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Research Article

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Interactional means of teaming up: enacting the features of contemporary working life in a theater performance

Abstract: The article examines how the aspects of the social world are enacted in a theater play. The data come from a videotaped performance of a professional theater, portraying a story about a workplace organization going through a personnel training program. The aim of the study is to show how the core theme of the play – the teaming up of the personnel – is constructed in the live performance through a range of interactional means. By focusing on four core episodes of the play, the study on the one hand points out to the multiple changes taking place both within and between the different episodes of the play. On the other hand, the episodes of collective action involving the semiotic resources of singing and dancing are shown to represent the ideals of teamwork in distinct ways. The study contributes to the understanding of socially and politically oriented theater as a distinct, pre-rehearsed social setting and the means and practices that it deploys when enacting the aspects of the contemporary societal issues.

Keywords: collective action; enacting; multimodality; teamwork; theater

1 Introduction

Human social life is inherently based on everyday social encounters where the participants construct shared social worlds with different mundane and institutional situations, tasks and roles in and through situated social interaction. However, not all the encounters are naturally occurring, but some of them specifically aim at simulating the aspects of the real social world. These include various kinds of acted and role-playing settings that are used, for example, for professional training and assessment purposes (Stokoe 2013; Stokoe et al. 2019). Theater, and more specifically, realistic theater, also stands on such simulation. However, unlike in training settings where the authenticity of the simulation is the core issue, in theater one could rather talk about 'authenticating conventions' (Burns 1972; Hazel 2015).

In other words, in theater performance, the audience is presented with a scene where the social actions of their life-world are enacted and made recognizable through the staged actions of the theater practitioners. In order for this to happen, the viewers have to acknowledge the reciprocal relation between the real world and the interactional construction unfolding in front of them. This, in turn, requires the theater practitioners to mobilize their understanding of the social world and to make it intersubjectively accessible to one another. This is accomplished during the rehearsal period as the practitioners jointly pursue the embodied and temporal representation of specific real-world situations originally depicted in the written script (Hazel 2015). However, in this way, the final performance is not a mere reflection of the social world, but a joint interpretation and an analysis of the social reality and human behavior that highlights certain aspects of them for the sake of artistic purposes.

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In this paper, we investigate theater as this kind of *enactment* of the social world and approach it as a special kind of social setting where the normative orders of everyday social encounters and interaction are interpreted and performed via the staged actions of the practitioners. Methodologically, our study draws on multimodal conversation analysis, which itself examines how the participants achieve and sustain an inter-subjective social world as their understanding about what is happening is publicly displayed and updated on a turn-by-turn basis. In previous conversation analytical research, theater has received very little attention. Among few studies, Hazel (2015, also 2018) has examined how the issues connected with medical practice are portrayed in dramatized representations of healthcare provision. By studying the practice where the partici-pants discuss the sections of the staging, he shows how the nuances of everyday interaction are actively scrutinized and the formation of social actions modified during the theater rehearsals. Similarly, Schmidt (2018) has investigated the rehearsal period and the interplay between fleeting and endurable resources of interaction in the temporal organization of the play. Moreover, Broth (2011) has analyzed audience responses, such as laughter, during the performance and the way in which the members of the audience negotiate these collective actions with each other and in relation to the unfolding of the play.

However, while the previous studies have focused on the interaction between the actors and the audience or the making of the theater performance, in this article, we will examine the actual performance. Our interest lies in the rehearsed and performative nature of the show: the aim of our study is to show how the theater practitioners employ various kinds of semiotic resources available in this social setting in order to create pre-agreed interac-tional compositions that convey certain meanings. Our data come from a videotaped performance of a profes-sional theater in Finland, telling a story about a workplace organization that undergoes a personnel training program delivered by a consulting company. One of the play's core themes and story-lines is the teaming-up of the personnel during the training. We will analyze how this is constructed in the play through a range of interactional means so that it not only becomes a recognizable social phenomenon but also appears in a critical light.

Teamwork has become a prevailing way to organize production in post-industrial society, which puts a strong emphasis on relational, intercorporeal – and affective – aspects of human action for the sake of value creation and successful outcome of work processes. As noted by Karppi et al. (2016, p. 9), in contemporary capitalist economies, affect and affection are organized, created and maintained for the needs of production so that the human capacities 'to affect and become affected are transformed – into managerial strategies.' In this light, the post-bureaucratic organizations (Heckscher 1994; Heckscher and Adler 2007; Iedema 2003) are not managed through the conventional hierarchical structures, but rather understood to manage themselves by utilizing the workers' engagement with each other and the joint task at hand. The political philosophers Hardt and Negri (2009, p. 173) have compared this kind of self-organizing team to an 'orchestra that stays in rhythm without a conductor' – a form of social organization that could be described as a spontaneous, collegially organized system based on intensified interaction and bodily resonance. Respectively, it has been discussed how the workers' inability to make use of such intercorporeal and affective dimensions of their work may have fatal consequences: Koski (2016), for example, has connected the fall of Nokia brand to the loss of the mutual functionality of the product development teams, materialized in their members' lack of 'tuning in' with each other.

All in all, it could be said that in late capitalism the centrality of teamwork has become a hegemonic discourse across organizations and different fields. Iedema and Scheeres (2003; see also Cameron 2000) have, for example, shown how workplace organizations as diverse as factories and hospitals have deployed the special discursive strategies of 'team building devices' that oblige the workers to reflect and renegotiate their knowing and doing. For many professions, 'teamwork' thus represents a mundane understanding of their ways of communicating, famously described by Peräkylä and Vehviläinen (2003) as professional stocks of interactional knowledge. These kinds of normative models concerning the way professional interaction is carried out form a central part of the knowledge base of various specialized professions and may range from general descriptions to refined theories and instructions – becoming often particularly visible in professional training and development programs.

From the point of view of social interaction, the elemental quality of the team work is that it involves more than two participants. More specifically, in teams, the social actions are accomplished by an ensemble of participants who also have a shared accountability for the produced action (Djordjilovic, 2012; see also Kangasharju 1996; Lerner 1993). In workplace settings, such interactional collectivities may emerge

recurrently across different interactions and thus display an institutional team identity (Djordjilovic 2012). Teaming can also be predominantly embodied. Hindmarsh and Pilnick (2007) have, for example, analyzed the interactional organization of teamwork in anaesthesia and discussed the concept of intercorporeal knowing – the team members' orientation to each other's bodies and their ability to read and act on the bodily actions – in the coordination of the team's work.

While all joint action in human social action implies a high level of coordination of behavior, there are two fundamentally different frameworks for such coordination to happen (Stevanovic and Peräkylä). In spoken conversation, in particular, joint action is largely organized in terms of stable trajectories of initiative action (e.g., proposals, offers, and invitations) and responsive action (e.g., acceptances and rejections). This *sequential framework of interactional coordination* involves, not only a temporal, but also a causal-conditional relationship between actions, participants imposing constraints on each other in terms of their next actions (Enfield 2011). From the point of view of this framework, teamwork consists of well-organized and smoothly unfolding sequences of interaction, where one participant at the time occupies the role of a powerful agent who controls the course of joint action.

In addition to the sequential framework of turn-taking, coordination of joint action may also happen as the *concurrent framework of interactional coordination*. This framework is not absent from spoken conversations. Mother-infant interaction is characterized by simultaneous vocalizations, these frequently coinciding with positive affective expressions (Beebe et al. 1979). Women engaged in single-sex talk with friends have been shown to produce a lot of overlapping talk (Coates 1994), overlap more generally characterizing instances of agreement (Goodwin and Goodwin 1987; Vatanen 2014). Furthermore, participants in interaction frequently smile and laugh together (Hatfield et al. 1992) and synchronize their body sways when negotiating conversational transitions (Stevanovic et al. 2017). Yet, it is evident that the home environment for concurrent interactional behavior is the collective production of sound and movement through singing, playing, and dancing, where various rhythmic elements that can be used as a resource of synchronization (Durkheim 2001 [1912]; Heider and Warner 2010; McNeill 1995; Phillips-Silver and Keller 2012). From the point of view of this framework, teamwork is characterized by the fusion of individual agents into a collective agent in terms of "shared intentionality" (Tomasello and Carpenter 2007).

In this respect, theater is a special kind of social setting in as much as it employs multiple semiotic resources that are usually not available in ordinary social situations. These include, among others, music and other rhythmic elements that can be used to synchronize the actions of the participants. Because of this, theater acts as a special kind of locus for collective action where the ideals of teaming can be opened up and conveyed to the recipients in particularly prominent and also critical ways. Our study thus contributes to the overall understanding of socially and politically oriented theater as a distinct social setting and the means and practices that it deploys when enacting the aspects of the contemporary societal issues. Moreover, it suggests new methodological approaches by examining social interaction and the process of meaning making in a pre-rehearsed setting.

Before proceeding to the analysis, we will introduce our data and method more closely. This is followed by the analytical sections. In conclusion, we will recap our findings and reflect on how the interactional resources theater offers can be used to open up the dimensions of collective action and also to create critical representation of it.

2 Data and method

The data for the study come from a musical *Ansa* that ran at the Jyväskylä City Theater in Finland during the autumn 2016 and the spring 2017. In the research project, one of the actual shows of the musical was videotaped by two cameras.[1] The musical tells a story about a middle-aged woman called Ansa, who works in the production

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1 The musical was a third adaptation of the play written by Finnish playwright and director Sirkku Peltola. Director: Fiikka Forsman. Music: Iiro Rantala. Song texts: Heikki Salo. Choreography: Sonja Packalén. Initially, one of the shows was videotaped for the purposes of another article (see Nissi & Dlaske, 2020).

line of a muesli bar factory with her fellow workers. At the beginning of the play, the factory workers are presented as a group of employees reasonably satisfied with their individual lives and for whom the work at the factory means most of all a regular income. However, this all changes when the factory management wants to increase the productivity of the company and hires a consultant to deliver a personnel training program. The business consultant from *Fenix Nova Psychodynamic Consultation* arrives and brings with him new ways of understanding and organizing work. All the workers go through a training program called *Kaikki peliin* ('Giving your all') and their relation to work and each other transforms – this is particularly the case with Ansa. However, in the end, the factory is closed down as the production is moved abroad and the workers lose their jobs. Ansa becomes disillusioned and kills the consultant. The play finishes as she is arrested.

In the play, the main story line revolves around the consultant, Ansa and their emerging relationship, and on one level the play can be viewed as a story about a lonely woman who discovers her romantic side during the training. Eventually this grows into an allegory of the spirit and processes of contemporary capitalism so that the play appears as a critical commentary on societal developments and a satire on contemporary management techniques (See Nissi and Dlaske 2020). However, this change process of Ansa and her developing relationship with the consultant is echoed by another salient story line, namely, teaming up of the personnel during the training, which is in the analytical focus of this article. In order to study that, we identified the scenes where such teaming particularly occurs and chose for a closer examination four episodes (each approx. 4–10 min) that involved all or several factory workers. These episodes take place at the beginning, middle, and end of the storyline and present the following events (Figure 1):

Episode I: The consultant arrives and delivers an opening talk, the training begins

Episode II: The consultant assigns an exercise, the training is underway

Episode III: The consultant gives the employees a certificate, the training finishes

Episode IV: The employees have been fired and the consultant killed, Ansa is arrested.

Figure 1: The episodes analyzed in the study.

In analyzing the episodes, we focused on the question of how the impression of 'collectivity' is achieved in and through social interaction of these multiparty scenes. By doing so, we noticed that there were multiple changes taking place both within single episodes and between them, during the longitudinal unfolding of the performance. These changes had to do, for example, with the design of the consultant's turns and the organization of the recipient action. However, the analysis of the episodes proved challenging for the reason that all the scenes involved a shift from a dialogue to singing and dancing. Initially, we treated the latter as the separate components of the scenes and extended our investigation only to the point where they began. However, this seemed to leave the core elements of the play outside the analysis, after which we decided to also examine music and choreographic movement – and instead to actually approach them as semiotic resources specific to this social setting.

Our study draws on the understanding of social interaction that is essentially informed by multimodal conversation analysis. As a method, however, conversation analysis cannot be directly applied to the study of theater interaction, but it needs to be both modified and complemented with approaches more specifically focusing on the way meanings are constructed and conveyed through the ensemble of different semiotic modes (e.g. Kress 2010, Kress and van Leeuwen 2001). In this article, we also make use of this social semiotic approach in as much as we view the play as a cultural product where various semiotic resources are employed to construct a representation of the social world, in this case, the dimensions of teamwork and collective action, and actually analyze how the social world becomes signified in these representations. Here, we particularly focus on the meaning potential and interplay between talk, embodied action and music and sound, namely, the use of rhythm, melody and phrasing (see Machin 2013).

When it comes to conversation analysis, our focus lies in how participants convey specific understandings of the world by the means of collective action. The scripted nature of the action, however, poses limits to the standard application of the so-called next-turn proof procedure, where next turns are treated as evidence of the

participants' own orientations to prior turns (Sacks et al.1974). Instead, our approach is better in line with the recent discussions on action ascription and action formation (Levinson 2013), where the focus has been on how people design their actions to be recognizable as requests, invitations, or proposals. In this study, we focus on how joint action has been designed (by writer, director, actors, etc.) so as to be able to convey the emergence of that action from a collectivity. From this point of view, our study aligns with conversation-analytic research on collective action in settings such as dance classes (Broth and Keevallik 2014), orchestra (Weeks 1996), and comedy performances (Cain 2018), although, in our study, the interaction is scripted to a significantly larger extent than is the case in these studies.

Conversation-analytic understanding of social interaction is important for the present considerations in that it offers an understanding of the multitude of resources that participants may use in the sequential construction of their joint activities, and thus, in the creation of real world representations in the context of the play. We consider this basic idea important, independent of whether these activities are fully "authored" by the participants in interaction or merely "animated," the persons responsible for their design (e.g., writer, director) being external to the interaction (Goffman 1981, pp. 124–157).

3 Analysis of the representation of teaming up

In this section, we will examine how the teaming up of the personnel is enacted in the theater performance as a form of collective action. By focusing on the four episodes mentioned above, we will at first analyze the transitions to collective action, shown in the shifts from a dialogue to singing and dancing. Secondly, we will investigate collective action during the actual musical pieces within the episodes.

3.1 Transitions to collective action

As already mentioned, all the episodes include the participants' joint singing or dancing. In terms of interaction, this means that there is a transition to synchronous action accomplished by the collectivity of the participants in their staged roles of 'workers' taking part in the training. However, such collective action does not commence straight from the musical pieces. Instead, the synchronization of action is a phased process that begins to emerge already during the dialogue – until it finally reaches the peak in joint singing and dancing.

This can be seen from Extract 1, which comes from the first episode. In the play, the training has just started and the consultant is delivering his first talk. At the beginning of the extract, he discloses the main goal of the training, the formation of a team (lines 1–2), followed by the workers' repair initiator (line 3). Here, the workers produce a collective vocalization, but do not align with the training activity – rather the repetition is used to display surprise and disbelief (see Svennevig 2004). Spatially, they are also detached from the consultant. However, as he begins to walk while producing a definition of the 'team' (lines 4–5), some workers follow him. In this way, they actually perform the core content of the consultant's definition, a self-initiated, collective action that is nevertheless concordant with the views of the superior. Further changes in the organization of action occur after Ansa makes an unrelated comment and then apologizes for interruption (line 7).

Extract 1.   Episode 1.
    01   Con: **>ME TEEMME TEISTÄ ARVON ROUVAT JA**
                 >WE WILL MAKE YOU DEAR LADIES AND
    02   **HERRAT TÄMÄN PROJEKTIN AIKANA TIIMIN<.**
                 GENTLEMEN DURING THIS PROJECT A TEAM<.
    03   Wor: **↑tiimin.**
                 a ↑team.

Picture 1

*BEGINS WALKING WHILE TALKING, WALKS HALF THE STAGE

                     *Pic 1

                          *SOME WORKERS SLOWLY WALK AFTER C

04	Con:	*<tiimin> ja ryhmätyön *ero on siinä että
		the difference between <a team> and group work is that
05		ryhmä kulkee sinne minne pomo käskee mutta
		a group goes where the boss requests but
06		↑tiimi (0.5) se haluaa samoja asioita ↑kuin pomo.
		a ↑team (0.5) it wants the same things ↑as the boss.

((lines omitted: Ansa comments on another issue))

| 07 | Ansa: | anteeksi tämä keskeytys mutta (-) |
| | | sorry about this interruption but (-) |

                                        *TOUCHES A'S FOREHEAD

                                           *DRUM BEAT BEGINS

08	Con:	<ei ei> älä pyyä anteeksi elämältä *ansa. *(0.7)
		<no no> don't apologize for life ansa. (0.7)
09		kun ↑paljaita olemme kaikki. (0.3) omalla tavallamme.
		since we are all ↑exposed. (0.3) in our own ways.
10		(.) kun teet asiat omasta halustasi ↑olet vapaa.
		(.) when you do things out of your own desire ↑you are free.
11		(.) .hh ota vastuu itsestäsi
		(.) .hh take responsibility for yourself

*MAKES A ROUNDED GESTURE, HAND RAISES IN THE END

| 12 | | *NIIN SALAINEN MINÄSI NOUSEE FEENIX LINNUN |
| | | AND YOUR HIDDEN SELF WILL RAISE TO THE STARS |

                        *SOME WORKERS RAISE THEIR HANDS HESITANTLY

13		LAILLA *TÄHTIIN. (.) .hh SINÄ VOIT OLLA KU
		LIKE A PHOENIX BIRD. (.) .hh YOU CAN BE LIKE A
14		VEENUS ÖISELLÄ YÖTAIVAALLA JOS ITTE TAHOT.=
		VENUS IN THE NIGHT SKY IF YOU YOURSELF WANT.=

Picture 2

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                    *Pic 2
              * RAISES HAND BRISKLY
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15   Eine: =↑**KYLLÄ *T<u>A</u>HON.**
             =↑YES I D<u>O</u>.
16   Con: ↑**HYVÄ. (.) KU HUIKEAT ONNISTUMISET TULEVAT**
             ↑GOOD. (.) BECAUSE THE GREAT SUCCESSES COME
17   **OIKEASTA <u>A</u>SENTEESTA. (0.3) SISÄISELLÄ ROIHULLA**
             FROM THE RIGHT <u>A</u>TTITUDE. (0.3) ONE GOES FAR WITH
18   **MENNÄÄN PITKÄLLE. (0.3)**
             AN INNER FIRE. (0.3)
```
             *SWIRLS HAND IN THE AIR
                       * SOME WORKERS SWIRL THEIR HANDS
```
19   *LIEKKI *on olemassa vain palaessaan. (.)**
             THE FL<u>A</u>ME only exists when it's burning. (.)
20
```
             *SHAKES FIST, KNEES BENT
```
             *Y<u>E</u>S Y<u>E</u>S Y<u>E</u>S.
             Y<u>E</u>S Y<u>E</u>S Y<u>E</u>S.

Picture 3

*Pic 3

*ᴍᴏsᴛ ᴡᴏʀᴋᴇʀs sʜᴀᴋᴇ ᴛʜᴇɪʀ ꜰɪsᴛs ᴠɪɢᴏʀᴏᴜsʟʏ

21　Wor:　***Y<u>E</u>S Y<u>E</u>S Y<u>E</u>S.**
　　　　　Y<u>E</u>S Y<u>E</u>S Y<u>E</u>S.

22　Con:　**ku rakkaussuhteeseenki kuuluu että meillä**
　　　　　it also belongs to a love affair [relationship] that we

　　　　　　　*ᴍᴏᴠᴇs ʜᴀɴᴅs ᴀɴᴅ ᴘᴇʟᴠɪs

23　　　　**on *↑H<u>A</u>LU.**
　　　　　have a ↑D<u>E</u>SIRE.

　　　　　*ᴍᴏᴠᴇs ʜᴀɴᴅs ᴀɴᴅ ᴘᴇʟᴠɪs sᴇᴠᴇʀᴀʟ ᴛɪᴍᴇs

24　Ansa:　***Y<u>E</u>S Y<u>E</u>S Y<u>E</u>S.**
　　　　　Y<u>E</u>S Y<u>E</u>S Y<u>E</u>S.

25　　　　(3.0)

　　　　　*ʜᴏʟᴅs Aɴsᴀ's ᴄʜɪɴ ᴀɴᴅ ᴘᴏɪɴᴛs ᴀᴛ ʜᴇʀ ᴡɪᴛʜ ᴏᴛʜᴇʀ ꜰɪɴɢᴇʀs

26　Con:　***ku eihän k<u>u</u>kaan mene n<u>a</u>imisiinkaan <u>e</u>rotakseen.**
　　　　　surely n<u>o</u> one m<u>a</u>rries just to get div<u>o</u>rced.

27　Wor:　**(-)**

Picture 4
*ɪɴsᴛʀᴜᴍᴇɴᴛᴀʟ ᴍᴜsɪᴄ ʙᴇɢɪɴs

　　　　　　　　　　　　　　*ʙᴇɢɪɴs ᴡᴀʟᴋɪɴɢ ᴡʜɪʟᴇ ᴛᴀʟᴋɪɴɢ
　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　*Pic 4
　　　　　　　　　　　　　　*ᴀʟʟ ᴡᴏʀᴋᴇʀs ᴡᴀʟᴋ ᴀꜰᴛᴇʀ C

28　Con:　***ty<u>ö</u>suhde (0.9) tulisi nähdä *pa*risuhteen (kaltaisena).**
　　　　　empl<u>oy</u>ment (0.9) should be seen (like) a l<u>o</u>ve affair.

29　　　　**(0.8) se vaatii kunnioitusta. (0.8)**
　　　　　(0.8) it requires respect. (0.8)

Picture 5
*Pic 5
*WALKS ACROSS THE STAGE; ALL WORKERS FOLLOW CLOSELY

30	*↑**tämän projektin päämääränä (.) on ihan**
	the goal of ↑this project (.) is to see really
31	**silmästä silmään kattoa (.) että ↑voijaanko**
	eye to eye (.) that ↑can one
32	**ihmisestä ottaa se ↑sata prosenttia irti.**
	get that ↑one hundred percent out of humans.

                                *STOPS, WORKERS CROWD AROUND C

33	**(0.3) m<u>i</u>nä sanon että *v<u>oi</u>jaan.**
	(0.3) <u>I</u> say one c<u>a</u>n.
34	SONG BEGINS

The extract shows how the synchronization of action that began to emerge in the form of the workers' coordinated walking (cf. De Stefani and Mondada 2014) during the consultant's initial turns tightens step-by-step as the episode unfolds. This process becomes visible straight after Ansa's apology (line 7), where the consultant does not produce a normatively expected second pair part, namely, he does not express acceptance or mitigate Ansa's blame with regard to previous action (see line 8). Instead, he uses the sequential position of the response to introduce his own agenda into the conversation and to begin the motivational talk – yet make his turn appear topically related to the previous conversation.

Now, the training is fully underway. In terms of semiotic resources, there are some immediate changes. Firstly, the consultant touches Ansa (line 8) – the use of the haptic modality brings a new level of intimacy and affection into the activity (see Cekaite and Holm Kvist 2017). Importantly, this crucial transition in the play is also marked by the emergence of a drum beat and staccato rhythm that begins to play in the background. Moreover, there are changes in the prosodic and linguistic features of the consultant's talk, shown in the use of a loud, ecstatic voice, but most of all, metaphorical language that can be seen to convey the ideological underpinnings – namely, the entrepreneurial ethos – of the training (lines 8–14). While these features display the consultant's own heightened emotive involvement (cf. Selting 1994) in the activity, they also function as an invitation for the recipients to take part in the same manner. Initially, some workers attempt to copy the embodied action of the consultant (line 13). However, on line 15, one of them does this explicitly both by embodied and verbal means – the brisk hand movement, the loud repetition of the consultant's words and the turn-initial *kyllä* 'yes' (see Hakulinen 2001) indicate her new unconditioned compliance with the training.

After receiving indisputable support from one of the workers, the consultant moves on with the training. Next, he evaluates the previous response, making it exemplary and framing its compliant stance as a

precondition for 'great success' with the use of a causal connective *ku* 'because' (line 16). By doing so, the consultant also legitimizes his role as an expert, who can make claims about the reality and the inner state of the workers (lines 16–19). Rhetorically, the claims he produces are organized into a three-part list (cf. Jefferson 1990) – this rhetorical device is repeated with the exclamation *yes yes yes* (line 20). Now, all the workers' potential resistance begins to disperse. At first, some of them again copy the actions of the consultant. However, this time it happens with seeming easiness (line 19), and later on, with an increasing number of workers taking part in the synchronous action (line 21) – the verbal exclamation and its distinct prosodic features being finally repeated by them all (line 21) with the aid of the easily projectable list structure.

In the play, these changes in the organization of joint action denote the effect of the training, namely, the birth of a collective actor, a team. Once the lead character, Ansa, also shows compliance and eagerness with the training (line 24) new instrumental music begins (line 28) and marks another important shift in the episode. Now all the workers perform tightly coordinated, synchronous action. They follow the consultant without any delay (line 28) and walk closely after him across the whole stage (line 30). Interestingly, this happens as the consultant discloses the real – and somewhat questionable – goal of the training (line 30–33). In this light, the workers' teaming up and joint following of the consultant appears also problematic: the workers seem to have lost their ability to interpret the ongoing activity and to act accordingly. At this point, the dialogue turns into joint singing and dancing.

A similar transition from a dialogue to singing and dancing – and from individual to synchronous, collective action – is also found in other episodes. However, they differ from the first episode with regard to the duration and complexity of the sequence leading to the musical piece. In the latter episodes, the sequence becomes faster and simpler, thus denoting, in the context of the play, the workers' socialization into new conventions brought by the training. This is seen in extract 2, which comes from the second episode. Here, the training program is in half-way and the workers undertake a physical training exercise to improve their stamina.

Extract 2.   Episode 2.

```
                                                         *SHAKES FIST
        01   Con:   ↑otetaas ääni mukaan. (0.4)    *tulosvastuu
                    ↑let's add a voice. (0.4) profit responsibility
                    *SOME WORKERS SHAKE THEIR FISTS
        02          *tulosvastuu [tulosvastuu tulosvastuu
                    profit responsibility [profit responsibility profit responsibility
        03   Wor:                [tulosvastuu tulosvastuu
                                 [profit responsibility profit responsibility
        04          tulosvastuu tulosvastuu [tulos-
                    profit responsibility profit responsibility [profit-
        05   Con:                           [(ja sitte) (0.7)
                                            [(and then) (0.7)
                           *WALKS RHYTHMICALLY WITHIN ONE PLACE
        06          liike. (0.5) *tulosvastuu
                    the movement. (0.5) profit responsibility
        07          tulos[vastuu tulosvastuu tulosvastuu
                    profit [responsibility profit responsibility profit responsibility
                         *ALL WORKERS WALK RHYTHMICALLY WITHIN ONE PLACE
        08   Wor:       [*tulosvastuu tulosvastuu
                        [profit responsibility profit responsibility
        09          tulosvastuu [tulosvastuu
                    profit responsibility [profit responsibility
        10   Con:              [<NOIN> (0.4) ja (.) ETEENPÄIN
                               [<like that> (0.4) and (.) FORWARD
        11          LIIKE LÄHTEE.
                    THE MOVEMENT GOES.
```
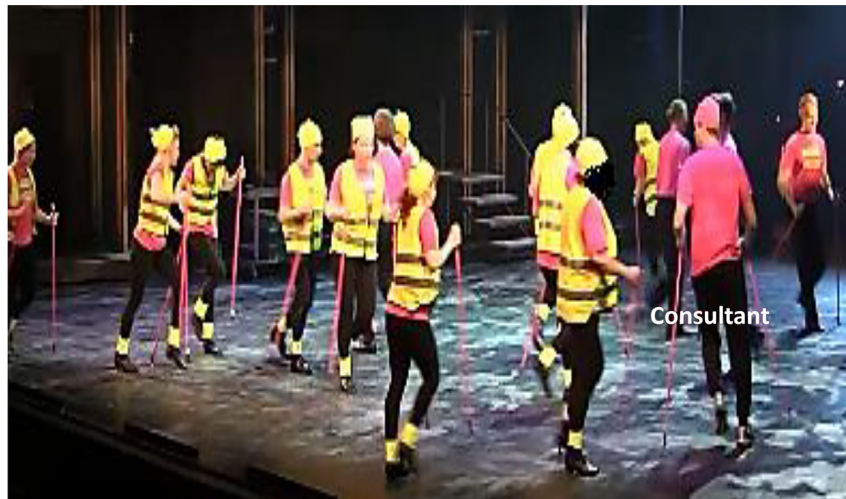
Picture 6
*INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC BEGINS
    *Pic 6
    *WALKS AROUND THE STAGE; ALL WORKERS WALK WITH C AS A
    GROUP, YET FORMING THEIR OWN CHOREOGRAPHIES

12   ***(1.0) *ja (0.3) R̲AMMAT KÄVELEVÄT. (.) S̲OKEAT**
    (1.0) and (0.3) THE CR̲IPPLED WILL WALK. (.) THE BL̲IND

13   **NÄKEVÄT. (.) K̲UUROT KUULEVAT. (.) L̲IHAVAT**
    WILL SEE. (.) THE D̲EAF WILL HEAR. (.) THE FAT

14   **LAIHTUVAT. (.) L̲AIHAT LIHOVAT. (-)**
    WILL BECOME SLIM. (.) THE TH̲IN WILL GET FAT. (-)

15   SONG BEGINS

As seen from above, the consultant now uses straightforward directives to initiate an exercise (lines 1, 5–6, 10–11), and by so doing, already assumes the workers' compliance and ability to coordinate their actions in order to take part in the exercise. The workers, for their part, begin to jointly repeat the consultant's verbal and embodied actions almost instantaneously (lines 2–3, 8, 12). Moreover, while in the first episode the synchronization of action proceeded gradually from some to most and finally all workers, here it rapidly expands from some to all workers (see lines 2, 8). On line 12, where the consultant begins to walk around the stage, the workers no longer follow him, but actually walk with him, forming their own choreographies. At that moment, the affective intensity of the ongoing activity has become very prominent, shown in the prosodic and formulaic features of the consultant's talk – seemingly referring to the generic conventions of evangelical preaching and making the training activity to appear in a critical light, as a form of indoctrination (cf. Nissi and Dlaske 2020). Similar to the earlier episode, here the activity shifts into singing and dancing.

    In sum, the multiple changes within the transitions to collective action thus have to do with growing pace, volume and grandiosity of the action that denote a new kind of affective involvement of both the consultant and the workers, the advancing easiness of synchronous action as well as the increasing and expanding level of compliance and alignment with the activity. However, while the verbal and embodied resources available in social interaction can be efficiently used to – critically – perform these changes and the creation of collectivity, they also have their limits due to the naturally partial distribution of agency in social life. Next, we will show how these limits related to the temporal-causal organization of 'enchrony' (see Enfield 2011) can be overcome with the aid of other semiotic resources outside human bodies.

3.2 Collective action during singing and dancing

We will now turn to the analysis of collective action during singing and dancing, which may be assumed to occur to a relatively large extent within the concurrent framework of interactional coordination. While synchronization of behavior over time is a common feature of these performances, the more specific characteristics of joint action conveyed through the performances vary from moment to moment. In this section, we analyse and identify different parameters with reference to which the interactional emergence of these different characteristics of action may be accounted for with.

Extract 3 is from a song *Minä Oy* 'Me Inc.' whose Finnish lyrics are about the old self dying and the new one arising from the ashes. The song has a catchy, ascending melody and a regular four-four beat (cf. Machin 2013). At the end of the first strophe, however, an unexpected change occurs. The lyrics of the song suddenly appear in English – the language of global capitalism – while they convey an ostensibly grandiose, yet empty, content: 'Everything is everything.' At this point, the consultant starts to move his hands and arms in broad strokes, thus seemingly creating an impression of a charismatic visionary or a healer, while the workers fall down, apparently due to being struck by the irresistible power of the consultant's vision (Figure A).

Extract 3.   Episode 1.
               A & B: Body movements of the consultant and workers during the first and second 'Everything is everything' interlude. C: Musical score of the 'Everything is everything' interlude.

A

B

C

The musical score of the 'Everything is everything' interlude (Figure C) clarifies the high degree of complexity and unpredictability in the segment. There is a change in the time signature from the four-four beat to a six-eight beat. There is also a new tempo signature, showing a much faster tempo than the one before (cf. Machin

2013). The rhythm associated with the words 'Everything is everything' is quite complex, involving a lot of syncopation, which does not similarly enforce synchronous movement than a strong regular beat. Through all these semiotic means, the impression that is being created can be seen as both grandiose and chaotic. In the context of the play, what is being enacted on the stage thus appears so complex and unpredictable that managing it seems to necessarily require an outside actor, namely, a leader.

At the end of the second Finnish strophe, the same 'Everything is everything' interlude reoccurs. This time, the choreography of the workers is quite different from the one before. Instead of falling down, the workers themselves use broad arm strokes while being engaged with one another, with an excited facial expression on their faces. As it appears, the workers have now taken the leader's vision as something that they perceive as their own, elaborating on it without the consultant having to interfere anymore. What previously came across as complex and chaotic is now treated as manageable so that the grandiose, yet empty, vision ('Everything is everything') appears as something that would make sense. The staged actions thus build a representation of a self-organizing team, and by so doing, critically feature the ideals of teamwork.

However, in the play, this representation is realized in different ways as seen from the following example. Extract 4 is from a song *Kun tyttö on hyvä ja kaikkensa antaa* 'When a girl is good and gives her everything,' with various equivocal messages (e.g., share price curves rising, batons gliding, and the dividends coming in the lap) and erotically suggestive dancing. After all this, the final part of the song consists of an enactment of the production line of the muesli bar factory 'in action' (Figure A). Notably, the muesli bars that run through the production line are enacted by the 'girls' who jump off the line at the end of the process, thus representing not only the outcome of the production process but also their self-sacrifice in it.
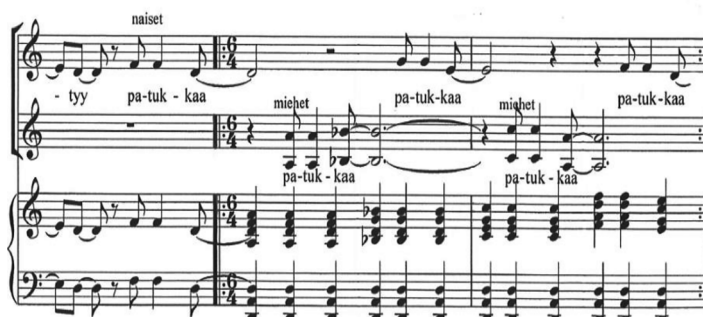
Extract 4.　　Episode 3.
A: Embodied enactment of the muesli bar production line. B: Musical score of the production line scene.

A

B

As opposed to the prior example, the unfolding of Extract 4 is highly predictable. During this segment, the lyrics of the song are simply *patukkaa, patukkaa* ('bars/batons, bars/batons'). The musical score of the segment (Figure B) sheds light on additional reasons for the high level of projectability (cf. Machin 2013). The chords dm-gm-C-dm build a predictable structure. The melody is constructed in a way that projects its continuation: in the last bar of the line, after the notes c2 and a1, it is only natural to continue the pattern of descending thirds, which again leads to the beginning of the sequence. Furthermore, the impression of a never-ending loop is emphasized by keeping the same chord as a continuous organ point in the bass part. Through all these semiotic means, the segment creates a vision of the muesli bar production activity continuing endlessly.

Also, this example can thus be seen to represent a fulfilment of one ideal of teamwork – the notion of the team being able to produce outcomes without the interference of a leader. However, unlike in Extract 3, in Extract 4, this is due to everything being as projectable as possible. Notably, though, there are some differences in the manner in which each worker (or muesli bar) jumps off the production line at the end of the process. Hence, even if all workers sacrifice themselves – on the altar of the deadly routine of capitalistic production – there might be individual differences in the exact ways in which each worker accomplishes that.

Our final example is – again – quite different from the ones discussed above. Extract 5 is from the point in the play where all the employees have been fired and the consultant killed, and Ansa is now being arrested. During the very slow lamento-like song, whose melody is hummed without lyrics, the singers stand extremely still. The only visible body movement is the one displayed below: while Ansa is being taken away, the singers' heads are turned to the right to look at Ansa (Figure A), but when Ansa is gone, the singers slowly turn their heads to look straight forward (Figure B).

Extract 5.   Episode 4.
A: The singers' heads turned to the right to look at Ansa, while she is being taken away. B: The singers' head position after Ansa is gone.

A

B

Despite the movement being very small and slow, it is produced with a relatively high degree of synchronicity. At the same time, even if the head movement has certainly been rehearsed by the actors, it is produced in a way that seems spontaneous and "unplanned" – it is merely a passive reaction to the matter that there is not any more a common target (Ansa) serving as a focus of the individuals' joint attention. As a result, every individual on the stage acts, as it were, *independently*, turning to look straight forward (into the empty darkness) at the point when there is nothing else to look at. Thus, in a very paradoxical way, also this episode highlights an important ideal of teaming and becoming a collective: individuals act as a collective, doing exactly the same thing, while still acting as individual persons. In this scene, the individuality of the ex-workers on the stage is also underlined by the different personal clothing that each individual carries. Hence, even if the individuals here do not anymore constitute a team in an ordinary sense, their shared tragic experience leads them nevertheless to behave as if they would still constitute a collective. In light of this last scene, where the similarity of the individuals' behaviours is based on common experience, the earlier forms of heightened collective activity come across as empty and artificial – as periods where the collective nature of behaviour is achieved from the outside.

4 Conclusions

In this article, we have examined how teaming up is enacted in a theater performance. By focusing on the actual show, we investigated how the theater practitioners employ different kinds of semiotic resources available in this social setting in order to create pre-agreed interactional compositions that convey specific meanings. In the episodes we studied, the play included a shift from a dialogue to singing and dancing, and respectively, to synchronous, collective action. In our analysis, we examined on the one hand the transitions to these musical pieces and the gradual synchronization of action, and on the other hand, the representation of collective action during singing and dancing. By doing so, we approached music and choreographic movement as an intrinsic part of the play and the enactment of teamwork as collective action.

One of the great paradoxes of the team is the way in which the notions of collectivity and self-determinacy are intertwined in it. Our study has particularly shed light on how these paradoxes can be enacted on a stage. While teamwork in real life normally takes place within the framework of sequentiality, with speakers alternatively controlling the unfolding of joint action, the high level of synchronous coordination associated with music and dance provides an effective way to enact collectivity in the here and now of the theater performance. What our study has, however, demonstrated is that also the moments of collective action may vary with regard to how the agency of the individuals within the collective comes across. While a high *predictability* of action is linked to the matter of a team being able to act as a collective self-determinately, without an external leader, this outcome is not easy to achieve when the action involves a considerable degree of *complexity*. At the same time, even less predictable circumstances can lead to individuals behaving in similar ways although these circumstances themselves may be in no way desirable. In these circumstances also the *size* of behavioural expression in space and/or time plays a major role in highlighting the specific characteristics of joint action, the public, externally-led synchronous behaviours being associated with body movements of large range and fast tempo and the synchronous behaviours emerging from the individuals' "inside" with small and slow body movements. We therefore suggest the usefulness of these three parameters – predictability, complexity, and size – for the analysis of different characteristics of joint actions within the overall concurrent framework of interactional coordination.

As such, the enactment of teamwork also brings a critical component into the play. In general, in theatrical expression, the core question does not have to do with the authenticity of the enactment, but rather the way the social world is being enacted in the first place, as the play itself can be seen as an analysis of the social reality and human condition. As put by Hazel (2015, p. 59), 'theatre procedures can serve to articulate normative expectations pertaining to the social world.' However, in our case, the play is also a critical analysis and commentary of the contemporary realities and social processes, conducted, in particular, by means of music and dance that enable the representation of synchronous, almost mindless collective action and the position of

an individual within collectivity. In this way, the play deliberately draws the audience's attention to the problematic and potentially tragic aspects of teaming and critically opens up and studies this concept, its ideological foundations and personal and social consequences.

Appendix: Transcription conventions

.	Falling intonation
↑	Rise in pitch
wo̲rd	Emphasis
WORD	Loud talk
>word<	Fast speech rate
<word>	Slow speech rate
wo-	Word cut off
(word)	Item in doubt
(-)	Talk not heard
(0.5)	Pause (length in tenths of a second)
(.)	Micropause
=	Latching of turns
[	Beginning of overlapping talk
*	Beginning of overlapping embodied and other action
POINTS	Embodied action
DRUM BEAT	Other action
⟶	Relation between embodied actions
((--))	Transcriber's comments

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