Adjectival ‘Forms’ and Assessments in Informing Sequences in Japanese Conversation: Employment of Prosodic Effects in Specific Sequential Contexts

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1. Introduction

In Japanese casual conversation both adjectives and nominal adjectives, unlike other major lexical categories (i.e. nouns and verbs), display a type of versatility or expressivity. This may be achieved most notably by various phonological manipulations including sound stretch, sound reduction, and insertions of one or more morae, in order to adapt themselves to a local

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1 I am most indebted to Fay Wouk for invaluable comments and suggestions throughout this project. My special thanks go to Michael Barlow, Junko Mori and Tsuyoshi Ono for extended comments to improve an earlier version of this paper. I am also grateful to the audience at the 17th J/K conference, especially, Hiromi Aoki and Kyoko Masuda, who gave me useful comments and suggestions for future studies. All shortcomings are solely my responsibility.
interactional environment at a particular moment. To put it another way, conversationalists produce a word in these “categories” in a precise form which is actualized by a particular phonological manipulation, depending on here-and-now interactional exigencies on a moment-by-moment basis. This paper reports preliminary findings on a specific task executed by these prosodically manipulated forms of adjectives and nominal adjectives in real-time interaction, which have not been thoroughly explored to date. It focuses on these forms employed as responsive actions, specifically assessments, in informing sequences. By an informing sequence, I mean a sequence of actions or utterances where the speaker tells the recipient(s) new information and the latter respond(s) to it (Mori 2006). A close examination of conversational data shows that such forms regularly follow nonlexical tokens such as *hee* at the precise placement and time where an ongoing topic is reaching its peak or climax, thereby bringing it to completion. However, it is shown that this distinctive task should always be jointly accomplished by both speaker and recipient(s) who may attend to it in a developing course of talk. This study thus demonstrates that participants may attend to this task enacted by prosodic effects which emerge from manipulations of adjectival forms (for both adjectives and nominal adjectives), suggesting that prosody and grammar can be intertwined in interactional actuality. Finally, the categorical distinction between adjectives and nominal adjectives is called into question in light of their sequential placement and functional homogeneity. As a consequence, this study adds a contribution to a growing body of research on Interaction and Grammar or Interactional Linguistics (Ford et al. 2003, Ochs et al. 1996, Selting and Couper-Kuhlen 2001).

2. Prosodically-Charged Adjectival Forms (PCAFs)

In everyday conversation, adjectives and nominal adjectives undergo various phonological manipulations such as prolongation and contraction of one or more morae. In the present study, such “forms” occasioned by phonological manipulations are termed prosodically-charged adjectival forms (PCAFs). For the sake of clarity, three subtypes of PCAFs—extended forms, reduced forms, mixed forms—taken from real-time conversational data are shown with examples in Table 1. Extended forms refer to forms in which one or more morae are prolonged, while reduced forms refer to forms in which one or more morae are contracted. Mixed forms are forms in which both prolongation and contraction are observed in different morae. For instance, an adjective *ussu::: ‘thi:::(n)* in the ‘Mixed Form’ column in Table 1 is one such case, where the inflectional suffix *-i* is omitted while an obstruent mora /s/ is inserted and the second mora is further prolonged. Note that each subtype may be infused with its
distinctive intonation, proper pitch and tempo, and apposite amplitude to adapt itself to a particular placement in a turn’s talk within a particular sequence as it unfolds.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extended Form</th>
<th>Reduced Form</th>
<th>Mixed Form</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Adjective</strong></td>
<td><strong>Adjective</strong></td>
<td><strong>Adjective</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K: sugoi:; ‘great’</td>
<td>K: sukuNA:; ‘sma(ly)’</td>
<td>T: ussu::; ‘thi:::(n)’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>basic form: sugoi</td>
<td>basic form: sukanai</td>
<td>basic form: usui</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>=&gt; sugoi</td>
<td>=&gt; sukanai</td>
<td>=&gt; usui::</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nominal Adjective</strong></td>
<td><strong>Nominal Adjective</strong></td>
<td><strong>Nominal Adjective</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M: sasuga:; ‘well do(ne)’</td>
<td>basic form: sasugada</td>
<td>basic form: suiteso::</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>=&gt; sasuga</td>
<td>=&gt; sasuga</td>
<td>=&gt; suiteso::</td>
</tr>
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Table 1. Three Subtypes of PCAFs

3. Previous Studies

Of particular interest here are activities of assessing one’s action which may be most conspicuously displayed by the employment of adjectives (Goodwin and Goodwin 1987, 1992, Ford et al. 2003). These assessment activities in which adjectives are embedded can be one of the most mundane but dynamically organized sites for participation which interactants may encounter in unfolding talk. Although previous conversation analytic studies have almost exclusively discussed English and have centered on the properties of the assessment activity rather than the function of the adjective which appears in such an activity, they are suggestive and a good point of departure for the following discussion of PCAFs in Japanese, which also frequently appear when people are assessing what is being said.

Goodwin and Goodwin (1987, 1992) stressed assessment as an interactive activity collaboratively accomplished by co-present parties by employing talk, intonation, body movement, etc. in an integrated fashion through time. Particularly useful to this study is their discussion on what they call an assessment term, which refers to a segmental unit signaling an ongoing activity as an assessment, an analytical starting point for the larger course

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2 There are no extended forms of nominal adjectives in my corpus. However, there is another issue, which cannot be discussed in detail here and may await a future study: how can a basic form of a certain nominal adjective be specified? According to standard Japanese textbooks, it consists of a root form plus copula, _da_ (e.g. _kirei_ <root form> _+ da_ <copula>). In this study, I treat it as such. However, it may turn out that once we look at conversational data, it may be hard to find such a form. Or it is safe to state that some nominal adjectives may have such forms as basic in their own right, and others not according to frequency.
of an assessment activity. An adjective is considered one such unit, an object through which the speaker brings into play multi-faceted properties of an assessment activity. In addition to the assessment provided by its actual meaning or function itself, it also usually receives a noticeable lengthening of sounds and displays the most heightened involvement in an assessment activity (Goodwin and Goodwin 1987:22).

The Goodwins also state that an assessment or a string of assessments are regularly deployed to exit from an extended talk such as a story or a topic. This observation is most relevant to the present study. Jefferson (1993[1983]:9) also notes that “recipients recurrently follow an assessment with a topical shift.” Although these studies did not consider an adjective or assessment term to be a closing device, it is worth observing how such a unit contributes to closing, based on its distinctive status within an utterance which displays the most heightened participation actualized by deploying its meaning, prosody, nods, etc. In this connection, particularly interesting are PCAFs in Japanese, which rarely co-occur with additional components such as subject and final particle but exhibit in assessment activities heightened involvement emerging from their prosodical idiosyncrasies. It is thus intriguing to explore how (or whether) such forms can be deployed to make closure relevant in the development of talk attended by participants.

4. Data
The data involved in this study consist of four multi-party conversations among native speakers of the Tokyo dialects of Japanese, who are family members, relatives, friends and so forth. The ages of speakers range from thirteen to sixty. The total amount of data is approximately two hours. The conversations are transcribed according to the notational conventions generally used in Conversation Analysis (Sacks et al. 1974).  

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3 Goodwin and Goodwin (ibid) also noted that an assessment is typically delivered in the format [it] + [copula] + [adverbial intensifier] + [assessment term]. Interestingly, they observed that no prosodic enhancement accrues to the first part of this format.
4 As Goodwin and Goodwin (1987, 1992) observed, an assessment activity may not be a segmental phenomenon, but rather it may be actualized through various means, such as prosody, gazing, and nods, which signal this temporally unfolding activity.
5 The convention includes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Notation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>overlapping talk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0.5)</td>
<td>silence in tenths of a second</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.</td>
<td>falling intonation</td>
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<tr>
<td>,</td>
<td>continuing intonation</td>
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<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td>cut-off</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hhh</td>
<td>exhalation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( )</td>
<td>transcriber’s description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>=</td>
<td>latching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(.)</td>
<td>micropause</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>?</td>
<td>rising intonation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>:</td>
<td>prolongation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WOrd</td>
<td>louder than the surrounding talk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hhh</td>
<td>inhalation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;</td>
<td>quicker than the surrounding talk</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In providing a detailed observation of actual interactional data, this study adopts Conversation Analysis as a methodology (Sacks et al. ibid) to try to explicate how PCAFs are utilized as a resource for accomplishing a certain action. Our primary focus is the way in which PCAFs as a responsive action, particularly an assessment, are deployed in the course of one’s informing. Before moving on to fine-grained analyses on this matter, let us take a brief look at the overall frequency of adjectives and nominal adjectives employed as assessments in informing sequences, whether they are realized as PCAFs or not.

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PCAFs</td>
<td>25 (92.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-PCAFs</td>
<td>2 (7.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>27 (100%)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. Overall Frequency of PCAFs and Non-PCAFs

Table 2 shows the rather skewed distribution of adjectives and nominal adjectives with reference to their prosodic realizations in this particular sequential environment. There proved to be a total 27 adjectives and nominal adjectives, 25 of them (92.6%) realized as PCAFs, and only 2 of them as simple non-past forms or basic forms (7.4%), which will be referred to as Non-PCAFs. This suggests that compared with Non-PCAFs, PCAFs may not be a marked or special type of expression which is rarely exploited by speakers who are engaged in the assessment activity, but rather that PCAFs are a type of expression which is more typical and entrenched as an evaluative response in the course of such an activity. Beyond this initial sketch, we will now direct our attention to the way in which PCAFs are deployed in temporally unfolding sequences.

5. The PCAF Format: A Topic-Closing Indicator

In this section, I discuss in detail how PCAFs appear as assessment responses with reference to their sequential placements. The following fragment illustrates the typical use of PCAFs. In fragment (1), S talks about how his wife can work in New Zealand.

(1) Ex-Study-Abroad Students

1  S: paatotaimu janakute, hurutaimude hatarakeru [no].

   part-time not full-time can-work  FP

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6In each excerpt that follows, the first italicized line shows the original Japanese utterance, in which the PCAF is highlighted in bold print and enclosed with a square box. In the second line, a word-for-word gloss is provided. The third line contains the English translation, which may reflect the temporal development of an unfolding utterance.
‘Not part-time, (She) can work full-time.’

2 K: [haa:].
   ‘haa’

3 (0.5)

4 C: [sugoi nee].
   hee great FP
   ‘hee (that’s) great, isn’t it?’

5—Y: [hee sugo::i].
   hee great
   ‘hee (that’s) great.’

6 S :de, unyoku- unyoku tte in ka, anoo,
   then fortunately fortunately QT say or that

7 shutsuganshitara, hakase de tootekite,…
   applied Ph.D as passed
   ‘Then, fortunately, saying fortunately, or well, (when I) applied, I passed as a Ph.D (candidate), and…’

Prior to this fragment, S actually told his recipients that his wife could get a working visa rather than a visitor’s visa. In line 1, thus, S paraphrased the same information that he previously mentioned. Since no information can be recognized as new, K’s nonlexical token haa:: in line 2, which overlaps S’s possible completion point, can be understood as a type of assessment or stance toward what S said, rather than a simple news-receipt (Mori 2006). After some brief pause, C delivers an affiliative response to S and simultaneously elicits affiliations from other recipients (line 4). Overlapping C’s response, Y coaligns with C, displaying another affiliation to S with a nonlexical token hee followed by an extended form of PCAF sugo::i ‘great’ (line 5). It should be noted here that after C’s initial nonlexical token hee, which can also be considered a type of assessment marker, Y displays a more heightened involvement in the assessment activity with hee plus the PCAF sugo::i. More importantly, after producing the PCAF, it appears that the ongoing topic has been withdrawn by participants, as another topic is then proffered by S in line 6.

A similar pattern can be observed in the case of reduced forms of PCAFs. The next fragment is one such case.
Ex-Study-Abroad-Students

(2) Ex-Study-Abroad-Students

1 S \textit{nyuujiirando no jinkoo wa ikatsu deshoo?}
   New Zealand GEN population TOP what is
   ‘What is the population of New Zealand?’

2 K. \textit{ee::ri (1.5) e nihon ga ichioku::,}
   ee ee e Japan NOM 100-million
   ‘ee? ee? (1.5) e Japan has 100-million and,
   (22 lines omitted, in which K, Y and C make guesses about the population of New Zealand)

3 S \textit{saai, kotaewa, (1.0) yonhyakurokujuuman’nin.}
   now answer 4.6-million people
   ‘Now the answer is (1.0) 4.6 million people.’

4\rightarrow K \textit{ee \{e:::\}, \textit{sukuNA}.}
   ee small
   ‘ee, (that’s) sma(ll).’

5 Y: \textit{[ee:::].}
   ‘ee.’

6 C \textit{demo atashi tsugi sensee ga ii tai koto wakaru yo.}
   but I next teacher NOM want-to-say thing know FP
   ‘But I know what you (teacher) want to say next.’

In fragment (2), S delivers with a question toward K the informing about the unexpectedly small population of New Zealand, which may be unknown by recipients including K (line 1). After several exchanges, all the recipients, K, C and Y, each provide a candidate answer to the question raised by S, which is omitted from the fragment. In line 3, S produces the answer bit by bit in a dramatized way. In line 4, with rising intonation, K delivers a highly stretched version of a nonlexical token \textit{ee} to show great surprise, overlapped by the same token produced by Y in line 5. Then K’s own prepositioned nonlexical token, as well as Y’s overlapping one, is followed by a reduced form of PCAFs \textit{sukuNA} ‘sma(ll)’(line 4), which strengthens her emotional involvement in the assessment activity by means of a more explicit assessment term with greater amplitude. Again, significantly, K’s utterance with nonlexical token-prefaced PCAF is considered ratified as a topic closure by coparticipants, as shown by the fact that C
then takes the primary speakership and begins a new and anticipatory topic, which S (the primary speaker) may talk about next (line 6).

These fragments illustrate a typical format in which a PCAF is embedded. It is shown schematically in (3).

(3) The PCAF format: nonlexical assessment token(s) → PCAF

This format consists of one or more nonlexical tokens, which display a type of assessment or stance toward what is being said, plus a PCAF, which implements a more heightened participation in the assessment activity. These two components are produced in a particular order: a nonlexical assessment token(s) precedes a PCAF. By the employment of this format, an ongoing topic is regularly brought to an end, and a new topic may be opened up. Therefore, this format can be best understood as a topic-shift indicator. However, the use of this format must also be understood as ‘positionally-sensitive’ (Schegloff 1996), thereby being restricted, in that these two components are produced always together, in a particular order at the precise position and time as a response within an informing. In accomplishing the specific task (i.e. a topic closure) dealt with by the format, a PCAF thus regularly follows such a nonlexical token, which means that a PCAF in this format may not appear at the head of a responsive turn or a series of such turns after an informing delivered by the primary speaker. This positional sensitivity in the use of this format is further warranted by the sequential placement to which it is restricted; the PCAF format appears precisely when an ongoing topic is reaching its peak or climax. It is then useful here to consider a case where a PCAF stands alone in a responsive turn:

(4) Family Dinner
1 K: tomioka-kun wa::: nanka no, un seimitsukikai no Tomioka-kun TOP something GEN un precision-instrument GEN
2 nanka yatteru mitai yo= something doing seem FP
3 =demo hiruyoru marude gyakuten no seikatsu mitai yo. but daytime-and-night-time almost reverse GEN life seem FP
   ‘Tomioka-kun is, something, yes seem to do something with precision instruments, but (his) daytime and night-time almost seem to reverse in his life.’
4→ A: [ai[he:ni]]
   tough.
   ‘(That’s) tou::gh.’
In this excerpt, K reports what A’s old friend, Tomioka-kun, is doing these days. In lines 1-3, K informs A about the nature of Tomioka’s work, followed by the rather surprising information that he lives in a world where day and night are reversed due to his working conditions. In line 4, A then assesses that surprising information with a free-standing PCAF that’s tough, which overlaps T’s assessment in line 5. It should be noted that the free-standing PCAF delivered by A is not considered a proposal for a topic closure or at least it is not treated as such by the primary speaker, K, who continues her extended talk in line 6. Here the free-standing PCAF does not seem to be regarded as a closure-relevant device, which can be explained by the fact that it does not follow any nonlexical assessment tokens and more crucially the climax of K’s informing in (4) actually shows up several turns after this excerpt. In fact, none of the free-standing PCAFs in my corpus occurs at a closure-relevant place where an extended talk is ascending to its climax, unlike those in the format (3).

6. Counteracting Topic Closure Signaled by the PCAF Format

6.1. Dispreferred Responses

While the PCAF format described above exhibits its sequential sensitivity in ongoing talk, a topic closure which it attempts to implement can be overridden by certain interactional factors. One of these factors can be observed in cases where the format is exploited as a dispreferred response. The next fragment is illustrative:

(5) Ex-Study-Abroad Students
1 S: de ookurando ga ichiban ooka te, hyakarokujumun nin gurai.

7 The free-standing PCAF discussed here may be another type of use of PCAFs, which I cannot describe in more detail in this paper.
then Auckland NOM most many 1.6-million people about
'Then Auckland is the biggest, and (there are) about 1.6 million people.'

2  K: [hee::]
   'hee'

3  Y: [hee::]
   'hee'

4  C: [hee::], ja ato honto hitsujii bakka jan hh
   hee then the-rest really sheep only TAG
   'hee, then the rest are only sheep.'

5  Y: hh[hhh]

6  → K: | [hhh] yaba::i | (Dispreferred Response)
     too-unique
     '(That’s) too unique.'

7  C: :hhh | (TOPIC IS NOT CLOSED)

8  K: | see:, aru•te tara hitsujii ni acchau ippai.
     ee walk COND sheep DAT have-to-meet many
     'ee:, if (you) walk, (you) have to see sheep, many.'

Fragment (5) is a continuation of the informing provided by S in (2) about the fairly small population of New Zealand, compared with the overflowing population of Japan. It has been actually abandoned by the coparticipants, but is now brought up again by S, who is going to live in New Zealand very soon. At line 1, S informs coparticipants of the population of Auckland, which contains the largest population in New Zealand. At lines 2-4, K, Y and C concurrently produce a nonlexical token hee as a news receipt, followed by C’s comment on what S said. Following Y’s laugh token operating as a nonlexical assessment marker at line 5, K coaligns with Y by delivering her own laugh token at line 6, which is prefatory to the subsequent PCAF yaba::i ‘(That’s) too unique’. This nonlexical assessment token-prefaced PCAF format (i.e. laugh token + PCAF) can accomplish a dispreferred action (Levinson 1983, Pomerantz 1984, Tanaka 2005). It should be noted that this PCAF yaba::i, expressing a negative evaluation, is produced in a rather scornful or contemptuous tone, which is directed at the referent being assessed, Auckland. This suggests that S’s new home is critically assessed by one of his coparticipants. It is also important to note that the preceding laugh tokens may function as a mitigation marker,
which may avoid an outright disagreement.\(^8\) The preceding laugh tokens may thus be one strategy to avoid a dispreferred PCAF becoming confrontational. In fact, the available data suggest that dispreferred PCAFs used in the format regularly follows laugh tokens rather than other nonlexical tokens such as *hee*.

Of particular noteworthiness is the fact that after the dispreferred PCAF format, the ongoing topic is not brought to a close by participants. In fragment (5), after the PCAF delivered by K at line 6, C produces another laugh token at line 7. At line 8, K elaborates the previous assessment with her own PCAF, which seems to mitigate the blatant criticism about the assessable, Auckland, by shifting a focus to a rather general impression about New Zealand. In connection with this, Ford (2001) showed that dis-affiliative turn-initiated negations (e.g. *No*) as responsive actions are recurrently followed by relevant elaborations or explanations, but that when speakers do not provide any elaborations, this is treated as problematic. Based on her observation, we may analogously understand that speakers of dispreferred PCAFs may also provide further elaborations, say, modifying the negative or face-threatening stance displayed by such PCAFs. The available data also show that the PCAF format performed as a dispreferred response delays or leads to cancellation of the closure of an ongoing topic.

### 6.2. Local Management

Since conversational interaction is inherently contingent and interactively managed, such an impact may also affect the course of unfolding talk in which the PCAF format triggering a topic closure is embedded. Consider the next excerpt:

(6) Family Dinner

```plaintext
1 A: ...dan’nasan ga:-, asoko no kado o:-, (\(\alpha\)asoko no, aru jan.
husband NOM there GEN corner ACC thereGEN is TAG

2 wataru jan. >shingoo ga aru jaːn<, asoko o wataatte
  cross TAG traffic-light NOM is TAG there ACC cross

3 mienakunaru made okusan ga zutto mimamotte, saigoni
cannot-see until wife NOM all-the-time watch finally

4 ok- dan’nasan ga hurikaette te o hurTE, wi- husband NOM turn-back hand ACC wave
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\(^8\)Tanaka (2005: 424-425) suggests that in Japanese conversation dispreferred responses via a noncanonical word order or predicate-initial word order may exhibit an outright argument. Although the PCAF in (5) seemingly appears predicate-initially, it is actually positioned with some delay by prefaced laugh tokens. It may thus preempt such an argument.
In lines 1-5, A reports that she witnessed what an old couple, who are both K’s friends, do when the husband goes to work. The story goes that the wife is watching her husband going to work until she finally cannot see him. A goes on to say with a rather dramatic tone, which can be a signal to K that the climax of A’s extended talk is about to come, that the husband turns back and waves his hand instead of saying good-bye. Since such a sweet scene is rarely encountered not only among her generation but also in Japanese culture in general, K produced a prolonged nonlexical token ee:::, which displays great surprise, immediately followed by the PCAF naga(h)::(h)::i(h) [hh] ‘ee (that’s) too long.’ (line 6). Despite its production at the precise timing, however, the PCAF format employed by K does not successfully bring the topic to completion. This can be explained by A’s overlapping utterance at line 7. Rather than ratifying the topic closure proposed by K, A elicits further involvement from K. It is worth noticing here that this elicitation is conveyed with greater amplitude than the PCAF, which leads to the preemption of the proposed topic closure. A then goes on to recount the exact location where she witnessed this unusual situation (lines 7-8), and successfully obtain K’s further involvement (line 9).

The observations offered in 6.1 and 6.2 illustrate how the topic closure signalled by the PCAF format, while it is regularly employed and accom-
plished, can be deferred or cancelled through here-and-now negotiations of participants where some interactional need emerges. This fact thus indicates that topic closing through the use of the format can be best understood as a collaborative activity accomplished by coparticipants in the normative course of talk (Goodwin and Goodwin 1987, 1992, Howe 1991, West and Garcia 1988).

7. Summary
Table 3 provides a summary of how PCAFs are utilized as assessment responses in informing sequences. It indicates the overwhelming use of PCAFs at a specific sequential placement. That is, 88% of them are actually delivered as the PCAF format at the climax of an ongoing talk, while only 12% stand alone at the midst of an extended talk. Further, 32% of PCAFs, which are employed in the PCAF format, successfully execute topic-shift, while an equal number are affected by local management, which defers or cancels the topic shift proposed by the format. Another 24% express dispreferred responses, which delay closing an ongoing talk. Therefore, despite this exhibited position-specific use with regard to the PCAF format (88% of PCAFs), outcomes vary because of the contingency of conversational negotiations. However, a successful topic closure as an outcome accomplished by the use of the format can still be considered the bedrock from which deviant outcomes (its postponement and cancellation caused by dispreferred responses and local management) may emerge, depending on conversational contingency.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PCAF Format / Free-Standing PCAF</th>
<th>Number (%)</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PCAF Format</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic-Shifting Indicator</td>
<td>8 (32%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dispreferred Response</td>
<td>6 (24%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Management</td>
<td>8 (32%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free-Standing PCAF</td>
<td>3 (12%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>25 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3. Summary of PCAFs

8. Concluding Remarks
This study has attempted to explicate the use of prosodically-charged adjectival forms, PCAFs, in a particular sequential environment. Despite the exhibited heterogeneity in prosodic realization (i.e. subtypes of PCAFs), it has demonstrated the homogeneity which can be found among these forms. That is, these forms regularly follow a nonlexical token(s) such as *hee*, forming a particular assessment response format to bring an emerging talk to completion. However, it should be emphasized that this homogeneous
function actualized by this format can only be specified by reference to its particular sequential placement where an ongoing talk is reaching its peak or climax, and that it does not preclude in a predetermined way the idio-
syncrasies each subtype of PCAFs potentially exerts in different sequential
environments attended to by their producers.

While the distinctive function as a topic-shifting indicator is a hallmark of PCAFs embedded in the format, it can be overridden by certain interactional factors. One such factor is the format deployed as a dis-preferred response. In this case, a PCAF, which displays a criticism, regularly follows a laugh token(s), which may function as a mitigation marker for the subsequent criticism. It has been shown that the dispreferred format withholds topic closure, and that interactants instead are prone to deal with such a problematic response in subsequent turns. Other factors involve conversational contingencies in which participants negotiate with each other about some emerging need. On such occasions, the participant who is attempting to continue the current topic tends to employ some strategy for withholding the topic closure proposed by the format, such as overlapping talk with greater amplitude, as seen in (6). These factors suggest that topic closure proposed by the PCAF format must be collaboratively accomplished by coparticipants. However, it is also important to note that despite the cases where topic closure is deferred or cancelled by these factors, the format can be methodically deployed in a sequentially and positionally specific placement, which suggests that it can be directed to the same orientation that the topic in progress should be brought to an end.

Throughout this paper, it has been shown that a prosodic effect realized by PCAFs exhibits a distinctive role and fits into a particular sequential environment. By attending to such a role, conversational participants find the mutual orientation to their next move in development of the emerging talk. In this sense, prosodic effects such as this can be treated as important resources in the same way as other grammatical resources. That is, such prosodic effects can be seen to be a part of grammar. Therefore, prosody and grammar can be best understood as a unitary entity, rather than two separate entities.

Finally, the present study has not distinguished adjectives from nominal adjectives in a predetermined way, as long as these adjectives which appear as PCAFs are employed in the precise placement within sequences. This is contrasted with the dominant view that adjectives and nominal adjectives are separate parts of speech. However, everyday interaction exhibits no such clear distinctions. Rather, at least some items from both categories may be employed identically and treated as a single category by conversationalists first, as well as professional analysts. Although much more data must be examined to uphold such a claim, this seems to be one possi-
ble future direction to investigate: how can two or more ‘different grammatical categories’ be understood as unitary in particular sequential contexts in real-time language use?

References