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# The use of *demo*-prefaced response displacement for being a listener to distressful experiences in Japanese interaction

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**Abstract:** This study draws on video recordings of interactions between volunteers and evacuees from the areas affected by the March 2011 nuclear power plant explosions in Japan's Fukushima prefecture. This article has two purposes. The first is to provide a conversation analytic description of a set of interactional practices: displacing responses from their unmarked status as responses to immediately preceding turn-at-talk. The second is to explicate the ways in which the volunteers use the practices in post-disaster communication to address difficulties in affiliating with evacuees who are assumed to have had distressful experiences. The practices, with the Japanese word *demo* ('but') deployed at the turn-beginning position, propose that participants selectively focus on one aspect of the ongoing talk. The volunteers use them to accomplish "being a listener" appropriately in their interactions with the evacuees.

**Keywords:** *demo*-prefaced response displacement, conversation analysis, distressful experiences, affiliation, Great East Japan Earthquake

## 1 Introduction

This article has two purposes. The first is to provide a conversation analytic description of a set of interactional practices: displacing responses from their unmarked status as responses to the immediately preceding turn-at-talk. These practices selectively respond to one particular aspect of the ongoing talk (rather than responding to the immediately preceding turn) and propose that aspect as the focus for the talk. The practices are prefaced with the Japanese conjunction *demo*, which functions in a manner similar to the English word *but*, that is, as a

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contrastive marker. In fact, the *demo*-prefaced response maintains a certain contrastive relationship between the proposed aspect and other possible aspects implicated by immediately preceding exchanges and preserves the latter aspects as alternative foci.

The second purpose is to explicate the ways in which volunteers use the practices in post-disaster communication to address difficulties in “being a listener” to recounted distressful experiences of evacuees (see also Kuroshima and Iwata 2016). Although the practices are not unique to such communication, such practices may be particularly useful in the type of interaction in which affiliation is required but not easily accomplished because of the assumed asymmetry of experiences between the participants (Heritage 2011). The volunteers can use the response displacement to selectively respond to an aspect of the evacuees’ talk with respect to which they may feel most entitled to display their affiliation.

This study draws on video recordings of interactions between volunteers and evacuees from the areas affected by the March 2011 nuclear power plant explosions in Japan’s Fukushima Prefecture, northeast of Tokyo.<sup>1</sup> These interactions took place during one particular activity at emergency shelters and temporary housing sites: “footbath volunteering.” The volunteer coordinators defined footbath volunteering as a variation of active listening volunteering. The volunteers are laypeople, such as college students, who communicate with the evacuees while providing them with footbaths and hand massages (see Nishizaka and Sunaga [2015] for the interactional organization of the activity).

*Psychological First Aid: Field Operations Guide* (National Child Traumatic Stress Network and National Center for Posttraumatic Stress Disorder 2006) is a detailed guide for communication with survivors at disaster sites. According to the guide, such communications should aim to provide the survivors with emotional comfort, offering them appropriate information and addressing their needs and concerns. Footbath volunteering also provides an important opportunity for volunteers to learn about the evacuees’ immediate needs and concerns. In fact, volunteers are instructed to write down the details of the evacuees’ recounting after their interactions and to give this written information to their volunteer coordinators.

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**1** The Great East Japan Earthquake in northeastern Japan (11 March 2011) triggered destructive tsunamis and killed more than 18,000 people. The tsunami caused explosions at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant. To escape the radiation emitted by the explosions, more than 110,000 people evacuated their hometowns.

This study explores a particular way in which communication with the evacuees was *actually* achieved during and immediately after their stay at emergency shelters. All of the volunteers involved, after arriving at their volunteer sites, received brief instructions regarding how to proceed with hand massaging and foot bathing and how to converse with evacuees (particularly what not to say). They had to follow these instructions and maintain communications in response to every emerging local interactional contingency (see Garfinkel 1967, 2002).

The local contingent accomplishment of actions in interaction is methodical. Methodical ways of such accomplishment can only be examined in the details of the interaction that may elude any analytic framework imposed by researchers on the data (Sacks 1992). Conversation analysis (Schegloff 2007) provides a systematic methodology to explore participants' practices for the organization of interaction and to ground observations in the participants' understandings and orientations through the detailed analysis of each single fragment of "naturally occurring" interaction. This study uses conversation analysis to elucidate a set of particular practices, *demo*-prefaced response displacement practices, for being an affiliative listener in interaction in which distressful experiences are possibly recounted.

All of the target responses that will be examined are assessments or commentaries. As Jefferson (1981a) noted, assessments can be "technically affiliative" in the sense that "[t]hey at least provide a [+/-] result (e. g., 'Well that's good' or 'Well that's too bad,' respectively). And, with the proffering of such a result of analysis, they are technically 'affiliative'; i. e., they at least concur with prior talk" (Jefferson 1981a: 43; see also Stivers 2008; Stivers et al. 2011). The same holds true of commentaries; the commentaries in the target responses display a certain (+/-) position toward the interlocutor's talk, although they do not contain any evaluative terms (such as "good/bad"). For example, a comment on the length of the interlocutor's stay at an emergency shelter, such as "it has been long", can be heard as displaying a (-) position toward the stay. All the assessments and commentaries in the target responses are affiliative in that they concur with the position expressed or implied by their recipient's preceding talk.

One may consider affiliation with others' position to be potentially difficult because of the difficulty of directly accessing other minds. In fact, Weber (1972), who spoke of direct understanding of the subjective meaning of actions, also pondered the potential difficulties of fully understanding, in particular, the irrational or emotional meaning of actions. However, the position implicated by the speaker's talk is fully (for all practical purposes) accessible and treated as such by the recipient in the details of their interaction. The difficulty of affiliation, as we will see, does not originate in the inaccessibility of other minds but

rather in the social distribution of entitlements to experiences and emotions (Heritage 2011; Sacks 1992). How volunteers address the difficulty of affiliation as a practical problem can be directly examined through the detailed analysis of talk-in-interaction.

## 2 Data and method

From July 2011 to April 2012, we videotaped approximately forty “footbath volunteering” interactions with the informed consent of all those involved. In the Fukushima data, there were ten cases in which volunteers appear to respond to something other than the evacuees’ immediately preceding turn(s) to affiliate with the evacuees. All of the ten cases involve the Japanese word *demo* in a certain way. Using conversation analysis, I will elucidate what exactly the volunteers do in these responses by presenting detailed analyses of four of these cases. I will also examine additional examples from more ordinary settings to make a case for the claim to be made in this study. The number of cases of the targeted practices is small, but the detailed analysis of each of the four cases and its juxtaposition with other cases (including a contrastive case) generated a robust description of the practices.

## 3 Three types of targeted practices: an overview

I located three types of *demo*-prefaced response displacement practices. The first type is the practice of responding to an earlier portion of interaction without being “referentially contrastive” (Schiffrin 1987) to the immediately preceding exchange; the *demo*-prefacing here looks like a return device (exemplified by Excerpt [1]). The second is the practice of responding to an earlier portion of interaction but also preserving the referentially contrastive relationship to the immediately preceding exchange (Excerpt [2]). The third is the practice of responding to a newly extracted aspect without referentially-contrastively relating to the immediately preceding exchange nor responding to any particular portion of preceding exchanges (Excerpt [3]). All of these types can be characterized as the displacement of a *demo*-prefaced response from its unmarked status as a response to the immediately preceding turn. In juxtaposition of these three types, I argue: (a) the *demo*-prefaced responses selectively address one particular aspect of the ongoing talk (this aspect may or may not be explicitly mentioned in an earlier portion of the talk or newly extracted from

the preceding talk), and (b) these responses maintain a certain contrastive relationship between the addressed aspect and other possible aspects implicated by preceding exchanges.

In order to demonstrate these points, I first present the most typical case of the first type and explore how the case exhibits features that differentiate it from those presented in the literature (Section 4). Then, I present two other cases that exemplify the second and third types, respectively, and juxtapose them with the first case to explicate what kind of displacement the *demo*-prefaced response displacement is (Section 5). Following this explication, I discuss some implications of these displacement practices, in particular, in the context where affiliation with recounted distressful experiences is expected to be displayed (Section 6).

## 4 Practice of responding to an earlier exchange: the first type

### 4.1 An example

Excerpt (1) (a lengthy fragment) provides a typical example of the first type of the targeted practice.<sup>2</sup> It is from an interaction between a volunteer (VOL) and an evacuee (EVA) who had been living in temporary housing since the nuclear power plant explosions. At the beginning of the excerpt, EVA discloses that she is having her dogs taken care of by someone (line 1).

In lines 11 through 15, EVA tells VOL that it is helpful for elderly people like her to have their dogs taken care of by volunteers. After this, three “topic shifts” ensue.<sup>3</sup> The first shift is initiated by EVA; after two consecutive

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<sup>2</sup> All of the excerpts cited in this article are composed of three tiers. At each numbered line, there is a Romanized version of the original Japanese. Below this is a phrase-by-phrase gloss. Finally, the third tier presents a rough English translation. See the appendix for the transcription conventions. Next to the excerpt numbers are the interaction identifications and the pages and lines of the original transcript in parentheses.

<sup>3</sup> Maynard (1980) noted that those utterances that can be considered as *topic changes* “are unrelated to the talk in prior turns in that they utilize new referents, and they implicate and occasion a series of utterances constituting a different line of talk” (Maynard 1980: 264). In contrast, *topic shifts* “involve a move from one aspect of a topic to another in order to occasion a different set of mentionables” (Maynard 1980: 271).



- 16 VOL: *n:: ɾ:::n*  
Yeah.
- 17 EVA: *ʌ(fu):::nn*  
Yeah.
- 18 (0.6)
- 19 VOL: *'a ɾtashi mo-ɾn?*  
I also huh?  
I also- Huh?
- 20 EVA: *ʌmæ↓wa ʌne go:↑:hiki ↓gurai katte ta=*  
previously PART five about own PAST  
Previously, ((I)) owned five or so =
- 21 =*xxx ni i ɾta to↓ki*  
PART was when  
= when I was in XXX ((town name)).
- 22 VOL: *ʌe? iɳu:::?*  
huh? dog  
Huh? Dogs?
- 23 EVA: *n i↓nu:*  
Yeah, dogs.
- 24 VOL: *e e::: ɾ::*  
Wow!
- 25 EVA: *ʌn::↓n ɾdakedo↓moɳ byooki ni*  
yeah but ill to
- 26 *natta↓ri:: ne .h*  
became PART  
Yeah, but they became ill, and [Lines 25-27]
- 27 VOL: *ʌsu::go↓i ɳ*  
Amazing!
- 28 EVA: *yappa' toshi kut↓te naku nat↑tari*  
as\_expected old become die\_POL PAST
- 29 *shi ɾ↓(ta)*  
do PAST  
as usual, they became old, and passed away.  
[Lines 28-29]
- 30 VOL: *ʌu:::ɾ:::n*  
I see.
- 31 EVA: *ʌ°°nn°°*  
Mm
- 32 EVA: *'nde choo::do ni↓hiki nokotte ↓↓ta °°no°°*  
and just two remain PAST PART  
Then, just two remained ((when I evacuated)).
- 33 *ɾɾ(n::nn n::↓n)*  
Yeah.

- 34 VOL:   <sup>L</sup>*aa soo*::  
          I see.
- 35           (0.6)
- 36 VOL:   *nansai*↓ *guraj no inu nan'des'* ↑*ka*?  
          how\_old about PART dog   JDG    ITR  
          **How old are they?**
- 37           (0.2)
- 38 EVA:   *ima ikite'n* ↓*no ga ne*:: ↑<*hassai*>  
          now live   PART PART PART 8\_years
- 39           <sub>r</sub>↓*ka*↑*na*  
          I\_wonder  
          **Those still alive are eight years old, perhaps.**  
          **[Lines 38-39]**
- 40 VOL:   <sup>L</sup>*ga: soo*::  
          I see.
- 41 EVA:   *hassai* ↓*to ni sai* ↑*ha*↓*n*  
          8\_years and 2\_years half  
          **Eight years and two and half years.**
- 42           (2.4)
- 43 VOL: → *demo* ↓*azu*↑*katte mora*↓*tte yo*↑*katta* ↓*ne*;  
          but       keep       have       good       PART  
          **Demo [but] that's good you could leave them in  
          the care of someone.**

turns occupied by acknowledgment tokens (lines 16 and 17) and a small gap (line 18), EVA mentions the number of dogs that she previously had owned (lines 20 through 23) and the number of dogs that remained when she evacuated her hometown (line 32). After a small gap (line 35), VOL initiates the second topic shift with an inquiry regarding the surviving dogs' ages (line 36), and, in lines 38, 39 and 41, EVA answers the inquiry. After the completion of EVA's answer, a substantial silence ensues in line 42. Following the silence, VOL returns to the topic of certain volunteers taking care of EVA's dogs, offering a positive assessment of the current situation (line 43).

VOL's affiliative assessment in line 43, which accomplishes the third topic shift, has three characteristic features. First, as mentioned above, the assessment responds to EVA's telling before line 15, rather than responding to EVA's immediately preceding turn. In particular, it designedly connects back to the exchange in lines 1 through 10. VOL's responses in lines 2 and 5 register the newsworthiness of EVA's disclosure in line 1 (that someone is currently taking care of her dogs). In lines 6 and 7, EVA further discloses that those who are caring for her dogs are volunteers, and, in line 8, VOL responds with the same



phrase as in line 2 (*a soo nan'da* 'Oh, I see'). In line 10, VOL provides a positive assessment of EVA's disclosed situation ('Oh, that's good'). VOL's assessment in line 43 recycles the same phrases that VOL used earlier in lines 5 and 10 (*azukatte moratte* 'you could leave them in the care of someone' and *yokatta* 'that's good', respectively), thereby recognizably connecting to the earlier exchange. Thus, VOL's assessment in line 43 is displaced from the unmarked "next"-positioned status (see Jefferson 1981b; Sacks 1992: Lecture 4, Spring 1972, for the unmarked nature of the next position for responses).

The second characteristic feature of VOL's assessment in line 43 is the fact that, although prefaced by the word *demo*, which can be used as a contrastive marker, the assessment does *not* appear to be referentially contrastive to the preceding turns, in which EVA mentions the dogs' ages.

Third, in contrast to VOL's assessment in line 43, the one in line 10, which responds to EVA's immediately preceding turns, does not involve *demo*, even though the same evaluative phrase (i. e. *yokatta* 'that's good') comprises the core component of both assessment responses. The word *demo* in VOL's response may be related to the displacement of the response.

Thus, *demo*-prefacing may appear to be a device for returning to an earlier point. However, in what follows, I will argue that the *demo*-prefaced practice of returning to an earlier point is a special case of the more general practice of selectively addressing an aspect of the ongoing talk. To do so, first, I compare the above analysis of Excerpt (1) with previous findings on how a contrastive marker functions.

## 4.2 Comparisons with previous findings

Schiffrin (1987) observed that the English word *but* can mark a speaker's *return* to a point, in contrast to *and*, which marks a speaker's *continuation*. Mazeland and Huiskes (2001) discussed the Dutch conjunction *maar*, which marks the contrastive relationships of components both within and between turns-at-talk in a manner similar to the English word *but*. *Maar* is used systematically as a "resumption" marker in contrast to what they assumed was rather a simple "continuation" (see Jefferson 1972: 319). They described four characteristics of resumptions with *maar*:

As a rule, [1] resumptions are done by the speaker of the abandoned line of talk. [2] They do long-distance tying by recycling the last telling component that is suited to serve as a basis for the kind of continuation the speaker is working towards. [3] They are done after possible termination of the intervening line of talk. [...] [4] [T]hey are oriented to as prefatory to some kind of elaboration. (Jefferson 1972: 160–161)

Mazeland and Huiskes (2001) also specify two types of environments for resumptions in which a simple continuation of the “abandoned” line of talk after termination of the intervening sequence becomes problematic because of “a kind of digression from the line that [is] returned to”: “(i) after expansion of a repair sequence [...] and (ii) after a competing line of topic development” (Mazeland and Huiskes 2001: 147–148).

However, the targeted practice in Excerpt (1) is different from the resumption of a prematurely aborted line of talk for several reasons. First, in the excerpt, the volunteer’s target turn is the recipient’s assessment *response* to an earlier portion of the evacuee’s talk. That is, the *demo*-prefacing is a *recipient’s*, rather than a teller’s, device. Second, no line of talk was aborted prematurely; after one topic or focus shifted to another and the new topic developed in its own due course, the recipient chose to respond to an earlier portion of the talk. Third, the assessment response is complete and occupies a full turn-at-talk alone. Thus, the *demo*-prefaced response in Excerpt (1) does not return to the earlier talk in the same fashion as the turns with the Dutch *maar* do.

The second and third types of *demo*-prefaced responses further suggest that the *demo*-prefaced displacement is not a simple return to an earlier portion of the ongoing talk. In the next section, I will examine these practices and argue that the *demo*-prefaced responses also maintain a contrastive relationship with the immediately preceding exchanges.

## 5 Two other types of *demo*-prefaced displacements

### 5.1 Double-edged *demo*: the second type

Excerpt (2) is also an example from the Fukushima data. At the beginning of Excerpt (2), EVA tells VOL that her dogs will be neutered (EVA utters the word *choosee* ‘adjust’ instead of *kyosee* ‘neuter’).

In lines 6 through 10, EVA accounts for the neutering: the dog-keeping volunteers are taking care of many dogs in one place, and thus, they need to neuter the male dogs, including EVA’s. Then, in lines 12 through 19, EVA displays a strong negative position toward the neutering. However, in lines 21 through 28, EVA backs down from the strong negative position by mentioning a *brighter* side of the situation (‘They will not be killed anyway’, ‘so that’s all right’, lines 24, 25 and 28).



16 EVA: *son'mama* ↓*ni* ↑*shite* ↓*te* ↑*morae ba ii* ↓*no*  
as\_it\_is PART leave PART given if good PART

17 *ni* ↑*NE*;  
PART PART

**I wish they could leave them and do nothing.**

[Lines 16-17]

18 VOL: *~m aa : : : : : ~ :*  
**O::::h**

19 EVA: *~itai °gmoi sashi° °°↓te°°*  
pain feel cause PART

**That will cause them pain.**

20 (0.2)

21 EVA: *maa shooga* ↓*nai* ↑*ne*; *soo yuu* ↑*kisoku* ↓*da*  
well no\_other\_way PART so like rule JDG

22 *t* ↓ ↓ *tara*  
if

**But there is nothing we can do, if it's the rule.**

[Lines 21-22]

23 VOL: *~.hhh*

((9 lines omitted. They compare various types of volunteers who take care of evacuees' dogs and cats.))

24 EVA: *dakara shoogana* ↓*i* = ↑*betsu ni*  
so no\_other\_way anyway

25 ↑*korosareru* °°*mono*°° °°*ja*°° °°°°*nai*-°°°°  
be\_killed thing JDG not

**So there is nothing we can do. They will not be killed anyway. [Lines 24-25]**

26 VOL: *~°°°°kocchi no te°°°°*  
**This hand.**

27 VOL: °°°°*(ii des' ne?)* °°°°

28 EVA: (*°°°nai kara ii* ↓*ya*°°°)  
**So, that's all right.**

29 (2.8)

30 VOL: →*ima sara* *to oma* *c* ↓ *chau* *yo* ↑ *ne*  
why\_now PART think couldn't\_help PART

31 →*de* ↓ *mo* ↑ *ne*;  
but PART

**Why now, you couldn't help wondering *demo ne*.**

[Lines 30-31]

32 EVA: *so* ↓ *o ne* ↑;  
**Right.**

33 VOL: *~n:n*  
**Mm hm**

In lines 30 and 31 ('Why now, you couldn't help wondering'), VOL displays agreement with the position previously displayed by EVA (the particles *yone* and *ne* make prominent the agreeing nature of the entire utterance). This agreement also contains *demo*, although deployed at its end.<sup>4</sup> This thus-marked response appears to be referentially contrastive with EVA's preceding turns in lines 24, 25 and 28 in the following manner:

EVA: They **will not be killed** anyway. So that's all right. (lines 24, 25 and 28)  
 VOL: But (*demo*) why now [do they **have to be neutered**], you couldn't help wondering. (lines 30 and 31)

At the same time, however, one should note that VOL's response in lines 30 and 31 is constructed specifically as agreement to EVA's position in lines 12 and 13 in the following ways. First, in line 30, VOL recycles the word *omou* ('wonder') that EVA used in line 13. Second, the adverbial phrase *ima sara* ('why now') in line 30 is designedly and hearably directly connected to *son'na koto shi naku tatte* ('do they have to do that') in line 12. In fact, the construction of the phrase is designedly incomplete and highly dependent on the previous talk. Thus, the phrase would not be intelligible without a portion of EVA's turn in line 12 being integrated into it:

EVA: **sonna koto shi naku tatte**to omou n'da kedo sa (lines 12 and 13)  
 VOL: *ima sara* [**sonna koto shi naku tatte**]to omocchau yo ne  
*demo ne* (lines 30 and 31)  
 EVA: **Do they have to do that**, I can't help wondering.  
 VOL: Why [**do they have to do that**] now, you couldn't help wondering.

In this manner, VOL's response in lines 30 and 31 is constructed as recognizably agreeing with EVA's position in lines 12 and 13, while it is referentially contrastive with EVA's immediately preceding talk.

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<sup>4</sup> This fragment contains *demo* at the end instead of at the beginning; that is, *demo* is displaced from its unmarked preface position. I cannot discern any distributive pattern regarding the position of *demo* within a turn (however, see Mori [1999] for an overview). One possible account for the occurrence in Excerpt (2) is that the very beginning of the turn (*ima sara* 'why now') is, as explicated below in the text, constructed as highly dependent on the earlier portion of the talk to which the turn responds; it is designedly constructed as grammatically incomplete. The turn's beginning may have been placed as close as possible to what it depends on. In contrast, the *demo*-prefaced response in Excerpt (1), with *demo* placed at the unmarked preface position, is grammatically complete as constructed, and there may be no need for *demo* to be displaced to the end of the current turn.

In this example, VOL agrees with the position implicated in EVA's earlier turn (lines 12 and 13), which conflicts with the position implicated in EVA's immediately preceding turn. Thus, rather than skipping the immediately preceding exchanges, VOL selectively responds to EVA's negative comments about the planned neutering, which conflict with EVA's immediately preceding, more accepting comments ('there is nothing we can do').

## 5.2 Responding to a newly extracted aspect: the third type

In Excerpt (3), although VOL's target response (a comment on an item discussed in the ongoing talk) also involves *demo*, it does *not* appear to be responsive to any particular portion of the preceding talk. That is, it *cannot* be understood as a return to an earlier portion of the talk in any sense. This case is also from the Fukushima data. EVA in Excerpt (3) was staying at an emergency shelter at the time of the recording. Prior to Excerpt (3), EVA told VOL that her son visits her at the shelter after he is done at work, sometimes very late at night.

In line 1, VOL asks EVA whether she misses her son when she stays alone at the shelter, and, in line 3, EVA answers negatively ('Not at all'). However, later in the exchange, EVA tells VOL that she misses her son at night (lines 11, 12 and 15), and she says: 'it would be better if he were here rather than away' (lines 26 and 27). After this statement, EVA and VOL laugh together (lines 28 and 29). This laughter demonstrates their common understanding that EVA's expanded response has come to an end and their shared stance toward EVA's entire response: possibly, EVA's irresistible disclosure of fondness for her son is funny and heartwarming. Then, following VOL's agreement with EVA (lines 30 and 31) and a substantial silence (line 32), VOL offers a *demo*-prefaced assessing comment on EVA's son in lines 33 and 34.

VOL's *demo*-prefaced comment in lines 33 and 34 has several features. First, although introduced with *demo*, it is not referentially contrastive to EVA's preceding telling (and VOL's preceding agreement with EVA in lines 30 and 31); EVA's missing her son and the son's being lucky are not intelligible as referentially contrastive to each other. Second, the use of *yo* (line 34) implies a claim that the comment originates from its speaker's territory (see Hayano 2011; Kamio 1997). Certainly, the assessing comment about EVA's son is hearably grounded in, and concluded from, EVA's telling: your son is such a lucky person because his mother misses him so badly. However, as far as this assessment is attributed primarily to VOL, who drew it from EVA's talk

(3) [FK24: 06:38-07:32]

- 1 VOL: .h sabishiku nai ↓des' ka nan↓↓ka::  
miss not JDG ITR kind\_of  
**.h Don't you miss him?**
- 2 (1.8)
- 3 EVA: ee:: ze::n↓ ze::n (tsuraku mo) na↓i  
what? not\_at\_all feel\_painful not  
**What? Not at all. I don't (mind).**
- 4 VOL:                    <sup>L</sup>ze(h)n(h) ze(h)n(hhh)  
**No(h)t a(h)t a(h)ll(hhh).**
- 5 VOL: .hh ꞑh
- 6 EVA:                    <sup>L</sup>uchino ko wa ↓neꞑ ꞑchi↑isai toki kara =  
our son PART PART young time since  
**My son, since he was very young,**
- 7 VOL:                    <sup>L</sup>HA:i  
**Yes.**
- 8 EVA: = hitori de: sodatte ik ꞑu kara ↑ne?  
by\_himself grow\_up go so PART  
**has grown up as the only child, so.**
- 9 VOL:                    <sup>L</sup>↓nha:i  
**Yes.**
- 10 (.)
- 11 EVA: ↓dakara .h ↓↓yoruꞑ(h)↑yoku ↑ne? ↓inai to  
so night often PART absent if  
↑ne?  
PART  
**So .h during the night, when he is away,**  
**[Lines 11-12]**
- 13 VOL: ha:i  
**Yes.**
- 14 (0.2)
- 15 EVA: <↑chot↓to> ↑sabishii tteyuu↓ka  
kind\_of miss or  
**I guess I kind of miss him.**
- 16 VOL: aa:: aa:↓::  
**Oh, I see.**
- 17 (0.6)
- 18 EVA: >daremo inai\_< n?  
nobody there\_isn't well  
**Nobody is here, well,**

- 19 EVA:  $\uparrow$ it $\downarrow$ su $\uparrow$ mo ho $\downarrow$ ra sannin de kurashite  $\downarrow$ ya =  
always look three PART live PAST  
**we three used to live together all the time,**
- 20 VOL:  $\downarrow$ soo de $\downarrow$ s' yo  $\uparrow$ ne $\downarrow$ :  
**Right.**
- 21 EVA: =  $\uparrow$ ka $\downarrow$ r  $\uparrow$ a  
**so.**
- 22 VOL:  $\downarrow$ n $\downarrow$ : $\downarrow$ n  
**Mm hm.**
- 23 EVA: hitoride kocchi (n)i ki te  $\downarrow$ kara  $\uparrow$ ne:?  
by\_myself here to come because PART  
**I live here by myself, so.**
- 24 VOL:  $\downarrow$ n $\downarrow$ : $\downarrow$ n  
**Mm hm.**
- 25 (0.6)
- 26 EVA: yappari .hh <ingai yori ita hoo  $\downarrow$ ga>  
as\_expected away than present than PART
- 27  $\uparrow$ ij  $\downarrow$ na  
good PART  
**But after all, .hh it would be better if he were here rather than away. [Lines 26-27]**
- 28 EVA:  $\uparrow$  $\uparrow$ ahah hah hah hah hah hahhhhh
- 29 VOL:  $\downarrow$  $\downarrow$ uHEH HEH HEH HEHhhhhhhhh .hhh
- 30 VOL:  $\downarrow$ so $\downarrow$ des'  $\downarrow$ yo ne: $\downarrow$ £ yappa $\downarrow$ ri  $\downarrow$  $\downarrow$ ne: $\downarrow$ : $\downarrow$ :  
so JDG PART PART as\_expected PART  
**That's right. It would be, after all.**
- 31 VOL: n $\downarrow$ : $\downarrow$ : $\uparrow$ : $\downarrow$ n  
**Mm mm.**
- 32 (1.4)
- 33 VOL:  $\rightarrow$  >°e demo°< musuko san shi $\uparrow$ awase des'  
PART but son HNR lucky JDG
- 34  $\rightarrow$   $\downarrow$ yo=nan'ka  $\uparrow$ ( )  $\uparrow$ hihyehhh  
PART it\_seems  
**E demo [but] your son is lucky, I think. [Lines 33-34]**
- 35 EVA:  $\downarrow$ ij $\downarrow$ e  
**No!**
- 36 EVA: kekkoo\_ yasashii n' da  $\downarrow$ yo: $\downarrow$   
unexpectedly generous JDG PART  
**But in fact he is generous to me.**
- 37 (.)
- 38 EVA:  $\uparrow$  $\uparrow$ a ha ha ha ha ha ha ha h h h h h  $\downarrow$ h h h
- 39 VOL:  $\downarrow$  $\downarrow$ a $\uparrow$ A £ $\downarrow$ honto des\_' ka: $\downarrow$ £ ahahahhhh .hhh  
**Oh really.**



(*nanka* ‘it seems’ in line 34 marks the inferential nature of the assessment), it can be news to EVA. Thus, in that comment, VOL appears to *newly* extract one particular aspect (EVA’s son’s situation in relation to his mother) from EVA’s talk rather than connecting it to what actually occurred earlier in EVA’s talk.<sup>5</sup>

### 5.3 What kind of displacement *demo*-prefaced displacement is: proposing one focus among alternative foci

In the juxtaposition of these three examples, I will explicate what kind of displacement *demo*-prefaced response displacement is. Based on observations on *demo*-prefacing in the context of “dispreferred” responses (such as disagreement), Mori (1999) characterized *demo* as a marker for a shift in perspective, proposing the following possibility:

[I]t may be possible to assume that the *demo*, which marks a contrast between the perspectives expressed by different participants, has the effect of displaying the recipients’ engagement in the collaborative construction of coherent discourse towards a legitimate conclusion. Thus, a marker like *demo* may simultaneously exhibit both the recipients’ acceptance of the perspectives presented in the prior talk and their declaration of conflicting perspectives. (Mori 1999: 107)

In fact, the target response in Excerpt (2) (lines 30 and 31) presents a perspective that conflicts with the interlocutor’s perspective presented in the immediately preceding turn. On the other hand, the target responses in Excerpt (1) (line 43) and in Excerpt (3) (lines 33 and 34) do not appear to declare any “conflicting perspectives,” as Mori (1999) suggested.

However, one should note that the target responses in Excerpts (1) and (3) accomplish topic shifts: from the dogs’ ages to the previous topic (i. e. the dogs being in the care of volunteers), and from EVA’s feeling about her son to the son’s feeling (i. e. possible happiness), respectively. I examine two examples of *demo*-prefaced topic shift that are not cases of the targeted practices (they originate from ordinary conversation, not from the Fukushima data). Although researchers have observed the topic-shift function of *demo*-prefacing (Mori 1999; Onodera 2004), I expose the as-yet explicitly undescribed properties of the topic shift function of *demo*-prefacing. These properties characterize a certain contrastive relationship between the targeted practices and their immediately preceding exchanges in Excerpts (1) and (3).

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<sup>5</sup> VOL’s comment in lines 33 and 34 contains the particle *e* at its beginning. This particular particle, which marks certain types of unexpectedness, also may contribute to the sense of disjunction between the current turn and the preceding turn(s) (see Hayashi 2009).

At the beginning of Excerpt (4), three men have been discussing a famous chain of ramen (noodle) shops that they regard highly. In response to B's inquiry, A has just explained where the shop is located in a town called Nakano.

(4) [KB: 17: 25–29]

- 1 B: *aa jaa ano ano >iwayuru< ano: nakano doori*  
oh then uh uh so-called uhn NAME street
- 2 *no: zoi ni arun' rdesu ka*  
PART along exist JDG ITR  
**Oh, then, well, the street known as Nakano Street,  
it's somewhere along there, right? [Lines 1-2]**
- 3 A: *↳soo soo soo rsoo soo.*  
**Right right right right.**
- 4 B: *↳↑a:: a*  
**Oh::**
- 5 C: → *demo yoodai mo umai yo.*  
but NAME also good PART  
**Demo [but] Yodai ((shop name)) is also good.**
- 6 *(0.4)*
- 7 A: *yoodai mo umai ne.*  
NAME also good PART  
**Yodai is good, too.**

In lines 1 and 2, B requests confirmation regarding the shop's exact location, and in line 3, A provides confirmation. Following B's response in line 4 registering the newsworthiness of the information provided by A, C mentions another ramen shop (Yodai) in line 5. This mention introduces a new item in the current conversation, thereby initiating a topic shift. The fact that there is a good ramen shop in one area is not referentially contrastive with the fact that there is another good ramen shop. However, note that C selects another co-member from the collection of commonly characterizable items, i. e. good ramen shops in the Nakano area (see Sacks 1992: Lecture 14, Spring 1967). The *demo*-preface here appears to mark the *another*-ness of the newly introduced item relative to the given domain (i. e. good ramen shops in the area).

The next example (Excerpt [5]) illustrates the same point. Three women have been discussing Hollywood's plan to make a movie of a Japanese cartoon. M and O heard about this plan several years earlier, but N had not heard about it. The plan had yet to be implemented at the time of the conversation, and they have been imagining who would play each character. At the beginning of the excerpt, they are discussing a particular character.

(5) [FFG: 20: 24–36]

- 1 N: *n̩ yada ne: (. ) nhh ɾh*  
 yeah terrible PART  
**Yeah, ((the idea)) is terrible. (. ) nhhh**
- 2 O: *ˌnhehaha .hh*
- 3 N: *ʔtashikaniʔ ˈpɔi kedo: ɾ: yada ne:*  
 certainly like though I\_hate PART  
**He certainly looks the part, but it'd be terrible.**
- 4 O: *ˌn:n*  
**Yeah.**
- 5 O: *n:n yada.*  
**Yeah, it'd be terrible.**
- 6 (0.8)
- 7 N: → *ˈhe::e° >nanka demo are da yo ne:<*  
 I\_see well but that JDG PART PART
- 8 → *sharu wij dansu sa:*  
 NAME PART  
**I see:: >well demo [but] Shall We Dance ((movie title)) has been**
- 9 O: *n:n*  
**Yeah.**
- 10 (0.6)
- 11 N: → *hɡriuddo de sa rimeeku sɑre ta yone.*  
 Hollywood in PART be\_remade PAST PART PART  
**remade in Hollywood, did you know?**

In lines 7, 8 and 11, N mentions a Japanese movie that was remade in Hollywood. This Japanese movie is characterizable as a co-member of the same collection, that is, the collection of Japanese entertainment that has been, or is planned to be, made into Hollywood films.

Thus, *demo*-prefaced topic shifts appear to be based on *another*-ness in the common domain. In other words, *demo*, as a topic-shift marker, indexes a certain contrast between the two items, that is, it marks these items' alternativeness within the same domain.

Now, the target turn in Excerpt (1), also characterizable as a *demo*-prefaced topic shift, appears to selectively respond to an earlier aspect of the ongoing talk as an *alternative* topic to the topics of the immediately preceding exchanges, that is, as topically (rather than referentially) contrastive with the immediately preceding exchanges. The *demo*-prefaced response does not simply return to an earlier portion of the talk. It also preserves a topically contrastive relationship between the prefaced response and its immediately preceding portion of the

ongoing talk: that is, the contrast of the current topical focus with other possible foci. The same is true of the target turn in Excerpt (3), where the aspect newly extracted in VOL's *demo*-prefaced comment is proposed as the focus while preserving aspects implicated in the immediately preceding turns as possible alternative foci. Thus, the target turns in all the excerpts that I examined (Excerpts [1]–[3]) appear to propose that the participants selectively focus on a particular aspect that may or may not be connected to a particular earlier portion of the ongoing talk.<sup>6</sup>

Note also that, in Excerpt (1), after VOL produces the *demo*-prefaced response, she only receives a “repair-initiation” (Schegloff et al. 1977), that is, asking-back indicating a trouble to be repaired (*n?* ‘huh?’ in line 44 of Excerpt [1a]).

(1a) [Continuation of Excerpt 1]

43 VOL: → *demo* ↓*azu* ↑*katte mora* ↓*tte yo* ↑*katta* ↓*ne* ɾ<sub>2</sub>  
 but keep have good PART

***Demo* [but] that's good you could leave them in  
 the care of someone.**

44 EVA: ɿ<sub>2</sub>*n?*  
**Huh?**

45 VOL: *azukatte mo* ɾ<sub>1</sub>*rat* ↓*te yo* ↑*kat* ↓*ta*:  
**That's good you could leave them in the care of  
 someone.**

46 EVA: ɿ<sub>1</sub>↑*soo na* ↓*no*: (.h)  
**That's right.**

Then (in line 45), VOL repeats the same words as in line 43 (i. e. *azukatte moratte yokatta* ‘that’s good you could leave them in the care of someone’), but the *demo*-preface does not appear. That is, *demo* can be “dispensed with” (Schegloff 2004) when the response is moved away from the intervening exchanges. This evidences the fact that the *demo*-prefacing operates on the relationship between the intervening exchanges and the current response rather than between the earlier (responded-to) portion of the talk and the current response.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Yasui (2012) examined four cases in which a recipient of troubles-talk utters the expression *demo wakaru* (‘but I understand’). It seems that the analysis in the present study also sheds light on this interesting phenomenon; the utterance can be heard as claiming a *selective* understanding of the talk.

<sup>7</sup> As far as *demo* is “dispensable,” it is not an integral part of the action in progress (see Bolden 2010); *demo* only marks the current turn’s displaced relationship to the preceding exchanges.

## 5.4 A contrastive case

Now, in order to further argue that *demo*-prefaced responses do not simply return to an earlier portion by skipping (and thereby ignoring) the intervening line of talk, I compare the *demo*-prefaced turns with an instance of the simple return to a previous portion of the ongoing talk where the recognizable reattempt can be done without *demo*-prefacing. In Excerpt (6), from the Fukushima data, VOL's response in line 13, without *demo*-prefacing, is a simple return to an earlier topic. At the beginning of Excerpt (6), EVA, the speaker of the ongoing talk, has been telling VOL, the recipient, that the third wave of the tsunami reached the third floor of a building.

(6) [FK 2-3: 07:35–08:05]

- 1 EVA: <*san* ↓*gai*::>  
**The third floor.**
- 2 VOL: <£*chotto*::£> *ka*(*h*)*nga*(*h*)*e* *ra*(*h*)*re*(*h*)  
a\_little imagine can\_be
- 3 *ra*(*h*)*i* *de*(*h*)*s'* *ne*(*h*) .*h* *ha*(*h*)↓*i*  
not JDG PART OK  
**Well it's u(h)ni(h)ma(h)gi(h)na(h)ble(h) . .h**  
**OK(h). [Lines 2-3]**
- 4 EVA: *ah* *hah* *hah* *hah* *hah* *hhh*
- 5 EVA: £*ka*::*ngae* *rare* *na*-£  
**It's unimagina-**
- 6 VOL: *Lastuku* *nai* *des'* *ka?* (.)  
too\_hot not JDG ITR  
**Isn't it too hot? (.)**
- 7 VOL: *o*↓*yu* *r*:  
hot\_water  
**The hot water?**
- 8 EVA: *a*::*tsuku* *nee*  
**Not too hot.**
- 9 VOL: *daijoo*↓*bu* *des'* ↑*ka* *r*:?  
**Is it all right?**
- 10 EVA: *dai* *rjoobu* ↓*s'*↑:  
**It's all right.**
- 11 VOL: *j* *a'* *j* *kondo*  
then now
- 12 VOL: *kocchi* *no* *te* *iki* *mas'* ↓*ne*:  
this PART hand do JDG PART  
**Then, now I will do this hand.**
- 13 VOL: → .*hh* <(waka↓*n'*) ↑*so*::*n*↓*na*::>  
(no\_idea) that  
**.hh (Unbelieva-) That's ((terrible))**

In lines 2 and 3, VOL comments on the height of the tsunami. In line 6, overlapping EVA's agreeing comment (line 5), VOL initiates a sequence related to the temperature of the hot water for the concurrent foot bathing and then announces that he will begin massaging the second (right) hand in lines 11 and 12. Immediately after this announcement, VOL comments on the tsunami again in line 13. This time (line 13), VOL uses the same type of commentary term (*wakan'nai* 'unbelievable') as he used in lines 2 and 3 (*kangaerare nai* 'unimaginable'). VOL also uses an anaphoric term that refers back to something mentioned in the previous talk ('That's ((terrible))'). VOL's second comment (line 13), which is not *demo*-prefaced, appears to return to the previous line of talk by skipping the intervening exchanges. In contrast, the *demo*-prefaced responses in Excerpts (1)–(3) also maintain their contrastive relationship to, rather than being simply disjunctive from, the immediately preceding exchanges, thereby preserving the aspects implicated there as *possible* alternative foci. In fact, it appears that the exchanges in lines 6–12 of Excerpt (6) do not implicate any aspects to be preserved as alternative foci for the ongoing talk and that therefore it does not make sense to use *demo*-prefaced response displacement to resume the talk.

## 6 Dilemmas of affiliation

In the preceding sections, I elucidated practices by which the recipient of the ongoing talk proposes one particular aspect of that talk to be focused on in contrast to (i. e. as alternative to or conflicting with) the other possible aspects. In this section I discuss the significance of the use of these practices in interaction with those possibly having distressful experiences.

Heritage (2011) described a “paradox about emphatic moments”:

More specific experiences, for example, a movement-by-movement report of a symphonic concert or a course-by-course description of a gourmet meal, are less readily shared. Yet, paradoxically, the more detailed and granular the description, the more obligation may be imposed on a recipient to exhibit empathic union with the describer. (Heritage 2011: 176–177)

Similarly, the volunteers may find it difficult even to provide affiliative responses in the interaction with evacuees, who have complex, distressful experiences.<sup>8</sup> When an evacuee recounts his or her distressful experience, the

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<sup>8</sup> Jefferson (1993: 11) also noted that these “affiliative” responses (i. e. assessments and commentaries) may be “topically disengaged” and implicative of a topical shift. Because of this, the volunteers, who are supposed to listen to the evacuees, may find it the more difficult to provide these affiliative responses.



highlighting the distressful aspect of the planned operation. This position display may make an affiliative response expectable. However, in line 14, VOL only produces an information-receipt with a slight facial expression of pain without elaboration of her analysis of EVA's position. Then, in lines 16 and 17, EVA presents the same position from the opposite side (i. e. a positive position toward doing nothing to the dogs) with an evaluative expression, *ii* ('good'). This re-presenting of the same position appears to pursue a more elaborate affiliation. However, VOL produces only the same type of response. Thus, despite, or rather because of, such distress-highlighting position displays by EVA, VOL only produces minimal affiliative responses, while these are treated as insufficient by EVA in pursuing further responses.

In line 19, EVA adds an account for her position toward the neutering, which displays a stronger (i. e. more distress-highlighting) negative position, using the word *itai omoi* (literally meaning: 'feeling of pain'). This account in line 19 also appears to pursue a more elaborate affiliation, although (as indicated with degree signs) produced at an increasingly weak volume, thereby letting EVA's ongoing position display fade out. After there is no uptake of the displayed position from VOL, EVA begins to compromise her negative position display toward the neutering in line 21. Only after the *brighter* side of the situation ('They will not be killed') is mentioned by EVA, that is, only after an affiliative response becomes less expectable, does VOL produce an elaborate (or "substantive" [Heritage 2011]) affiliative response (lines 30 and 31). In sum, the following paradox appears to be involved here. When one, with a strong negative position display, highlights the distress that one is experiencing, the recipient may feel it difficult to adequately affiliate with the position, while the stronger the position displayed, the more obligation may be imposed on the recipient to respond elaborately affiliatively.

It is possible to assume that the very availability of a response displacement practice may have been a resource for the volunteer in Excerpt (2) to address such a paradox. When an immediate display of elaborate affiliation was difficult, the availability of such a practice may have allowed the volunteer to refrain from immediately producing an adequate affiliation and instead to "wait and see" whether a more appropriate opportunity would appear. It is also possible that, considering this very possibility, the evacuee may have compromised her original strong position after two attempts to pursue an elaborate affiliation.

Excerpt (7) is another case in point. It comes from an interaction that occurred at an emergency shelter in July 2011, immediately before the shelter was closed. At the beginning of the excerpt, VOL asks if EVA has been living at the shelter since March, the month when the earthquake occurred (lines 1 and 2).



(7) [FK11: 00:07:10] (CHI stands for "child.")

- 1 VOL: *saisho ni irashi ta toki wa: jaa-*  
 first PART be\_POL PAST when PART then  
**When you came here for the first time then-**
- 2 VOL: *san gatsu kara moo aa ɾs-*  
 March since already oh  
**Since March already, oh th(ree)-**
- 3 EVA: *↳soo san gatsu:*  
**Right. On March=**
- 4 VOL: *n ha: ɾi*  
**Yes.**
- 5 EVA: *↳juu kyuu ni kitan' ↓s' ke↓↓domo*  
 nineteenth PART came JDG though  
**=nineteenth, we came here.**
- 6 VOL: *a< (.) ɾjaa moo s-*  
 oh then already (three months)  
**Oh, (.) then already th(ree)-**
- 7 EVA: *↳saisho wa zzz ni itan des'*  
 first PART PART was JDG
- 8 *↓kedo ɾ(mo ne)*  
 though PART  
**First, we stayed in ZZZ ((prefecture name)),  
 though. [Lines 7-8]**
- 9 VOL: *↳hai ha: ↓i*  
**Yes.**
- 10 *(0.4)*
- 11 EVA: *de:*  
**And,**
- 12 VOL: *ee*  
**Yes**
- 13 *(.)*
- 14 EVA: *kocchi no ho↓o*  
 this\_place PART direction  
**((we came)) to this place.**
- 15 VOL: *ɾha:i*  
**Yes**
- 16 EVA: *↳(are) shinseki no hito n' chi ni itan'*  
 that relatives PART person PART home PART was
- 17 *des' kedo:*  
 JDG though

(Uh) we were staying with our relatives there,  
but [Lines 16-17]

18 VOL: *hai*  
Yes

19 (.)

20 EVA: <*yappari*: *itsu made mo ire naku te*:  
as\_expected for\_a\_long stay not and  
**As expected, we couldn't stay there for long.**

21 VOL: *a:::: soo des' ne* ↑↑  
**That's right.**

22 EVA: *£ki: tsuka tte£*  
**We couldn't relax there.**

23 (0.4)

24 EVA: *de: kocchi ni:*  
so this\_place PART  
**So, we moved in here.**

((Several lines omitted. A ball, which a child throws, hits another evacuee. Some exchanges between this evacuee and children ensue here. EVA and VOL watch them during these exchanges.))

25 CHI: *debu papa debu* ↑*papa*  
fat dad fat dad  
**Fat daddy, fat daddy!**

26 VOL: → *£demo jaa nagaka tta*  
but then long PAST

27 →*des' ne* ↑↑: *kana* ↓*ri*::: *honto* ↑↓*ni*:::  
JDG PART fairly really  
**Demo [but] then it has been long, quite long, actually. [Lines 25-26]**

28 EVA: *£nagaka t* ↓*tas'*::: *£saigo made ichai*  
long PAST last till was

29 *mashi* ↓*ta*.  
JDG PAST  
**It's been long. We have stayed here up until the last minute. [Lines 28-29]**

First, in line 3, EVA responds by producing an agreement token, *soo* ('right'), and repeating the word *san gatsu* ('March'). However, in line 5, EVA specifies the date, i. e. the 19th, when he and his family moved into the shelter. Then, in line 7, EVA continues to mention the name of the prefecture where they stayed for a week after the March 11 earthquake before moving into the shelter. In lines 16 through 22, EVA provides a further account of why they moved after staying with their relatives for only one week: they could not relax during the stay. In lines 26 and 27, VOL produces a comment related to the previous talk on the length of EVA's stay at the shelter, mentioned in lines 1 through 3, rather than to EVA's recounting regarding his relatives in lines 7 through 22.

In fact, this comment (lines 26 and 27) was initiated in line 6 when EVA mentioned the date of their arrival at the shelter and aborted immediately when intersected by EVA's continued recounting of his experience with relatives; it appears that VOL was going to say: 'oh, then you have already been staying here for three months'. In line 6, the aborted comment was prefaced with the token *a* ('oh'), registering a news-receipt, instead of *demo*.

(7a) [Partial repeat]

6 VOL: *a* (.) *ɽjaa moo s-*  
**Oh (.) then already th(ree)-**

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 26-27 VOL: *demo jaa nagaka tta des' ne:*  
**Demo [but] then it has been long**

When VOL reintroduces the aborted comment in line 26 after EVA possibly completed his recounting, VOL prefaces it with *demo*, thereby proposing the length of EVA's stay at the shelter as the aspect to be focused on. In lines 28 and 29, then, EVA accepts VOL's proposal (that the length of stay at the shelter be focused on) by agreeing with VOL's comment.

In fact, the inconveniences caused by staying at the "emergency shelter" for such a long time (such as the possible lack of the adequate necessities of life, sleeping next to strangers, etc., which are categorically inferable [see Sacks 1992: Lecture 6, Spring 1964]) may be more easily imaginable to *anyone* than how they could not relax when staying with their own relatives. VOL could feel more qualified, based on these categorically inferable inconveniences, to affiliate with the length of the stay at the shelter. Certainly, the target response in Excerpt (7) might appear to simply skip over the intervening exchanges. However, in its juxtaposition with the analysis of the other excerpts, one can

now see that it, with the *demo*-prefacing, preserves, rather than ignores, other aspects implicated by the intervening exchanges as possible ones to be alternatively focused on.

## 7 Conclusions

The volunteers had to continue doing “being a listener” throughout the moments of affiliative communication that they encountered in interaction. How did they accomplish this? I focused on a set of response displacement practices and argued that the volunteers used them to deal with their practical problems, that is, dilemmas of affiliation. By using these practices, volunteers selectively responded to an aspect of the ongoing talk with which they could display their affiliation in an optimal manner, proposing that aspect as the topical focus of the talk while preserving (or even “accepting,” to use Mori’s [1999] term) other aspects as possibilities.

“The mastery of a natural language” (Garfinkel and Sacks 1970) provides the volunteers with a technique of negotiating the focus of the ongoing talk. They use it to deal with the practical difficulties of affiliative responses. Certainly, those practices that I have elucidated may be dangerous in that they may be too selective or they may only allow a substantially delayed, though desired, affiliation. However, these practices were useful for producing affiliative responses in the face of all practical difficulties; they were particularly important to those who needed the simple presence of someone displaying affiliation in any manner. The ways in which the volunteers gather and employ interactional techniques provided by their natural language to address their practical problems is worth further investigation.

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## Appendix. Transcription conventions

The first tier of each utterance in the excerpts employs the transcription system developed by Jefferson (2004). It uses the following transcription conventions:

[	A left bracket divided across two lines indicates the point of overlap onset.
]	A right bracket divided across two lines indicates the point of overlap termination.
=	Equal signs indicate no break or gap. They may indicate that one continuous utterance is divided across two lines by an intervening line.
(0.0)	Numbers in parentheses indicate periods of silence by tenths of a second.
(.)	A dot in parentheses indicates a brief interval.
::	Colons indicate prolongation of the immediately preceding sound.
<u>words</u>	Underlining indicates stress or emphasis.
↑↓	Up or down arrows indicate shifts into high or low pitch.
.?	Punctuation marks indicate falling or rising intonations.
WORD	Upper case indicates loud sound.
°word°	Degree signs indicate that the sound of the material between them is soft.
wo-	A hyphen indicates a cut-off.
>word</word>	Inequality signs indicate the speeded-up or slowed-down production of an utterance.
hh/.hh	A row of <i>h</i> 's indicates an outbreath. Preceded by a period, it indicates an inbreath.
(h)	A parenthesized <i>h</i> indicates that the immediately preceding sound has the quality of laughter
£word£	Pound-sterling signs indicate that the material between them has the quality of smile.
()	Empty parentheses indicate inaudible utterances.
(word)	Parenthesized words indicate an uncertainty of what was heard.
((words))	Doubled parentheses contain the transcriber's comments.
→	Right arrows indicate targeted turns.
a*	An asterisk following a vowel indicates that the vowel only approximately reflects the actual sound.

In the second tier glosses, the following abbreviations are used:

HNR	honorific
ITR	interrogative
JDG	judgmental
PART	particle
PAST	past
POL	polite

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## Bionote

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