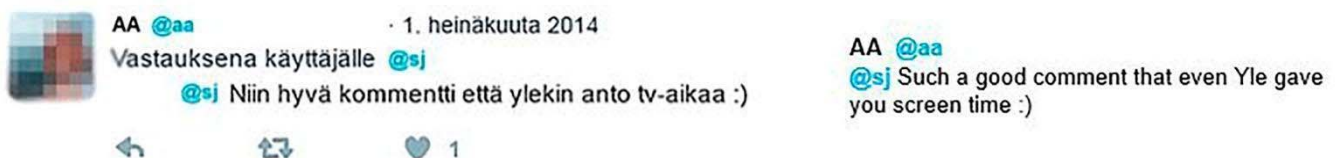


In Extract 6, the compliment given by EK refers to the performance of JT on television, which is made visible before the actual compliment with a noticing that explicates the grounds for giving the compliment. JT accepts the compliment by expressing agreement with its assertion. Pomerantz (1978: 82) has shown how compliments have both the status of a supportive action and the status of an assessment, and they can, as a response, be accepted or rejected like other supportive actions, and agreed or disagreed with like assessments. In her analysis of everyday English conversations (Pomerantz, 1978: 88), she notes that accepting is primary to agreeing in that usually, if only one of the alternative responses is present, it is the appreciation as a marker of acceptance. In his response,

however, JT emphasizes the assessment status of the compliment by agreeing with it and leaving the acceptance implicit. Thus, he humorously confirms the praise. However, in the context of social media, these kinds of playfully displayed confirmations of praise are quite common (see Maíz-Arévalo, 2013: 54, 56). After accepting the compliment, JT frames the state of affairs he has been complimented on in the context of his training for the accomplishment, and thus strengthens the playful tone of the tweet (see Golato, 2002: 562).

However, since compliments are often used together with noticings or congratulations, it is common for compliment recipients not to respond to the compliment as such at all, but rather orient to the other action within the compliment turn, for example the noticing. In fact, whereas congratulations and noticings can appear independently, compliments, in this context, seem to need another speech act to be fully understood. This is because compliments are fuzzier than noticings and congratulations in that the source of complimenting is not always the television publicity: they may be evaluating, for example, the style or content of the tweet as well. The next extract (7) demonstrates a case where a compliment is not explicitly directed towards celebrating the publicity the tweeter gets, but rather the television publicity is used as justification of the compliment.

#### Extract 7



In Extract 7, instead of the tweeter, the evaluative adjective refers to the ‘comment’, i.e. the content of the tweet. The comment is regarded as ‘good’ *hyvä* because it was shown on the television screen. Thus, the positive evaluation appraises the tweet, but it is validated by the fact that it has been shown on television. While the previous extract (6) was an example of a noticing as preliminary to a compliment, this extract (7) shows how the noticing and the compliment can merge together in such a way that the function of noticing is taken over by the compliment. As Golato (2005: 124) notes, compliments are well suited for that function, since they not only announce that the speaker has noticed something but also convey an immediate attitude towards what has been noticed. In this case, the response consists of just favoriting the tweet, which may be compared with thanking (see, Gorell and Bontcheva, 2016), and thus it accepts and implicitly agrees with the compliment (see, Pomerantz, 1978: 84).



### 4.3 Responding to the announcements of publicity: performing authenticity and modesty

In this section, we show how complicated the act of responding to noticings, congratulations and compliments is; the respondent is caught between dilemmatic expectations of, on the one hand, agreeing with the previous speaker and, on the other, displaying modesty and authenticity. In conversation analytic terms (see, Schegloff, 2007), all of these actions prefer, broadly speaking, some kind of an agreeing second pair part: acknowledgement of the newsworthiness of the noticing, thanks for the congratulation, acceptance of the compliment. At the same time, however, there is the respondent's need to come to terms with the preference for minimizing self-praise (see, Pomerantz, 1978). In politeness theory this dilemma is described as a clash between agreement and modesty (Leech, 2014: 189). Extract 8 demonstrates the dilemma.

#### Extract 8



Through first producing a noticing, and then congratulating NK, JJ treats the tweet's appearance in the broadcast as a public achievement worthy of congratulations. The recipient produces an agreeing response through thanking, but then downgrades the achievement by calling his tweet 'just my opinion', thus minimizing the self-praise. The hashtag *#hymiö* 'smiley' can be interpreted here as a paralinguistic cue that expresses politeness towards the initiator, and at the same time mitigates the conveyed claim (see, West and Trester 2013: 143).

As we saw in Extract 8, the modesty can be produced with a downgrading strategy. However, paradoxically, it can also be attained with the opposite strategy, of maximizing the self-praise (Maiz-Arevalo, 2013: 56), as in Extract 9.

#### Extract 9

TP @tp · 17. kesäkuuta 2014  
Vastauksena käyttäjälle @HA  
@HA huomaisitko twiittisi telkkarissa? Varteenotettava kommentti siis!

AH @HA · 17. kesäkuuta 2014  
@tp Huomasin! Enks mä nyt oo vähän niinku #somejulkkis?  
#hymiö

TP @tp · 17. kesäkuuta 2014  
@HA absof-ckinglutely. Nyt voitkin odottaa seuraajalukujen ampaisevan piiviin. Valtta tuo vastuun, muista kuitenkin se, somejulkkis 😊

AH @HA · 17. kesäkuuta 2014  
@tp Noh #huutelu jatkuu. Ehkä taas 400:n twiitin jälkeen saadaan ulos jotain fiksu!

TP @tp · 17. kesäkuuta 2014  
@HA vaatimattomuus on hyvä piirre ihmisessä, saatan toki odottaa jotain helmiä jo aikaisemminkin 😊

TP @tp  
@HA did you see your tweet on TV? So it was a worthy comment!

AH @HA  
@tp I did notice! I'm a bit like a #socialmediastar, aren't I? #smiley

TP @tp  
@HA absof-ckinglutely. Now you can expect your follower numbers to reach new heights. With great power comes great responsibility. Remember that, social media star 😊

AH @HA  
@tp well, the #heckling continues. Maybe again after 400 tweets you'll get to read something smart!

TP @tp  
@HA modesty is a virtue, although I might expect some gems even sooner 😊

The exchange in this extract (9) starts with a noticing, in question form, and a compliment that stresses the relevance of the tweet (*varteenotettava kommentti siis!* ‘a worthy comment then!’). The design of the compliment (particularly the particle *siis* ‘then’) implies that the tweet’s publicity on television makes it more noteworthy than it would be merely on Twitter. The recipient answers the question but then switches to a more humorous mode by enhancing the compliment through calling himself *#somejulkkis* ‘#socialmediastar’. This word choice could be seen as violating the principle of modesty, but as Maiz-Arévalo (2013: 48, 56) notes, enhanced compliments in social media are usually done playfully. Through maximizing the compliment, using a vernacular that differs from the usual language use of the tweeter, and supplementing the tweet with *#hymiö* ‘#smiley’ as a marker of irony, the tweeter guides the interlocutor toward orienting to the conversation less seriously.

In AH’s second turn, he shifts the frame from a humorous mode to a more serious one by using the discourse particle *noh* ‘well’. He also uses the hashtag *#huutelu* ‘#heckling’ to refer to his own tweets as idle attempts to attract public attention, and thus downgrades the praise of self. Similarly, tweeters in the data might underline the potential face threat of tweeting with the shared and public hashtag, for example through referring to their tweeting as ‘spamming’ or using hashtags such as *#kalastus* ‘#fishing’ to humorously point to their desire to get on television. As West and Trester

(2013: 140) note, the humorous mode of these kinds of exchange arises from the fact that in social media, participants are usually expected to avoid such face-threatening acts.

Partly intertwined with the call for modesty is the question of authenticity. As Tolson (2010: 277) notes, there has always been critical debate in the mass media about the sincerity of celebrities ‘being themselves’ or putting on an act. In the present data, the question of authenticity concerns the issue of whether the tweeter is tweeting like he or she would tweet without the possibility of a television appearance and a reward or whether he or she is “fishing” for the publicity by tweeting in a way that is likely to attract attention. Extract 8 can also be interpreted in the light of authenticity: the phrase ‘I only expressed my opinion’ can be seen as a justification that defends the tweeter against claims of inauthenticity. Also, laughter in responses can be used to show modesty and authenticity.

#### Extract 10



In Extract 10, JI responds to VH’s noticing with the question *oliko* ‘was it’ and onomatopoeia laughter. The laughter can be seen as a strategy for minimizing a face threat in that it displays the fact that the tweeter takes the publicity ‘lightly’ (see, Brown and Levinson, 1987: 103). However, laughter may be ambiguous: it can also indicate closeness (West and Trester, 2013). In Extract 10, also the question *oliko?* ‘was it?’ can be viewed as constructing an authentic self since it makes the appearance on television seem like an exceptional situation that came as surprise to the tweeter, thus implying that the tweeter was not chasing media attention.

We can see, then, that ending up on television may be dilemmatic for the tweeter: while it can be seen as an accomplishment, it can also be viewed by the audience as *famewhoring* (Marwick, 2013:

134). i.e. pursuing media fame. Doing a tweet with the shared hashtag is a delicate act that can raise questions about the authenticity of the self. In the next section, we zoom out to view the tweeters' actions in the larger context of institutional television talk and in the light of micro-celebrity, and discuss them as practices through which tweeters together with their co-tweeters and Yle broadcast participants display their role between ordinariness and celebrity.

#### 4.4 Tweeters' actions as middle-space performances

In his well-known lecture, Sacks (1984) introduced the idea that one of people's basic orientations is 'doing being ordinary': that is, through their conduct in everyday life and the way they tell stories, they work toward appearing ordinary. He also remarks that we may see celebrities as different, as exceptions that are 'entitled' to be non-ordinary. The concept of ordinary people has also been used to refer to lay participants in broadcast talk, but as Bignell (2005: 67) observes, an appearance on television makes ordinary people 'not ordinary like the rest of us'. As Tolson (2010) points out, publicity offers a promise of *celebrification*, which can be seen here as a transformation of withs into the watch (Scollon, 1998). In other words, a member of a tweeting audience becomes a member of a spectacle as soon as his or her tweet has unfolded on the television screen and been noticed and announced by another member of the tweeting audience. Since ordinary people on television do things that are not ordinary, the middle space performances of 'media flashers' are seen rather as performances of a staged self (Thornborrow, 2015: 16, 34). In the present data, live tweeters seem to be aware of the celebrification process and they tend to parody the famewhoring media culture by producing hyperbolic performances of celebrity.

##### Extract 11



In Extract 11, the affective exclamation *Iih!* parodies people's thrilled behavior toward celebrities and thereby turns the situation of watching television together into an asymmetry in which 'I as an audience am watching you as a spectacle' (see Scollon, 1998: 98). Through orienting to a tweeter's appearance on television as a noticeable event, MV highlights the role of the tweeter as a poser on the stage, unlike the rest of us. However, live tweeters tend to consider tweeters on television not only as performers but also as watchers of television football, like the rest of the audience. The next

example demonstrates how tweeters as co-watchers negotiate the roles of spectacle and watcher together.

### Extract 12



In Extract 12, the parodied role is displayed by the staged tweeter himself through the hashtags *#julkkis* ‘#celeb’ and *#nimmarit* ‘#autographs’. Before that, with her tweet, AM offers HM the possible position of spectacle, but does it through hedges (*taisi* ‘I think’, *tai sit näin näkyjä* ‘maybe I’m just seeing things’) that invite HM to join in the defining of his status. These examples show how live tweeters routinely accomplish the roles of both ‘ordinary’ and ‘not ordinary like the rest of us’ in interaction. Thus, returning to Sacks (1984), we can say that they display that they are not really and fully ‘entitled’ to ‘doing’ being celebrities. These kinds of parodied forms accentuate the mediated (self-)presentation that often evolves into a carnival that emphasizes both the importance and the impossibility of authenticity (Papacharissi, 2012).

However, the activity of appreciating publicity demonstrates how the traditional roles of broadcast talk are renewed rather than totally inverted through social television. Commenting on someone’s appearance on television implies that the appearance is regarded as a departure from socio-cultural norms; i.e., it is not common to see a fellow tweeter on a television screen with well-known media people, and that makes it worth commenting. Thus, through middle-space performances live tweeters negotiate the boundary between ‘media world’ and ‘ordinary world’ and make it visible (see Couldry, 2003: 119–120). As Page (2012) and van Es (2016) note, the blurring of the line between producer and audience on social television is mostly quite superficial, because live tweeters are still positioned as consumers who are responding to mainstream media content.

## 5 Conclusions

In this article, through focusing on tweets that appear on the television screen and their comments on Twitter, we have drilled down to the core of social television and shown how television is used as a local resource for tweeters who are watching televised football together. The key contribution of this paper has been to demonstrate how live tweeters use the shared hashtag provided by a broadcasting company as an affordance to construct a frame of publicity where the media attention given to someone's tweet fosters interpersonal interaction among tweeters. Thus, while the results of this paper are in line with the findings of van Es (2016) that the interaction between broadcast and tweeter remains mainly ostensible, the social function of live tweeting is still highlighted among co-watchers, since tweeters treat the tweets on the screen as accomplishments through supportive actions like noticings and congratulations. The practices of live tweeting are seen in this study as middle-space performances (Thornborrow, 2015) through which participants become noticeable for the rest of the audience. Our findings support the idea of earlier studies (Couldry 2003; Thornborrow 2015) that media presence is seen as significant and, consequently, people crossing into television are seen doing watchable things that are not ordinary. However, the results of this study show that, for tweeters, the middle space between ordinariness and celebrity is a delicate position, in which they use different kinds of practices to maintain their authenticity while still 'doing' being on TV. Regarding the idea of 'media as a valued place' (Couldry, 2003: 119), this study further suggests that commenting routinely on one's television appearance demonstrates the valued status of traditional television in comparison to Twitter.

Also, our study shows that live tweeters constantly move across different contexts and media forms. They use the affordances of Twitter (e.g. @ and #) to constantly adjust the contextual configuration (Goodwin, 2000) by pointing out which context is relevant at any given moment, and co-tweeters monitor these changes moment by moment. This shows how dual screening has hyper-mediatized the practices of consuming media events: in our case, live tweeters routinely engage in the work of not just 'doing watching televised football together' but, importantly, doing it across media settings. By using the asynchronous channel of Twitter as a 'virtual lounge room' (Highfield et al., 2013), tweeters also highlight the requirement of immediacy, which makes the conversation closer to a synchronous form of communication and restores the feeling of liveness.

In recent discussion about the impacts of multiple screens and platforms on media events, some commentators have emphasized the fragmentation of media events (Couldry et al., 2010). However, the findings of this article are in line with the study of a mediated sport event by Hutchins and Sanderson (2017), who demonstrated the centrality of television and showed that the experience of



the event is rather enhanced or complemented by technological affordances than undermined or fragmented by them. The simultaneous usage of Twitter and television is needed if one wishes to keep track of the relevant context of the Twitter exchanges and produce relevant contributions to those exchanges. Actions on Twitter and television are thus linked together into organized sequences, emphasizing the dual role of the audience as both media consumers and producers.

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## Footnotes

1. We use gender-specific pronouns to refer to tweeters who self-identify as male or female through using first names or usernames that are conventionally understood as referring to a specific gender.
2. Twitter changed the star icon for favorites to a heart and started to call it ‘like’ in 2015. The data extracts were captured in 2017, and so the stars are here represented as hearts.

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