

Classifying finds in foraging on the basis of (guided) sensory inspection

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Abstract

This study considers object-centered sequences by examining the sharing of finds in foraging activities, specifically in mushroom picking. The focus is on the ways in which participants engage in inspecting mushrooms and guiding others to inspect them in the process of classifying and assessing the finds. Participants typically draw on a range of sensorial cues, such as how mushrooms smell or feel to the touch, to pursue shared understandings of what characterizes – and thereby what might best be used as a basis for classifying and assessing – a particular species or specimen of mushroom. The data consist of video recordings of families with children or participants on instructed excursions engaged in foraging. The data are in Finnish and English.

Keywords: classification – conversation analysis – foraging – multimodality – objects in interaction – sensoriality.

German Abstract

Die vorliegende Studie untersucht objektorientierte Sequenzen beim gemeinsamen Sammeln von Lebensmitteln, insbesondere von Pilzen. Hierbei liegt der Schwerpunkt auf der Art und Weise, wie die Teilnehmer im Bewertungs- und Klassifizierungsprozess die gefundenen Pilze inspizieren und die Anderen bei ihrer Untersuchung anleiten. Typischerweise stützen sich die Teilnehmer auf diverse sensorische Reize wie den Geruch der Pilze und das Gefühl beim Anfassen. So erlangen sie ein gemeinsames Verständnis der Eigenschaften einer bestimmten Pilzart und verstehen, was sich am besten als Grundlage zur Klassifizierung und Bewertung eignet. Die Daten umfassen Videoaufzeichnungen von Familien mit Kindern und von anderen Teilnehmern angeleiteter Exkursionen zum Sammeln von Lebensmitteln. Die Aufzeichnungen liegen in finnischer und englischer Sprache vor.

Keywords: Klassifizierung – Konversationsanalyse – Lebensmittelsammeln – Multimodalität – Objekte in der Interaktion – Sensorialität.

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1. Introduction

This article examines object-centered sequences in foraging activities, in which participants search and pick mushrooms in nature. Mushroom picking is characterized by a particular future-oriented aspect in that the wild produce is typically stowed and stored for later, rather than for immediate use and consumption. Nevertheless, it is relevant for foragers to determine whether a find is worth keeping while they are still engaged in the activity. This article focuses on such moments as they take place within sequences of sharing. By 'sharing', we refer in general terms to the kinds of object-centered sequences in which participants focus their attention on a find and engage in inspecting, classifying and assessing it together (see Tomasello 2008 on sharing emotions or attitudes as one key communicative motive). In the process, the participants may look at, touch, hold, manipulate and pass mushrooms as well as draw on various visual, tactile, olfactory, gustatory and perhaps even auditory cues.

The data for the study consist of approximately 14 hours of video recordings in which families with children or participants on instructed excursions carry out foraging activities. Some of the data are in Finnish and some in English. The participants have given their informed consent for the use of the recordings for research purposes. Pseudonyms of given names or institutional roles, such as *instructor*, are used as participant labels. The data have been transcribed according to the conventions described in Jefferson (2004) and Mondada (2014a). Ethnomethodological conversation analysis (e.g. Garfinkel 1967; Heritage 1984; Sacks 1992) provides the methodological framework for the study.

After situating the study within previous research on how objects are 'accomplished' in social interaction (Neville et al. 2014:13), we discuss sequences of sharing in our data from two interrelated viewpoints. First, we examine how participants with varying amounts of foraging experience display their understandings of a find. We show two cases in which foragers who position themselves as less experienced request for confirmation on a preliminary classification of a find, making the classification visible, among other things, in how they handle the find. Furthermore, the two cases illustrate how foragers who are positioned as more experienced take a moment to examine the find before confirming or disconfirming the preliminary classification offered, thus also orienting to the relevance of inspection for classification. Second, we investigate practices employed by participants to gain sensory experiences of the find and to guide others to gain such experiences. We discuss three cases in which the participants in this way extract particular features of the find (e.g. visual, tactile or olfactory) for the purposes of classifying and assessing it. Finally, in the third analytic section, we examine one more case to highlight the inevitably ineffable nature of sensory experiences and, consequently, the negotiable nature of classifications that are based on such sensory experiences. A brief summary and reflection are provided in the conclusion.

2. Classifying objects and displaying expertise

To carry out social actions, participants draw on their present material environment and build on their assumed, emergent or already achieved shared understandings of it: participants recognize and accomplish objects as this or that, treating objects as

malleable in terms of their meaning, purpose and potential. In professional contexts, the categorization or classification of objects may have profound consequences because it often forms an essential part of expert activities and is based on both common understanding and discipline-specific knowledge. For instance, to reach an agreement about the color of a sample of dirt (i.e. how it will be documented in written records), archaeologists draw on a complex array of resources, from semantic categories of color names to specific tools and practices for using the tools (Goodwin 2000b). Nevertheless, the classification of objects as scientific findings, for example, is a matter of negotiation, the establishment of a shared interpretation of what the participants have at hand (see, e.g. Goodwin 1997, 2000b; Sean Smith/Goodwin this issue; Koschmann/Zemel 2014; Tuncer/Haddington this issue). Roth (2005) shows that this may involve the participants being able to draw, on the one hand, on prior classifications (i.e. whether there are categories into which an item can be placed), and, on the other hand, on relevant perceptual distinctions (i.e. whether there are items from different categories that can be compared). In any case, "[o]ne has to have done classification, physically handling the objects, manipulating, scanning, and so on, to make knowledgeable classifications" (Roth 2005: 609).

The kind of classification that participants do and the kinds of classifications that they make are inextricably tied to the ways in which they deal with the objects involved. Participants display their knowledge, experience and expertise with regard to relevant objects and relevant characteristics of those objects in how they talk about and handle them. For instance, examining service encounters at a shoe repair shop, Fox and Heinemann (2015) argue that the ways in which customers manipulate the objects that they bring in for repair or alteration, along with the design of their verbal requests, make visible their understanding of the problem and its possible solution. In another service context, at the optician, Due and Trærup (2018) show that although the passing of glasses is accomplished in collaboration, opticians can be seen to take more care than customers to secure successful, safe passes. The passing of glasses thus constitutes an important site for opticians to display their expertise and to take responsibility for their professional work (Due/Trærup 2018). Similarly, Mondada (2016) illustrates how sellers at cheese shops palpate pieces of cheese to produce understandings of the quality of the products and how, together with verbal and other bodily actions, the palpating serves as a display of the sellers' embodied knowledge and professional expertise. Moreover, in an investigation into the passing of implements and materials in the highly specialized setting of the operating theater, Heath et al. (2018) show how the accomplishment of a surgical procedure relies upon not only the surgeon's performance, but also the scrub nurse's being able to interpret the unfolding of the procedure and to pass relevant objects at appropriate moments and in appropriate ways.

Indeed, in becoming experts in a particular discipline or even simply in a particular activity, participants develop 'professional vision', that is, adopt and employ "socially organized ways of seeing and understanding events that are answerable to the distinctive interests of a particular social group" (Goodwin 1994:606; see also, e.g. Gåfvels 2016; Lymer 2009). For example, Ekström and Lindwall (2014) and Mondada (2014b) have investigated how what can better be understood as materials or ingredients are transformed into craft products or culinary preparations through one participant's instructing another in the process. In both settings, the participants

need to establish a shared understanding of the process of transformation in order to identify key moments in which action is to be taken as well as relevant features of the materials or ingredients which are to be manipulated. For instance, trainees on a cooking course learn to orient to the irreversibility of such preparations as trimming, peeling and cutting and, accordingly, to the relevance of preserving and possibly highlighting some features of the ingredients (Mondada 2014b). A part of the process, then, is learning to extract or isolate from a mass of possibly relevant features those that are in effect relevant for the ongoing activity.

The extraction of relevant features is also essential when participants strive for a shared experience of some kind and may guide one another into positions in which this is possible. Kreplak and Mondémé (2014), for instance, explore art-museum tours for visually impaired persons, who are guided both verbally and manually to achieve tactile aesthetic experiences of particular artworks (see also Heath et al. 2012). At the cheese shop, sellers may smell a piece of cheese and then let customers do the same, or they may prepare to cut a piece of cheese as they produce a verbal offer for customers to have a taste, guiding customers to focus on the olfactory or gustatory features of the cheese, respectively (Mondada 2019; see also Licoepe/Tuncer this issue; Mondada this issue). In many ways, then, participants orient to ensuring and displaying that they all have access to the object of their actions and that they all experience it in similar ways in this moment (see Fasulo/Monzoni 2009; see also Oshima/Streeck 2015). A challenge that participants face, however, is that sensory experiences are essentially ineffable, that is, they escape verbal description (see Levinson/Majid 2014; see also Sean Smith/Goodwin this issue). As shown by Liberman (2013) in studies on coffee tasting, completely objective descriptors are in effect impossible to produce because the sensory experience of tasting guides the description of a taste as much as the description guides the experience. That is, participants learn to associate particular descriptors with particular kinds of sensory experiences, so that 'bitter', for instance, becomes to be used in an attempt to capture a kind of gustatory experience that is different for every participant. What happens in most interaction, then, is that participants work to achieve a good enough shared understanding, sufficient for all practical purposes, of what a sensory experience may be like.

In what follows, we explore how participants achieve good enough shared understandings of their finds in foraging, or reach workable classifications of mushrooms, on the basis of having gained relevant sensory experience of them.

3. Orienting to the relevance of inspection for classification

In this first analytic section, we examine two cases in which participants position themselves as less experienced foragers and bring a mushroom to the attention of others. In both cases, the less experienced foragers also provide a preliminary classification of the mushroom, but they do so at very different levels of detail. Indeed, the two cases illustrate some ways in which participants display, through their verbal and embodied conduct, their varying degrees of knowledge and experience of the mushrooms at hand. Moreover, the two cases highlight similarities in how the participants whose expertise has been called upon become momentarily absorbed in "inspecting" the mushroom (Mortensen/Wagner this issue), before confirming or disconfirming the preliminary classification.

In Example 1, the classification is based on the possible function or use of the mushroom, that is, whether it is edible. The example comes from a recording in which a family of five is foraging mainly for berries but also for mushrooms. One camera stands on a tripod, and the father of the family wears another, head-mounted camera. The transcript has been prepared on the basis of both recordings. A few minutes before the excerpt, the father has picked some funnel chanterelles, which the participants have deemed as valuable finds. Immediately before the excerpt, one of the children, Enni, has made a 'noticing' (see Sacks 1992; Goodwin/Goodwin 2012) by calling out "mushroom" and pointing at a spot on the ground. In this way, Enni has drawn the participants' attention to a mushroom and invited the father to inspect it (Figure 1a).¹

(1) 26 HANS Mustikassa VI (00:06:34 / 00:16:38)

01 ♂(0.4)♯(2.4)
dad ♂walks towards children-->
fig #1a



Fig 1a. Enni points at the mushroom,
and the father walks towards the children.

02 ANN: onko toi se s- syötävä ♂sieni.
 is that the edible mushroom
dad -->♂LF makes a circle,
 pushing vegetation aside-->
03 DAD: #s::e ei ♂oo s::♯yötävä• sieni.♯
 it is not an edible mushroom
 -->♂bends down-----♯
 •RH grips and bends mushroom•
fig #1b #1c



Fig 1b. The father pushes vegetation aside with his foot.

¹ In the transcripts, the following symbols are used to mark various embodied actions by different participants: •, ♂, +, ± and *.



Fig 1c. The father bends down and bends the mushroom with his hand.

04 DAD: æi oo.
 {no it} isn't
 æstraightens up-->>

As the father walks towards her, Enni continues to hold her right hand in a pointing gesture (Figure 1a), without moving closer to or reaching for the mushroom. That is, Enni refrains from any closer inspection of the mushroom and positions the father as competent and licensed – in the sense of having the rights of an adult – to handle it. Enni's older sister, Anni, also position herself as a novice and the father as an expert by leaning in to look at the mushroom and by requesting for confirmation from the father about the edibility of the mushroom, *onko toi se s- syötävä sieni* ('is that the edible mushroom', 1.2). The demonstrative pronoun *toi* 'that' points out a referent, the mushroom, and treats it as being outside the speaker's current sphere and more accessible to the recipient (see Laury 1997). The definite article *se* (Laury 1997), in turn, marks identifiability and suggests that the mushroom be considered as another possible specimen of the same class of mushrooms that have been found earlier. On the basis of the father's earlier finds, then, Anni offers a preliminary classification of this mushroom as another edible one.

During Anni's request for confirmation, the father reaches the spot that Enni has been pointing at and stretches out his left foot to push aside vegetation from around the mushroom (1.2; Figure 1b). The fact that the father uses his shoe-clad foot to uncover the mushroom already suggests that he does not treat this mushroom an equally valuable find as the ones that he has gingerly uncovered and picked with his bare hands some minutes earlier. As he makes a small circle with his foot, pushing aside vegetation and gradually revealing the mushroom, the father begins to produce a response (*se ei oo syötävä sieni* 'it is not an edible mushroom', 1.3). The father lengthens the initial sound of *se* 'it' until his foot has come a full circle and, on *ei* 'not', slides his foot on the grass and brings it back on the ground. The lengthening of the sound thus delays the unfolding of a disconfirmation to a moment in which the father has evidently gained visual access to the mushroom. As soon as the father has brought his foot back on the ground, he bends down. The father now lengthens the initial sound of *syötävä* ('edible') until he has gripped the mushroom with his right hand and bent it slightly to reveal the stem and the underside of the cap (Figure 1c). Again, the lengthening of the sound marks the duration of the inspection and delays the completion of the disconfirmation.

The father's turn in line 3 is identifiable as a response only on the basis of its sequential position, that is, after Anni's request for confirmation: the turn comprises a full declarative sentence with an explicit subject (*se* 'it') and unmarked subject–

verb word order (see Hakulinen 2001). The syntactic format of the turn highlights the negation that the turn entails as well as the father's independent access to the referent that the negation is based on. The father can thus be seen to take up the position of a competent and licensed mushroom picker that the children have offered him. Immediately after bringing the inspection and classification of the mushroom to completion (l. 3), the father begins to straighten up and produces a disconfirmation that is more responsive by its grammatical design, a negated verb repeat: *ei oo* ('{no it} isn't', l. 4). This marks the confirmation sequence as complete.

In short, throughout the brief fragment, the children and the father adopt the positions of less experienced and more experienced foragers, respectively, and design their relevant verbal and bodily actions accordingly. Furthermore, the father delays the verbal disconfirmation until a point when he has evidently inspected the mushroom to a sufficient degree, that is, once he has gained visual, and possibly also tactile, access to the mushroom to base the classification on. In this case, the classification of the mushroom as 'not edible' is eventually enough and no further classification is pursued.

In Example 2, by contrast, two possible bases for the classification of a mushroom are presented: the name and function of the mushroom. Otherwise the setting is similar in that a less experienced forager seeks confirmation for a classification of a mushroom and a more experienced forager engages in inspection before providing a response. The example comes from an organized mushroom-picking excursion. At the beginning of the excerpt, one of the excursion participants, Riitta, approaches one of the two instructors. The participants have established a 'state of mutual gaze' (Goodwin 1980) a moment earlier.

(2) 08 HANS Sieniretki (00:06:17)

(N.B. The cameraperson walks closer to the participants and the instructor's bodily actions are therefore not entirely visible in lines 5-9.)

01 (0.3)#(0.3)

rii >>walks towards ins-->
 >>holds mushroom up (RH finger pinch, palm out)-->
 ins >>walks towards rii-->
 fig #2a



Figure 2a. Riitta and the instructor walk towards each other, and Riitta holds the mushroom in her hand.

02 RII: **eiks ookki kaneli#seitikki.**
isn't {this} a cinnamon webcap
 fig #2b



Figure 2b. Riitta and the instructor walk towards each other, and Riitta holds the mushroom in full view for the instructor.

03 (0.4)
 04 RII: **värj•äys+sieni.±**
a mushroom for dyeing
 -->•holds mushroom up (RH finger pinch, palm up)-->
 -->□
 ins ±stretches out LH±
 -->+
 05 ±(1.0)#±•(0.8)±
 ins ±grasps±takes±holds mushroom (LH finger pinch, palm in)-->
 rii -->•RH to waist-->
 fig #2c



Figure 2c. The instructor grasps the mushroom and takes it from Riitta.

06 RII: °(onkos se värjäyssieni)°
(is it a mushroom for dyeing)
 07 (0.3)
 08 INS: **ööm,**
uhm
 09 (0.3)

10 INS: *mää luulen että tämä *kuuluu nuihin keltasei#tik[kien*
I think that this belongs to those yellow webcaps
**feels mushroom with RH thumb-->*
fig #2d



Figure 2d. The instructor looks at the mushroom and feels it with her thumb.

11 RII: *[mutta*
but

12 *kumminki että se v- se vär•[jää-*
anyway that it d- it dyes-
•RH from waist-->

13 INS: *[kyllä±* v-*
yes d-
-->±holds mushroom (LH
finger pinch, palm up)-->
*-->**

14 *[kyllä on vär•jäyssie±niä• kyllä*
yes it is a mushroom for dyeing yes
-->±
rii -->•grasps•takes•holds mushroom-->>

As she walks towards the instructor, Riitta holds a mushroom up and waves it in the air (Figure 2a). In this way, Riitta offers the mushroom as a focus of the participants' joint attention and action. The fact that she waves the mushroom in the air, rather than carries it carefully in her hands, also implies that Riitta has made a preliminary classification of the mushroom as one that does not have to be handled with the same care as, for instance, a mushroom that has been picked for eating. A more precise classification follows in Riitta's verbal turn: the request for confirmation, *eiks ookki kaneliseitikki* ('isn't this a cinnamon webcap', 1.2), includes a possible name for the mushroom. Although Riitta seeks the instructor's confirmation for the classification, she displays a fair amount of expertise in providing not only the genus ('webcap') but also the possible species ('cinnamon') of the mushroom. Indeed, this level of accuracy in naming mushrooms is what the instructors in our data from organized mushroom-picking excursions typically strive for in classifying mushrooms (see Examples 3 and 6).

During her request for confirmation (1.2), Riitta holds the mushroom up in her right hand, pinching its stem between her fingers so that the palm of her hand faces outwards and the mushroom is in full view for the instructor (Figure 2b). The instructor may not yet have maximal visual access to the mushroom, however, because both Riitta and the instructor continue their walking trajectories towards each other. They both bring their feet down into a stable standing position during Riitta's next utterance, which adds to the initial request for confirmation by suggesting that

the mushroom is 'a mushroom for dyeing' (*värjätssieni*, 1.4). It is worth noting that the participants in our data relatively seldom display knowledge about, or interest in, possible uses of mushrooms beyond consumption, and so even this classification by function implies that Riitta has some specialized knowledge of mushrooms. Before the instructor has gained access to the mushroom, Riitta has thus already offered two possible, overlapping classifications of it for the instructor to confirm or disconfirm: the name of a particular species and a potential function for the species.

On Riitta's uttering *värjätssieni* ('a mushroom for dyeing', 1.4), the instructor stretches out her left hand and Riitta changes the position of her hand from displaying the mushroom at its full length to pinching it by the stem from below, with her palm upwards, and preparing the mushroom for the instructor to take. The instructor indeed grasps the mushroom and takes it from Riitta (1.5; Figure 2c) to begin an inspection, and Riitta withdraws her hand to rest on the waist. During the inspection, the instructor holds the mushroom in her hands and feels it with her right thumb, and both participants have their gaze on the mushroom (Figure 2d). Riitta continues to seek confirmation for whether the mushroom can be used for dyeing (1.6), thus treating the possible function of the mushroom as the most relevant basis for classification.

The instructor's response is delayed by pauses, hesitation markers and, finally, the stance marker 'I think/believe' (1.7-10; see Rauniomaa 2007), which all indicate that the inspection is still in progress but also suggest that the projected response may not entirely align with the request for confirmation. Indeed, the instructor's response neither confirms nor disconfirms but provides a new take on the classification: the instructor names a particular genus that the mushroom may belong to. In other words, the instructor highlights the importance of classifying mushrooms as accurately as possible, starting from naming it before assigning any functions to it. In her following turn, however, Riitta continues to pursue confirmation for a classification based on function: *mutta kumminki että se värjää* ('but anyway that it dyes', 1.11-12). The turn-initial 'but' signals return to a prior topic (see Sorjonen 1989), that is, whether the mushroom can be used for dyeing, whatever it is called. During her turn, Riitta lifts her right hand from the waist, and the instructor withdraws the thumb of her right hand from the mushroom and turns her left hand so that she now holds the mushroom by the stem with the palm of her hand upwards, preparing it for Riitta to take. While the instructor now confirms that the mushroom can be used for dyeing, Riitta grasps the mushroom and takes it from the instructor (1.14).

Examples 1 and 2 have shown how participants' emerging understandings are essentially intertwined with the ways in which they refer to and possibly handle the mushrooms that they have found. Naming a mushroom by its possible genus and species can be considered as a display of expertise, but making such crude preliminary classifications as 'edible' vs. 'inedible' may indicate not only that the participant is a less experienced forager but also that the participant does not deem further classification in this context relevant. Similarly, refraining from touching a mushroom with one's bare hands may indicate either that the participant is not able to judge whether it is safe to handle the mushroom or that the participant is able to make an adequate classification based on visual evidence alone. Moreover, the specific ways of holding and handling a mushroom, for instance, carefully or carelessly, bring forth the participant's understanding of what the mushroom may be

used for. In all cases, the participants orient to the relevance of inspection as a basis for any classification that may be done.

4. Extracting relevant features of a find via guided inspection

Because our data involve both expert and novice foragers, the processes of classification may be more visible than in data that involve experienced foragers alone. Very frequently, then, participants in our data encounter situated 'learnables' (Majlesi/Broth 2012) relating to the classification of particular mushrooms found in the forest. In this analytic section, we explore how different features of mushrooms, such as texture, color and smell, are oriented to during inspection and classification. In the examples in this section, more experienced foragers guide others to focus on different features of a mushroom via their bodily and verbal actions, performed in relation to the sensory qualities of the mushrooms (e.g. through smelling, touching or tasting). By allowing the less experienced foragers then to carry out these same actions themselves, the more experienced foragers engage them in developing their 'sensorial practices' (Mondada 2019) and, thus, their expert perception or 'professional vision' (Goodwin 1994) regarding mushrooms that are handled together. As such, the actions amount to guided inspection sequences.

Example 3 is from the same mushroom-picking excursion as Example 2. Prior to the excerpt, Kaisa and another excursion participant have walked towards the instructor, with Kaisa holding a mushroom in her hand. The instructor has identified the mushroom as cortinarius based on visual evidence available to her, that is, seeing the mushroom in Kaisa's hand. The participants have also established that mushrooms that belong to the genus of cortinarius are generally not edible. The mushroom is passed from Kaisa to the instructor, after which the participants continue to examine it together. During this, the instructor engages in a sensory inspection of the mushroom and, in so doing, sets an example to Kaisa and the other excursion participant. After this, the instructor guides the others also to inspect the mushroom in different ways and to pay attention to certain features of it.

(3) 08 HANS Sieniretki (00:09:04)

```
ins  >>looks twd mushroom, manipulates it with both hands-->
01 INS: [tää on nyt t#ämmönen vähän
        this is now this kind of a bit
fig          #3a
```



Fig 3a. The instructor looks at and manipulates the mushroom.

- 02 KAI: [joo.
yeah
- 03 INS: •tämmönen• (.) *vanhaksikin mennyt että* hh
kind of overaged also that
•strokes underneath the cap with both thumbs•
-->αlifts cap up-----αlays mushroom
flat on hands-->
- 04 KAI: joo.α se on sen *anäkönenki* että se ei oo syötävä mutta,
yeah. it does look like it is not edible but
ins -->α αLH breaks off a portion of the cap,
the rest of the mushroom remain in RH-->
- 05 (0.4)α(0.5)#(0.3)α
ins -->αsmells mushroom, holding it in RHα
fig #3b



Fig 3b. The instructor smells the mushroom.

- 06 KAI: se oli niin mielenkiinto[nen].
it was so interesting.
- 07 INS: [täs on,α
here is
αLH throws away pieceα
- 08 α(0.4)α
ins αmoves mushroom to LHα
- 09 INS: αtämmönen
this kind of
αLH holds mushroom close to Kaisa-->
- 10 KAI: mm,
- 11 INS: tää on tuo#ta vanha-
this is well an old
fig #3c



Fig 3c. The instructor holds the mushroom while Kaisa smells it.

12 (0.3)
 13 KAI: jo[oa:
 yeah
 ins -->ɑ
 14 INS: [haisuseitikki,
 stinking cortinarius

At the beginning of the excerpt, the instructor identifies a further feature which indicates that this particular specimen has gone bad: *tää on nyt tämmönen vähän tämmönen vanhaksikin mennyt että* ('this is now kind of overaged also that', 1.1,3). The instructor's turn ends in the conjunction *että* ('that', 1.3), which marks the turn as an explanation to a prior action, legitimizing the instructor's claim that the mushroom is unusable (see Koivisto 2011). Kaisa produces an agreement token and a formulation that equates the appearance of the mushroom with inedibility: *se on sen näkönenki että se ei oo syötävä mutta* ('it does look like it is not edible but', 1.4). Kaisa's turn ends in the conjunction *mutta* ('but', 1.4), which here indicates concession (see Koivisto 2011), suggesting that, based on the appearance of the mushroom, Kaisa can deduct herself that it is not edible. However, the description 'overaged', used by the instructor, can be used to characterize any fresh produce that has gone past its due date but that may nevertheless be consumable. As such, then, the participants' verbal turns show how Kaisa relies on a generalization, rather than any specialized mushroom-related knowledge, to assess the find, whereas the instructor draws on her knowledge of the species and on sensory evidence gained here and now of this particular specimen.

The instructor can be seen to gather sensory evidence for the classification of the mushroom through a tactile and visual inspection (Figure 3a), which takes place in conjunction with the verbal turns in lines 1-4. The instructor turns the mushroom around in her hands and feels the surface of the mushroom with her thumbs both underneath and around the cap. She then examines the texture of the mushroom by breaking off a piece of the cap (1.4). These sensorial practices provide an example for the others on how to examine and handle a mushroom in order to enable its classification. Kaisa and the other excursion participant follow the instructor's actions closely, their gazes directed towards the instructor as she handles the mushroom. The inspection continues with the instructor smelling the mushroom: she lifts it under her nose and leans in slightly (Figure 3b). Again, even though the instructor focuses on inspecting the mushroom herself, she does so while the other two participants follow her actions, thereby providing a further demonstration of how the others should handle the mushroom when attempting to classify it. While the instructor continues to inspect the mushroom, Kaisa completes her explanation of why she picked the mushroom although it looked inedible (i.e. 'it was so interesting', 1.6). Kaisa's explanation serves as another example of a layperson's reasoning, or how less experienced foragers draw on their everyday experiences in attempting to classify mushrooms or even to make crude distinctions between their possible functions.

After the instructor has completed her visual, tactile and olfactory inspection of the mushroom, which apparently has confirmed her classification of the species, she initiates the naming proper with *täs on* ('here is', 1.7). In conjunction with this, the instructor first throws away the piece of the mushroom that she broke off, moves the mushroom from her right to her left hand, and then stretches out the mushroom

towards Kaisa (Figure 3c). The instructor does not give nor does Kaisa take the mushroom, but, instead, the instructor holds out the mushroom, pinched in her fingers with the palm of her hand upwards, and Kaisa leans in to smell it. The instructor's ongoing verbal turn includes hitches and perturbations that deal with the simultaneous stream of embodied action (see Schegloff 2000 on two streams of overlapping talk); in other words, the instructor allows for Kaisa's embodied action of smelling to be embedded within her verbal naming of the mushroom (1.7-11). Once Kaisa straightens up and acknowledges having smelled the mushroom with a lengthened *joo* ('yeah', 1.13), the instructor completes the naming, *haisuseitikki* ('stinking cortinarius', 1.14). The name not only characterizes the smell, which is presumably unpleasant, but also indicates that a distinct smell is one of the identifying characteristics of this particular mushroom species.

Both by displaying first through her own actions how one can handle and inspect a mushroom and by giving then a chance for Kaisa to experience the smell first-hand, the instructor's actions provide evidence of the importance of various sensorial practices in the mushroom-picking activity. The sensorial practices of looking at a mushroom from different angles, touching it in particular ways, extracting pieces of it, and smelling it have here all worked towards revealing the relevant 'semiotic fields' (Goodwin 2000a) of attention and action for the less experienced foragers in a stepwise fashion. It is only at the end of the guided inspection sequence that the name of the species is given, as a sign of successful classification.

Example 4 is similar to Example 3 in that here, too, the instructor first provides a demonstration of how to handle a mushroom in order to distinguish some of its identifying characteristics and then guides an excursion participant to gain sensory experience of those characteristics. Here, the focus on is how the mushroom feels to the touch. The guided inspection sequence also involves a correction concerning appropriate ways of examining the texture of a mushroom. Some minutes before the beginning of the excerpt, the participants have inspected boletes together and noted that the bovine bolete under inspection is relatively old and not very firm. The participants have then spread out and the instructor has found another, younger bovine bolete. In Example 4, the instructor shares his find with an excursion participant, Kaisa.

(4) 08 HANS Sieniretki (00:59:28)

01 INS: *tämmönen #nummitatti +on,+*
this kind of a bovine bolete is
 >>holds mushroom between RH fingers
 +moves RH thumb on top+

fig

#4a



Fig 4a. The instructor holds the mushroom.

02 **+(1.0)#**
 ins +RH thumb taps mushroom-->
 fig #4b



Fig 4b. The instructor taps the mushroom with his thumb.

03 INS: **±se on,±**
 it is
 ±stretches RH out towards Kaisa±
 04 **α(0.7)**
 kai αRH reaches for mushroom-->
 05 INS: **ko se ei oo menny +vielä peähmeeksi.#**
 'cause it hasn't gone soft yet
 -->+lifts RH thumb up-->
 kai -->αRH forefinger
 strokes mushroomα
 fig #4c



Fig 4c. The instructor lifts his thumb, and Kaisa strokes the mushroom.

06 **(0.6)**

touches the mushroom. When the mushroom is well within Kaisa's reach, the instructor lifts his thumb up so that Kaisa is able to touch the cap of the mushroom. However, instead of tapping the mushroom like the instructor, Kaisa strokes it with her forefinger (Figure 4c). At the same time, the instructor provides a verbal description of how the mushroom feels to the touch, *se on, ko se ei oo menny vielä pehmeeksi* ('it is, 'cause it hasn't gone soft yet' 1.3,5). Both the instructor's bodily actions and his verbal turn guide Kaisa to experience the mushroom in a particular way and to focus on particular characteristics of it. That is, here the instructor guides Kaisa to consider the feel of the mushroom rather than some visual characteristics of it, such as color, shape or size. After having stroked the cap of the mushroom, Kaisa acknowledges the instructor's characterization of it with an aligning *mmm* (1.8) and withdraws her hand (Figure 4d).

In the meantime, the instructor begins a turn in which he refers to the leathery surface of the cap, which seems to be evoked by Kaisa's stroking, rather than tapping, the cap of the mushroom. Stroking and tapping enable quite different types of access to the mushroom: stroking is a gentle way of feeling the surface of the mushroom, whereas tapping gives better access to the texture of the mushroom beneath the surface (e.g. softness or firmness). As the instructor's earlier demonstration was done via tapping, his verbal characterization of the leathery surface of the mushroom (1.7) can be seen to indicate that Kaisa is not touching the mushroom in the way intended, and so the instructor's turn performs a subtle correction (see Jefferson 1987 on 'embedded correction'; Keevalik 2010 on 'embodied correction'). In other words, the fine distinction between the two sensorial practices, tapping and stroking, is here treated as relevant and consequential for the classification work involved in mushroom picking. This is most clearly visible in the instructor's assessment *se on kuitenkin napakka* ('it is nonetheless firm' 1.7,9), which verbalizes the outcome of the participants' shared sensory inspection of the mushroom. Two more assessments close the sequence (1.10,13).

Examples 3 and 4 have shown how participants may engage in inspecting mushrooms together and, more specifically, how participants aim to achieve shared understandings of the classification of mushrooms by experiencing and guiding others to experience particular features of mushrooms in sensory ways, for example, by touching or smelling them. The final example in this section further highlights the negotiable – and essentially learnable – nature of such experiences. As the handling of mushrooms takes place progressively and is visually available to other co-present participants, it allows for the online monitoring of the sensorial practices that others employ and of the understandings that they thus display (see Mondada 2011, 2016, 2019). The focus of guided inspection in Example 5 is on how to assess and appreciate individual specimens (see Wiggins/Potter 2010 on assessments of 'items' vs. 'categories').

In Example 5, a family of three is picking morel mushrooms. The child is a little over a year old, and the parents support and help her throughout the recording. The father holds the camera and does not appear on the video. At the beginning of the excerpt, the child and the mother cut a mushroom by its stem, with the child holding a knife and the mother having a hold of the child's knife-holding hand with her right hand and having a grip on the mushroom with her left hand. The mother is standing behind the child and reaching over the child for the mushroom (Figure 5b).

(5) 02 HANS Picking mushrooms (00:01:15)

01 DAD: #Hh::h[ehe
 mom >>cuts mushroom-->
 chi >>RH holds knife-->
 fig #5a
 02 MOM: [they'•re so thic•k.
 -->•LH lifts mushroom•LH holds mushroom-->



Fig 5a. The mother cuts the mushroom by its stem.

03 ␣(1.0)
 mom ␣RH removes litter from mushroom-->
 04 MOM: th[ick.
 05 CHI: [(henh?)
 06 (0.5)␣(0.2)
 mom -->␣RH grasps and pulls knife from child's hand-->
 07 MOM: feel th•is. #h[ere, (I want) you to hold it.]
 08 DAD: [look at the size of that] thi␣+:ng.+
 mom -->•LH brings mushroom closer to child-->
 fig #5b
 mom -->␣
 chi -->+RH lets go
 of knife+



Fig 5b. The mother guides the child to hold the mushroom.

09 MOM: h+old this mushroom.
 chi +grasps mushroom with both hands-->

10 #(0.2)•(0.2)•
 mom -->•LH lets go of mushroom•
 fig #5c



Fig 5c. The child holds the mushroom.

11 DAD: awesome.
 12 MOM: isn't it bi+::g?#
 chi -->+lifts mushroom up to nose & mouth-->
 fig #5d



Fig 5d. The child smells the mushroom.

13 DAD: wh[oah,
 14 CHI: [(--)
 15 MOM: mmm[::::,,]
 16 DAD: [does it sm]+ell [good?]
 chi -->+lowers mushroom-->
 17 CHI: [ooh::]+:::,,
 -->+

The mother and the father treat the mushrooms that they are currently picking as already known to them; that is, they have completed the necessary classification prior to the excerpt. As an indication of this, the father has assessed the mushrooms that they are currently picking as big ones and the mother has aligned with the assessment. The participants have in this way already established a positive evaluation of their find. As the mother and the child now cut together one mushroom from a cluster and begin to lift it off the ground (Figure 5a), the mother produces another assessment, *they're so thick* (1.2). Although the assessment may be based on visual evidence that all the participants have access to, it may also imply the mother's tactile experience of the mushroom, which she has gained by both cutting the stem and holding the mushroom in her hand. After the mother has removed some litter from the mushroom, she grasps the knife again and begins to pull it slowly from the child's hand. She also brings the mushroom closer to the child. Verbally, the mother

directs the child to *feel this* and *hold it* (1.7; Figure 5b). The mother is thus offering the child tactile access to the mushroom and an opportunity to experience for herself its thickness, or its size more generally. In other words, the child is given the opportunity to engage in guided inspection of the mushroom, whereby she is directed to focus her attention on its tactile features.

Once the child has let go of the knife, the mother directs her to *hold this mushroom* (1.9) and the child grasps the mushroom with both hands. This is different from Examples 3 and 4 in which the instructors continued to hold the mushroom themselves. Because the focus here is on the size and weight of the mushroom, in contrast with the smell or feel of it, it becomes relevant for the child to be able to hold the mushroom herself. The child first holds the mushroom in front of her, looking at it, and then lifts the mushroom up to her nose and mouth (Figures 5c-5d). Holding the mushroom under her nose, the child lets out a vocalization of some kind (1.14). The parents continue to provide appreciative vocalizations (1.13,15), building the one by the child into joint positive assessment. The father then offers an interpretation of the child's conduct in asking *does it smell good* (1.16). In doing so, the father ratifies the child's smelling the mushroom as appropriate conduct in the mushroom-picking context and also strengthens the positive, appreciative frame of interpretation in which the parents have guided the child to experience the find.

In Examples 3 and 4, which include only adult participants, the less experienced foragers are guided to inspect the mushroom with the more experienced ones first engaging in the inspection themselves and then giving others the possibility to experience specific features of the mushroom. In these cases, the inspection is done for the purposes of classification and extraction of relevant features of the find. In Example 5, guided inspection relates to the assessment of a specimen of a mushroom species that has already been classified, and the parents can be seen to use this as a way of socializing the child into appreciating their finds and, thus, their family activity of picking mushrooms. A certain future orientation is present in all the examples in this section: being able to identify a distinctive smell, or a certain texture, here and now provides the potential for being able to do so also in the future. That is, the sensorial practices that participants have now demonstrated and tested can be employed on other occasions, too.

5. Challenges in extracting relevant characteristics during inspection

Information gained through the senses is difficult to share because language escapes descriptions of what a "bad" or a "good" smell, for example, is really like (see Levinson/Majid 2014). This is why expertise and skills in the extraction of relevant features and subsequent classification of mushrooms is necessarily best gained in and through touching, smelling, and looking at mushrooms together. Furthermore, as with classification work in general (see Roth 2005), participants may become aware of the relevance and restrictions of sharing sensory experiences only when some trouble or uncertainty is encountered. Example 7 presents one such case. The instructor on a mushroom-picking excursion has problems in extracting a relevant olfactory feature of a mushroom. At this point on the excursion, the participants are sitting at a picnic table by a creek and going through the mushrooms that they have

picked so far. An excursion participant, Anna, has a moment earlier located a specific mushroom near the instructor on the table and asked what kind of a mushroom it is.

(6) 07 HANS Sieniretki (00:44:00)

```

01      +(0.6)+(0.8)
      ins      +locates and picks mushroom up with RH+
      ins      +looks at mushroom, cap up-->
02 ANN: mikä hapero se on.
      what kind of a russula is it
03      (0.4)+ (0.7) # (0.9) +(1.2)+
      ins      -->+smells mushroom+looks at mushroom, mushroom
      fig      sideways+
      fig      #6a

```



Fig 6a. The instructor smells the mushroom.

04 INS: +tämän kuuluis haista +sillille.+
 ins +looks at mushroom, cap up+turns mushroom sideways+
 this is supposed to smell like herring
 05 +(1.2)
 ins +smells mushroom-->
 06 ANN: hä.
 what
 (0.6)+(0.1)
 07 ins -->+breaths on mushroom-->
 08 MAR: niin, se on se silli#°hapero.°
 fig #6b
 right it is the herring russula ((Russula xerampelina))



Fig 6b. The instructor breaths on the mushroom.

```
09      (2.2)+
ins      -->+looks at mushroom, mushroom sideways-->
```

- 10 INS: **mä lämmitän tätä+ vähän josko se**
I warm this up a little to see whether it
 -->+lifts mushroom up to nose-->
- 11 **rupeais (.) tekemään mitä sen täytyy tehdä.+**
would start doing what it is supposed to do
 -->+
- 12 **+(1.0)**
 ins +smells mushroom-->
- 13 MAI: **[() se oli vähän- () [() [aivan silli se-**
it was a bit just like herring tha-
- 14 INS: **[mulla puuttuu-+ [+mä- [mää,**
I'm missing- I- I
 ins -->+wipes nose with RH+
- 15 X: **oli.**
it was
- 16 MAI: **[()**
- 17 INS: **[+mää tarviin tähän nyt]+ apua koska, (.)**
I need help here now because
 +waves mushroom in the air+turns cap downwards-->
- 18 **kattokaa haistakaa te saatteko tästä sillin**
you look you smell {it} whether you get a herring
- 19 **hajun + α koska mun nenästä o- α vähän α pahasesti puuttuu α**
smell because my nose unfortunately lacks
 -->+
- mar α reaches----- α takes- α holds mushroom--- α
- 20 **α #reseptoreita (0.4) α silli[n hajun tunnistamisessa,**
some receptors for identifying the herring smell
 mar α smells mushroom--- α
 fig #6c



Fig 6c. Marja (bottom right) smells the mushroom.

- 21 MAR: **[α haisee,**
it does smell,
 α passes mushroom left-->>

At the beginning of the excerpt, Anna specifies her earlier question by adding a potential species, 'russula' (l.2), thereby displaying some ability to identify the mushroom. However, the instructor avoids answering immediately. Instead, she picks up the mushroom from the table and begins to smell it (l.3,5; Figure 6a). In so doing, the instructor displays that the smell is a central characteristic to consider before a further classification can be made.

The instructor continues to guide the participants to attend to the smell of the mushroom by using a descriptor, *silli* 'herring', to indicate that this is the smell she

would expect the mushroom to emit (1.4). During her turn, the instructor also inspects the mushroom briefly from a distance before raising it up again to smell it. Apparently, the instructor is not able to sense the desired smell as she next moves on to breath on the mushroom, explaining that warming up the mushroom might help in making the smell detectable (1.10-11; Figure 6b). In the meantime, Anna's open-class repair initiator *hää* ('what', 1.6) and Marja's more knowledgeable turn in which she is able to name the mushroom, *niin, se on se sillihapero* ('right, it is the herring russula' 1.8), display the different positions that the two excursion participants take towards describing the smell. For Anna the appropriateness of the descriptor is evidently contestable, while for Marja the connection of the descriptor 'herring' to a specific type of mushroom is clear. Yet another participant, Maija, joins the conversation at this point, relating her own past experiences about the herring smell (1.13).

Thus far, the instructor has demonstrated and explained how to induce the smell from the mushroom, but she has not been able to sense the smell herself. Finally, she asks the excursion participants to help her in detecting the smell (1.17-20). As her explanation shows, and following events further confirm, people's sense of smell varies from one person to the next. For some of the excursion participants, the herring smell is very strong: the first excursion participant to smell the mushroom, Marja, can detect the smell immediately (1.21; Figure 6c). After the excerpt, the mushroom is handed over from one participant to the next, everyone taking turns to smell it.

Example 6 has illustrated how a distinct smell is one of the strongest identifying features of this and many other mushrooms (see Example 4). Direct access to the wild produce is therefore necessary to be able to develop one's sense of what, for example, a 'good smell' (Example 5) or 'a herring smell' (Example 6) may in effect be like. Sensory experiences are ineffable, but participants learn, through repeated exposure and practice, to use descriptors that are shared to a sufficient degree. For instance, upon being exposed to a particular smell that others simultaneously describe in appreciative terms, a participant may learn to perceive the smell as pleasant, or someone who is not able to detect a particular smell themselves may learn to identify the relevant context, so to speak, where a certain descriptor is typically used.

6. Conclusion

Just like many other human activities, foraging – and mushroom picking, in particular – essentially involves classification: before they carry their finds into their homes and possibly onto their plates, participants need to determine whether particular species or specimens are poisonous but possibly edible; edible and perhaps even palatable; inedible but usable for other purposes; inedible and also otherwise unusable, and so on. In our data, the less experienced foragers often settle for classifying their finds on the basis of such functions alone, whereas for the more experienced foragers, possible functions typically go together with the names of the genus and species. In either case, the participants orient to the relevance of having access to a find and experiencing it first-hand. That is, in order to classify and assess their finds, participants have to take into account the sensory qualities relating to the appearance, feel and smell of the mushrooms. In the examples that we have

examined, the participants engage in sensory inspection of the mushrooms and also guide others in such inspection to extract relevant, characteristic features. By employing particular sensorial practices and guiding others in doing the same, the more experienced foragers demonstrate how exactly this can be done. Furthermore, in talking about and handling the mushrooms in specific ways, the participants display their various levels of expertise on mushrooms and mushroom picking. Indeed, the handling of wild produce in sharing finds provides one interesting context in which to examine participants' practices for organizing sensoriality as a shared experience. Sequences of sharing also provide the basis for examining how mushrooms as living, evolving objects serve the collaborative construction of shared understandings of what foraging is, depending on who the participants are, and what kind of a mushroom is at stake.

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