INDEXING A CONTRAST:

THE *DO*-CONSTRUCTION IN ENGLISH CONVERSATION

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Abstract

This conversation-analytic paper reports on the structure and interactional use of what I term the '*do*-construction' in English-language conversation: Utterances such as *The kids do eat cake* (cf. *The kids eat cake*). The argument developed here is that, at its core, the *do*-construction is used to index a contrast with a prior understanding. As will be shown, this prior understanding can be overtly demonstrated or merely presumed or potential, and it may be the understanding of the speaker him/herself, or that of the recipient. Similarly, the *do*-construction can be seen in a variety of sequential positions, and in conjunction with a range of social actions. Nonetheless, what binds this diversity of cases together is the use of the *do*-construction to introduce content into the interaction in a way that actively orients to a contrastive understanding. After establishing the contrastive work that this resource accomplishes as a general feature of turn design, we then consider how the use of the *do*-construction can be seen to be relevant to specific sequences of action. I conclude with a discussion of the relationship between the grammatical construction analyzed here and other-correction, and comment on some related resources for indexing contrasts in English.

INTRODUCTION

This conversation-analytic article reports on the structure and interactional use of what I term the '*do*-construction' in English-language conversation—that is, utterances such as *The kids do eat cake* (cf. *The kids eat cake*).

I begin by offering a morphosyntactic and prosodic description of how the *do*-construction is produced by speakers in naturally-occurring conversation. Following this, I provide evidence that this grammatical resource is consistently used to mark a contrast, moving from the most overt to the more nuanced cases. After establishing the contrastive work that this resource accomplishes as a general feature of turn design, we will then consider how the use of the *do*-construction can be seen to be relevant to sequences of action, focusing specifically on marked confirmations/disconfirmations (Heritage & Raymond 2005, 2012; Raymond 2003; Raymond & Heritage 2006; Stivers 2005). I conclude with a discussion of the relationship between the grammatical construction analyzed here and 'embedded other-correction' (Jefferson 1987), as well as comment on some related resources for indexing contrasts in English.

The present analysis is based off of a total of 237 cases of the *do*-construction, culled from large corpora of naturally-occurring interaction, including ordinary conversation as well as institutional talk. Data are from both American and British dialects of English. Audio of some of the examples included here is publically available via TalkBank (MacWhinney 2007).

THE FORMAT OF THE *DO*-CONSTRUCTION

The *do*-construction is marked (see Levinson 2000) at two levels of linguistic structure—morphosyntactically and prosodically—which combine to generate the particular contrastive nature of the grammatical formulation. I will describe each of these in turn.

Morphosyntax

The word *do* has a variety of uses in Modern English. In addition to being just a 'regular' lexical verb (e.g., *They **do** laundry on Sundays*), *do* serves as a dummy auxiliary in the formation of interrogatives (1), in negation (2), and in ellipses (3).[1]

(1) *Does* Jane like Mark?

(2) Jane *did* not see him.

(3) Bill saw him, and Jane *did* too.

The linguistics literature refers to *do* in these grammatical capacities as 'periphrastic *do*', '*do*-insertion', or '*do*-support' (e.g., Huddleston & Pullum 2002). As seen in the above examples (1)-(3), just as when functioning as a lexical verb, periphrastic *do* is conjugated with tense/aspect/mood morphology; we are therefore interested not only in instances of *do* itself, but also *does* and *did*.

Use of periphrastic *do* in Modern English is also possible in non-interrogative, non-negation, and non-elliptical contexts. In such cases, the verb phrase is morphosyntactically 'expanded', so to speak, from [MAIN VERB] to [*do* + MAIN VERB], with *do* again being conjugated accordingly. For instance: *I faxed them a letter* can be expanded to *I did fax them a letter*. In TABLE 1 below, utterances in the left column (taken from naturally-occurring interaction) can be conceptualized as marked/expanded versions of the hypothetical unexpanded utterances in the right column.

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[1] Interestingly, this began in the 14th century, when post-verbal negation (e.g., *she **saw not***) slowly became replaced by *do*-periphrasis between the subject and the negation (e.g., *she **did not see***) (Ellegard 1953).

Expanded	Unexpanded
"But I **did get** letters off to . . ."	"But I **got** letters off to . . ."
"I **do think** that…"	"I **think** that…"
"Well I **did talk** to Danny . . ."	"Well I **talked** to Danny . . ."
"I **did fax** them a letter"	"I **faxed** them a letter"
"He **does** still **write** plays"	"He still **writes** plays"

TABLE 1: **Examples of utterances with vs. without a *do*-construction**

Note also, as illustrated in the final example in TABLE 1, that additional material (e.g., adverbs like "still") can occur in these expanded verb phrases as well.

Summarizing the use of this construction, Kallel (2002:166) writes that "the use of auxiliary *do* in un-inverted affirmative declaratives [such as those in the left column of TABLE 1] is limited to emphatic contexts" (see similar descriptions in Breitbarth, De Clercq & Haegeman 2013; Grimshaw 2013; Wilder 2013). Indeed, the expanded cases in TABLE 1 are generally perceived as in some way emphatic when compared to their unexpanded counterparts. In an attempt to explicate what is meant by "emphasis" in this description, researchers canonically offer an invented sentence that includes a contradiction, such as: *They said I hadn't paid but I <u>did</u> pay* (see Grimshaw 2013). Nonetheless, when, where, and why this "emphasis" is deemed relevant at any given point in discourse—in addition to what, specifically, is meant by "emphasis"—is left unspecified in the literature. As will be illustrated, examining the use of this construction in naturally-occurring interaction will allow us to unpack this notion at a more precise level of detail.

Prosody

An additional feature of the production of the *do*-construction in naturally-occurring talk, which parallels the "emphatic" characterization of the morphosyntax alone, is contrastive stress. Following previous researchers (e.g., Bolinger 1961; Couper-Kuhlen 1984; Ogden 2006;

Schegloff 1998), I use the term contrastive stress to refer to a marked shift in amplitude, pitch, and/or duration on a specific part of the turn which thereby draws the recipient's attention to that particular element in the utterance for some interactional purpose. For instance, in a constructed example such as *The house isn't blue, it's red*, contrastive stress can help target the two colors that are in contrast. Of particular relevance to the present study is what Höhle (1992) calls 'verum focus', which occurs on verbs and complementizers in German. Using invented data, Höhle argues that such a stress pattern is broadly associated with emphasizing the truth of the proposition it takes scope over. Interestingly, English glosses of this phenomenon in German frequently include a *do*-construction, such as *Karl hat den Hund gefüttert* ('Carl did feed the dog') (see also Lohnstein 2015).

In the corpus of cases used for the present study, the *do*-construction is routinely produced with a shift up in pitch on the *do*, occasionally co-occurring with increased loudness and/or lengthening as well.[2] For instance, the pitch track in FIGURE 1 illustrates the pitch peak on "did" that is produced in the first case to be analyzed below: "Yes I did talk to Count," (line 6 of example (4)).

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[2] That pitch is routinely used to mark prosodic stress in this construction, while increased loudness and lengthening occur less frequently, parallels findings from perceptual experiments which, Cruttenden (1997:13) describes, "have clearly shown that, in English at any rate, the three features (pitch, length and loudness) form a scale of importance in bringing syllables into prominence, pitch being the most efficacious, and loudness the least so".
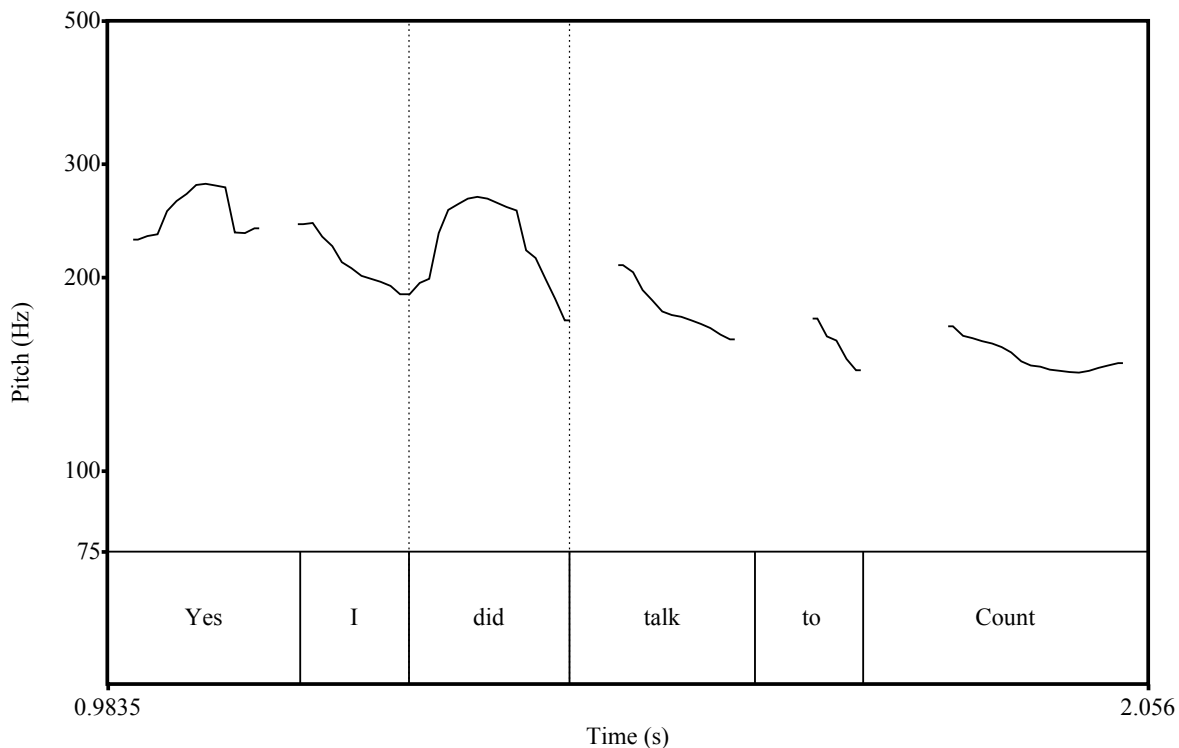
FIGURE 1: Pitch track of "Y_es I d_id talk to Count," (line 6 of example (4))[3]

In this example, following "I", there is an upward shift in pitch on "d_id". This pitch peak interrupts the gradual 'downdrift' or 'catathesis' (Beckman & Pierrehumbert 1986:272) over the course of the utterance, which has been reported to be the pattern for unmarked declarative statements in English (and several other languages). This stress serves to draw attention to the element being prosodically marked, potentially emphasizing its truth value to the extent that Höhle's (1992) analysis can be applied cross-linguistically (see Gutzmann & Miró 2008) and to naturally-occurring data.

While in some cases the pitch peak (and amplitude up-shift/lengthening) are greater than in others, marked prosodic features are nonetheless routinely present on the *do*, as will be reflected

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[3] Figure produced using Praat (Boersma & Weenink 2014).

in the transcripts that follow.[4] Thus when I refer here to 'the *do*-construction', I mean to refer to this combination of morphosyntactic and prosodic markedness.

THE *DO*-CONSTRUCTION AS AN INDEX OF CONTRAST

Now that the linguistic format of the *do*-construction has been described, we move on to look at where this structure occurs, and what it serves to accomplish, in naturally-occurring interaction. This section will illustrate that, across a range of sequential positions and in conjunction with a range of social actions, the core function of the *do*-construction is to index a contrast. We will begin by considering cases in which speakers grammatically establish a contrast with their own prior talk, before moving on to examine instances where contrasts are indexed with other speakers' talk, and ultimately, contrasts with unstated presuppositions.

In instances where speakers index a contrast with their own prior talk, by designing new content *as* contrastive, speakers actively orient to the understanding that their prior talk is expected to have established in their recipients. As will be illustrated in the cases that follow, speakers can thus be seen to be holding themselves accountable (in the sense of Garfinkel 1967) for the talk they have produced thus far, marking for their hearers that something contrastive with that talk is now being produced.

Case (4) below includes a same-turn self-repair (see Schegloff 2013) in which the repair solution is as contrastive as possible with the trouble source; that is, its polar opposite. Here, in response to musician Dan's story launch (lines 1-3), Bob provides confirmation that he is aware that someone known in common to the pair (named "Conti" or "Count") visited Dan last year. Bob

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[4] Culicover (2008:35, footnote 26) claims that the construction is possible with unstressed *do*, offering examples such as: *My point…and I do have one…*, where stress is on the main verb as opposed to the *do*. Interestingly, though, as Wilder (2013:145, footnote 11) notes, schwa pronunciation of *do* in such cases is still impossible, thereby suggesting that the *do* must retain *some* prosodic prominence in the *do*-construction. In the dataset assembled for the present study, no completely unstressed cases of *do* are found. That is, even in cases where the main verb is stressed, there is still notable prosodic prominence on the *do* as well (see, e.g., case (6) below).

immediately expands his responsive turn by explaining that although he is aware of Count's visit, he hasn't spoken to him. In the midst of this expansion, however, Bob initiates self-repair, that he "did", in fact, talk to him. The repaired TCU is built with a *do*-construction.

```
(4) Count's visit⁵

01  Dan:    I'll tell ya what's ha:ppening.
02          .hhhh Ah::: F:Irst of all you kne:w tha:t
03          we had Conti here last ye:ar,
04  Bob: -> .hhh (.) [Yea:h.=but I haven't- talked to hi-=
05  Dan:              [or-
06  Bob: -> =Yes I did talk to Count,=yeah. (.) [Mhm
07  Dan:                                        [Whad'e say.
```

In this case, the informational content of the repair solution is plainly contrastive with that of the trouble source—i.e., talking to Count vs. *not* talking to Count. Through deployment of the *do*-construction, Bob orients to the fact that, based on the information presented thus far—that is, up until the initiation of repair at the end of line 4—Dan will understand that Bob has *not* spoken to Count. To repair this misspeaking and the incorrect understanding that it will have generated, Bob marks the repair solution both morphosyntactically as well as prosodically by way of the *do*-construction, combined with an initial reference form in subsequent position[6] (Fox 1987; Schegloff 1996) and a repeat of the confirming interjection: "Yes I did talk to Count,=yeah.". The repaired version of this information in line 6 is thus grammatically designed such that it agentively delivers the correction *as* contrastive, thereby orienting to the recipient's presumed understanding *at that precise moment* in the ongoing talk.

Case (5) similarly illustrates the contrastive nature of the *do*-construction with a speaker's own prior talk, but this time from outside the context of repair. Here, Nancy has been describing

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[5] Transcripts follow the conventions outlined in Jefferson (2004).
[6] This marked reference form may enhance the reparative operation underway by indexing 'firstness' or 'newness' (cf. Heritage & Raymond 2005).

to Emma how she was recently introduced to a potential romantic interest, described as "just a real nice fellow" (line 6). Following Emma's assessment in lines 1/4, Nancy begins to bring her telling to a close by restating that "nothing may come of it" (line 5), meaning that the man in question may never call despite his promise to do so. Immediately following this, though, she continues and presents the contrastive possibility, complete with two *do*-constructions: "nif I: *did* have a .hhhh chance'r if'e *does* ca:ll:,…" (lines 8-9).

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(5) NB:II:4

01  Emm:       °Oh: well° GOOD I'M GLAD YIH f↑ound [somebuddy ee]gn
02  Nan:                                          [°↑yuhknow,°  ]
03  Nan:       Yeeah.[h
04  Emm:            [go ou[t'n h]ave fun] with]   [.snff::       [mghh-mghh]
05  Nan: ->              [S:o: ]  ez  I]   sa]:y [nothin:g ma:y [come of i]t
06          but e.-he wz [jist a(r)] a ri:l ni:ce:: (.) fellow=
07  Emm:                 [°Mm hm?°  ]
08  Nan: -> =en I'm sure thet (.) nif I: did have a .hhhh chance'r if'e
09       -> does ca:ll:,h ahm (0.2) en since he made it such a pointed
10          effort tuh: get my number he probably wi:ll, .hh.h[h.hh
11  Emm:                                                      [°Mm:[hm:,°]
12  Nan:                                                           [Ah:, ]
13          (.)
14  Nan:    It's jist a sha:me thet uh hje's jis so far awa:y.
15  Emm:    Mm:hm:=
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Contrasting with the possibility that "nothing may come of it" is the possibility that Nancy *does* "have a chance" and that the man in question "*does* call" (lines 8-9). Thus, just as in the self-repair case above, here a speaker grammatically designs her turn in a way that orients to its being contrastive with content from her own prior talk. Nonetheless, while the prior example indexed a contrast as part of a 'correction' of the speaker's prior talk, here we see the contrast used as part of the speaker's transition from describing a hypothetical outcome that is less happy to one that is more hopeful.

Speakers can also use the *do*-construction to mark a contrast with their interlocutors' prior talk or other behavior. Given that turns-at-talk (or lack thereof) are taken to reveal speakers'

understanding of the interaction thus far (as well as their understandings of their recipient and the world more generally) (Heritage 1984b; Schegloff 1992), when a contrast is indexed with such an understanding, it can serve to enact an other-correction of it. This is seen in the following case (6) in which an interlocutor's lack of uptake provides the impetus for the production of the *do*-construction. Here, Karen has just finished telling Shirley a story about having been stung by a jellyfish while on vacation in Florida. The events of this telling are provided as an account for Karen's current fear of going into the ocean, because one can't see jellyfish approaching in the water (lines 5/7). Shirley affiliates with this fear by enthusiastically upgrading to "↑You can't see anythi::ng." in overlap in line 8, before offering the specific hypothetical case of a shark approaching. In response to a lack of timely uptake from Karen (lines 11-13)[7], Shirley addresses what may be at issue for her recipient, namely that the just-mentioned idea of a shark encounter might "sound ridiculous" to her. She then contrasts this potential understanding with "But it does happen her:e." (line 15).

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(6) Jellyfish

01   Kar:    An' ever since then I'm like (.) I am not going
02           i(h)n(h)na th(h)at w(h)ater.=
03           =heh heh [heh heh heh heh
04   Shi:            [Yeah::. I don't like it.
05   Kar:    Cuz you can't see >>if it's a<< stupid jellyfi[:sh,=
06   Shi:                                                  [↑NO::.=
07   Kar:    =[I mean they're clear. ]
08   Shi:    =[↑You  can't  see  any ]thi::ng.
09   Kar:    ((sniff))=
10   Shi: -> =An' what if a shark came up,
11        -> whe-ye-m-n::, Yer in the waves. .hhh
12        -> (0.2)
13   Kar: -> Yea[:h.
14   Shi: ->    [I know it sounds ridiculous,
15   Shi: -> But it does happen her:e.
16           (.)
17   Kar:    O(h)h:[:. <Really:?>
18   Shi:         [(        )
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[7] To the extent that line 11 as a whole might be considered an increment (Ford, Fox & Thompson 2002), provided after the pragmatic and prosodic completion of line 10, this is arguably already an orientation to the lack of a timely response from Karen.

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19   Shi:    ↑Oh ↑yea:h.
20           (1.0)
21   Shi:    So:- hh[h I don't kno-
22   Kar:          [You mean ther- e- yer not- Yer not exaggerating?
```

In pursuit of uptake, Shirley explicitly formulates in line 14 how her recipient might be interpreting her prior turn. (And given Karen's later question in line 22, it appears that Shirley was likely correct in understanding Karen's lack of uptake as indicative of doubt that a shark attack could actually happen.) "I know it sounds ridiculous" paves the way for her to target and correct this inapposite (from her perspective) understanding with the *do*-construction in line 15, which receives a surprise-intoned change-of-state token plus newsmark in line 17 (Jefferson 1981:62-66; Heritage 1984a; Thompson, Fox & Couper-Kuhlen 2015:80-82). This is confirmed with an *oh*-prefaced confirmation in line 19 (Heritage 1998).

An additional case of this sort, where a speaker's *do*-construction addresses an interlocutor's prior behavior, is seen in (7) wherein Samantha is describing her flightpath home to San Francisco from Hong Kong. From the beginning of this excerpt through line 14, the participants are assessing Tokyo as a place to have a layover. Despite Dolly's attempts to minimize the negative aspects of having such a layover (lines 5, 8, 11-12/14), Samantha asserts that it is "annoying" that she does not have a direct flight (lines 15-17). The particular formulations used here—"I *have to* go through Tokyo." and "I *can't just* fly from Hong Kong ho#:me."—are then shown to be interpreted in a certain way by Tom through his later uses of the *do*-construction (lines 24 and 34).

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(7) Layover

01   Tom:    But Tokyo#: is a bad place.# .hh To layover.=
02   Sam:    =Tokyo is a ba- And I have like an eight hour-
03           er five hour lay:over °the:[re.°=
04   Tom:                               [I[: k n o : w]=
05   Dol:                                 [Five hours.]=
06   Tom:    =Yeah: Usual[ly yeah[hh
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07  Sam:                    [.hhh    ['ts cra::zy.=
08  Dol:     =It's not that ba:d.=
09  Sam:     =[.hhhh
10  To?:     =[h      h      h      h      h      h      h    ]
11  Dol:     =[By the time y(h)ou've sch(h)lepped t(h)o]=
12  Dol:     =th(h)e l- [heh heh=
13  Sam:                [hhhhhhh
14  Dol:     =.hhh It's such [a:   .hhh      [it's really
15  Sam: ->                  [.hhh No.=but [it's annoying that
16  Sam: ->  I have to go through Tokyo.=That I can't just fly
17       ->  from Hong Kong ho#:me.
18           (0.7)
19  Sam:     .h[hh
20  Tom:       [.tch Right.
21  Sam:     hheh hh .hh[h
22  Dol:                [That is annoying
23  Tom:                [#W'l# (.) I'm surprised you didn't go=
24  Tom: ->  =Hong Kon- >thuh-uh-eh< They do have rout- [Where's (.)
25  Sam:                                                [hhh
26  Tom:     >Does< it go Tokyo to where. .hh
27           (0.5)
28  Sam:     .h San Francisco.
29           (0.3)
30  Tom:     Myeah:.=w'l >is this< er: ↑Hong Kong San Francisco.
31  Sam:     Yeah.
32           (0.2)
33  Sam:     Bu:[t, it's full.
34  Tom: ->     [United does have that.
35           (.)
36  Tom:     Oh=it's full.=I see.
```

Tom expresses his surprise (line 23) that Samantha is not taking a direct flight, given that "They do have rout-", presumably going toward a description of "rout(es)" that "do" exist. Although this assertion is cut off before it reaches completion, note that it is designed as contrastive with what he takes to be Samantha's understanding of the world.

After clarifying what the specific flight destination is (lines 24-28), and after Samantha fails to provide a prompt account in line 32 (see Raymond & Stivers 2016), Tom produces an additional *do*-construction. This time the utterance includes the name of a specific airline ("United"; cf. "they" in line 24) and is fully brought to completion: "United does have that." (line 34). By asserting this information as contrastive via the use of the *do*-constructions, Tom reveals what he takes Samantha's understanding of the existence of flightpaths to be, while simultaneously attempting an other-correction of that understanding. In this case, however, Tom's interpretation

of Samantha's earlier complaints (lines 15-17) turns out to be incorrect: Samantha was already aware of the existence of the direct flight path, but she was unable to purchase such a ticket as the flights were already full (line 33). Thus, information that was formulated as contrastive with Samantha's understanding of the world was, in fact, not contrastive with it. Indeed, Samantha's demonstration of her prior knowledge of direct flights through the provision of an account (line 33), in addition to showing an orientation to her earlier complaints as accountable actions, may have been designed to block Tom's forthcoming other-correction turn. Nonetheless, this is unsuccessful as Tom's line 34 occurs in overlap. Following the overlap, Tom produces a change-of-state token (Heritage 1984a) and repetitive registration (Goldberg 1975) ("Oh=it's f*u*ll.=I see."; line 36), thereby suggesting that his prior *do*-construction turns were indeed meant as other-correction.

The *do*-construction can also appear in first position—that is, in a position that does not directly address prior talk or other observable behavior by either the speaker or the recipient of the *do*-construction turn. In such cases, speakers can nonetheless be heard to be indexing a contrast, namely with some unstated presupposition about or understanding of a specific context or situation.

Such cases—where nothing has been overtly stated but where a contrast is nonetheless indexed via the *do*-construction—have been previously described in the context of medical interactions. In reporting on pediatric encounters, Stivers (2002) writes that, while in some cases doctors use this practice to confirm a parent's *overt* candidate diagnosis,[8] in other cases, the *do*-construction can be produced in response to "symptoms-only" problem presentations (328, footnote 16; see also Stivers 2007). The analysis presented here accounts for why a problem

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[8] We will discuss (dis)confirmation cases specifically in the next section.

presentation that does not make any mention of ear pain, for example, would receive a diagnosis formulated with a *do*-construction—e.g., "Actually she does have an ear infection" (2002:328, footnote 16)—given the presumably contrastive nature of such a diagnosis in a context where ear pain was not referenced.

To provide a fieldnote account of the *do*-construction in true first position, consider the following example (8). After my first two weeks in the Netherlands, where I would be living for the next few months, a Dutch friend took me for the first time to the large supermarket chain called Albert Heijn. Completely spontaneously—that is, not arising out of any prior discussion—the following exchange took place upon my seeing sliced roast beef for sale at the deli counter:

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(8)

01  CWR:     -> Oh, they do have roast beef here.
02  Friend:     ((laughs)) Of course!
03  CWR:        Well I haven't seen any!
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Seeing cooked, sliced roast beef for sale was a surprise to me, as I had not seen it at any of the other markets I had been to (line 3); and thus I had come to the conclusion that it was not a readily available staple in the Netherlands. My use of a *do*-construction in this first-position noticing indexes the counter-to-expectations nature of the information in the turn, which is heard as contrasting with my own prior understanding of roast beef availability.[9] My friend's laughter, followed by an "Of course!" response, shows that the turn was indeed understood as indexing a contrast with the presupposition that roast beef wouldn't be available, by depicting such a presupposition as inconceivable (Stivers 2011). In third position (line 3), I then provide an account for why my original *do*-construction noticing was delivered as a contrast.

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[9] It bears mention that, without the *do*-construction, line 1 might have been heard as a suggestion or proposal to buy some roast beef, as opposed to a noticing through the indexation of a contrast with the speaker's own presuppositions about its availability. With the *do*-construction, however, such alternative action ascriptions would be strange, if not impossible, without a particular prior sequential context.

One final case of this sort is seen in (9), taken from a corpus of calls in which a reviewing doctor contacts attending pediatricians over the phone to discuss proposed courses of treatment (Kleinman, Boyd & Heritage 1997). As seen in the following extract, taken from the very beginning of one such call, Dr. Clancy self-identifies and gives the reason for the call, and then immediately asserts "an' we <u>do</u> record these messages so you'll hear a beep from time t' time." (lines 3-5).

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(9)

01  Dr.C:   Oh hi, Doctor Marcus?=This is Doctor Clancy callin:g
02          u::hm (0.2) I'm calling on behalf of the:
03      ->  uh=insurance company for:: uh David Laconte an'
04      ->  we do record these messages so you'll hear a beep from
05          time t' time. .hh[h uh- (.) °°c- c-°° u:h could you . . .
06  Dr.M:                     [Ye:s,
```

As in the previous ethnographic case, here nothing has been overtly stated to the contrary of the information provided in the *do*-construction. Nonetheless, the *do*-construction indexes a contrast with what Dr. Marcus may presuppose about the nature of their telephone call: While it would be reasonable and commonsensical (Garfinkel 1967; Raymond 2016: Ch. 3; Schütz 1962) for him to believe that a telephone call would not be recorded, this one in fact will be, and Dr. Clancy's *do*-construction orients to the likely contrastive nature of that informing action.[10]

The *do*-constructions presented in this section were diverse in terms of, for example, *whose* understanding is being contrasted with, *where* that understanding emerged, as well as *how*. Nonetheless, across this diversity of cases, it was shown that the core meaning of the *do*-

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[10] In his memoir, Christopher Hitchens indirectly offers an analysis of such first-position *do*-constructions when he describes his mother. About her, he writes: "Perhaps answering the call of her milliner forbears, but at any rate determined not to succumb to the prevalent dowdiness of postwar Britain, she was forever involved in schemes for brightening the apparel of her friends and neighbors. 'One thing I *do* have' she used to say with a slightly defensive tone, as if she lacked some other qualities, 'is a bit of good taste'" (14, emphasis in original). Hitchens's remark—"as if she lacked some other qualities"—taps into the contrastive nature of the *do*-construction, as well as the defensiveness that can be indexed through its usage. I am indebted to Rebecca Clift for sharing this passage with me.

construction is to index a contrast with a prior understanding. That is, speakers mobilizing a *do*-construction are understood to be "publicly and accountably" (Garfinkel 1967) marking their turns—both morphosyntactically and prosodically—such that they are interpreted in context *as* contrasts by recipients.

IMPLICATIONS FOR ACTION

In light of the argument that the *do*-construction serves to index a contrast, we now ask how this resource can come to bear on participants' formation and ascription of action in interaction. First we will consider a case in which the *lack* of a *do*-construction is seen to contribute to the speaker's overarching project.[11] Then, in an effort to more specifically link the present analysis to prior research on this and related phenomena, we will consider the *do*-construction in a particular action environment, namely marked confirmations and disconfirmations. The objective of this section as a whole, then, is to illustrate the precise import that indexing a contrast can have for how actions are designed and understood by participants in context.

To use, or not to use, the *do*-construction

Extract (10) is taken from an after-hours call to a doctor. Here a wife has called to report that her husband has suddenly been experiencing "th'most awful stomach pains, and sickness," (line 6). From the onset of the problem presentation—and indeed before the problem itself is even presented—this caller paints the picture of her husband as extremely healthy: He has "been perfectly fit for (.) you know, ages," (lines 2-3). This stance continues as the participants enter into the history taking phase of the call, with the caller citing that "he is (th'most) regular person.=You know he's never constipated, or anything like that." (lines 39-40), and confirming the doctor's "He's normally quite well." with the upgraded "Very." (lines 42-43) (Stivers & Hayashi 2010).

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[11] On the notion of 'projects' in interaction, see Levinson (2013:119-22) and Schegloff (2007:244-50).

The turn of interest here—the caller's lines 47-48—is then produced in the context of these repeated claims as to the husband's general healthfulness.

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(10) Doctor's Emergency Call

01  Doc:    How can I help.
02  Clr:    .hhh Well- (0.3) all of a sudden yesterday evening, having been
03          perfectly fit for (.) you know, ages, [.hh
04  Doc:                                         [Ye:[s,
05  Clr:                                             [My husband was taken
06          ill: (wi') th'most awful stomach pains, and sickness, h[h
07  Doc:                                                            [Ye:s,

          ((28 lines omitted))

36  Doc:    Does he had any problems in the past, with 'is stomach¿
37  Clr:    -No:.
38  Doc:    (.hh) No. <Um-or: u[w-
39  Clr:                       [(Mean) he is (th'most) regular person.=You
40          know he's never constipated, or anything like [that.
41  Doc:                                                   [mm-
42  Doc:    >Yes.< .h He's normally quite well.
43  Clr:    Very.
44  Doc:    Generally.
45  Clr:    (Yeah)/(Ye-es)
46  Doc:    ((sniff)) (No[t (   )-)
47  Clr: ->             [He has- does have a- slight (.) he takes some
48       -> (.) heart pills. h .h=
49  Doc:    =(g)-Right.=
50  Clr:    =(He's)/(been) taking them for nine years, b't 'e's very
51          active, it doesn't seem to affect him,
```

As a whole, lines 47-48 might be best analyzed as related to the practice of 'repair after next turn' (Schegloff 1992). What we are interested in here, however, is the particular design that the utterance takes, specifically the self-repairs that occur within it.

Taking into consideration the analysis presented in this chapter, the initial repair to include the *do*-construction—from "He has-" to "does have" (line 47)—is perhaps unsurprising: Given the stated-and-agreed-upon status of her husband's healthfulness across the interaction thus far, the fact that he actually has a heart condition is indeed contrastive. The caller's repair to include the *do*-construction constitutes an orientation to the doctor's in-the-moment understanding of the husband, which has developed over the course of the call, while simultaneously working to amend

that understanding.[12] But in this case, such a contrastive amendment would risk undermining the stance that the caller has worked to convey from the onset of the interaction, namely that her husband is normally a perfectly healthy individual. This may also explain the cut-off on the indefinite article "a-" and the addition of "slight", as ways of minimizing the health problem that she is about to mention.

But this formulation too is abandoned in favor of a completely restarted TCU that does *not* include a *do*-construction and which thus does not grammatically index a contrast with the caller's repeated prior assertions of her husband's healthfulness. This new, *non*-contrastive design is undoubtedly better fitted to the caller's overall stance, as its grammar no longer risks undermining the work she has done over the previous several turns; and indeed she delivers this as her final, on-record version of the informing. It is also noteworthy that this last self-repair shifts from a formulation that is on its way toward citing a health *problem* ("He has- does have a- slight" *arrhythmia*, for instance), to a formulation that references the *solution* ("He takes some (.) heart pills"; lines 47-48), thereby avoiding explicit mention of her husband as having a heart condition. Furthermore, following the provision of this information about taking heart medication, the caller continues expressing her positive stance of her husband's health in her next turn with "b't 'e's very active, it doesn't seem to affect him," (line 51).

In this case, then, we are provided with an additional sort of evidence of the work that the *do*-construction does in interaction—from the deviant case of a speaker's demonstrated *avoidance* of its use. That is, *not* using the *do*-construction when producing contrastive content may serve as

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[12] Note also that line 45 might have brought the sequence to a close, and thus the inclusion of "does" in line 47, through its invocation of a contrast, additionally works to link the current turn to the prior, rather than flagging a departure from it. My thanks to an anonymous reviewer for this observation.

a resource for *minimizing* the contrastive nature of the utterance, in the same way as *using* the *do*-construction can work to actively *underscore* a turn's contrastiveness.

Non-sequentially relevant confirmations

One particular sequential environment in which the *do*-construction is routinely observed is in the context of modified repeats, identified by Stivers (2005) as second-position repetitional utterances that consist of an expanded auxiliary or copula that is prosodically stressed. Stivers analyzes such sequences and argues that "modified repeats work to undermine the first speaker's default ownership and rights over the claim and instead assert the primacy of the second speaker's rights to make the statement" (131). This is shown to be the case because second speakers are providing confirmation in a sequential context where confirmation was not made conditionally relevant (see Schegloff & Sacks 1973).

An example of the sort of cases Stivers was interested in, taken from the present dataset, is seen in (11) below. Here, after expressing a lack of desire to call her parents later on that evening (data not shown), Iliana positively assesses having been able to talk to Sandra on the phone for so long (lines 1-2/4). In line 4, Iliana makes the claim that having had this opportunity to chat "R<u>o</u>cks.", which Sandra confirms with an interjection plus the modified repeat "It d<u>oe</u>s ro:ck." (line 5).

```
(11) It rocks

01  Ili:    ↑↑↑M::: ((excited squeak))
02          But I got you.=hh='n for such a long time.
03  San:    heh=what?=
04  Ili: -> =Rocks.
05  San: -> .hh [Yea:h. ] i- It does ro:ck.
06  Ili:        [(>   <)]
```

In cases such as this, Stivers argues that the second speaker (here, Sandra) "is doing confirmation by reasserting the claim and underscoring it as an assertion," thereby working to present herself as

"having primary rights to make this claim as evidenced by the redoing of the claim" (137). The position-independent account of the *do*-construction developed here, namely as a grammatical resource for indexing contrasts more generally in interaction, finds common ground with Stivers's analysis of the practice in a particular sequential environment. Here, Sandra's use of the *do*-construction indexes a contrast with Iliana's implicit claim to have primary rights to positively assess the conversation between the two friends. Indexing this contrast in rights is part of how Sandra accomplishes the affiliative action of this second assessment, using the agency of the response form to present herself as not simply 'agreeing just to agree' (Heritage 2002; Stivers 2005).[13]

Sequentially relevant confirmations and disconfirmations

Such an analysis of the *do*-construction can also be expanded to cases where (dis)confirmation is indeed relevant, such as in response to polar questions. Polar questions not only make relevant an answer, but they also set the terms for those answers by embodying presuppositions, conveying an epistemic stance, and incorporating preferences (Heritage 2010; Heritage & Clayman 2010; cf. Sacks 1987[1973]). Answerers then possess a range of resources with which to push back on these terms from second position, including, for example, repetitions (Heritage & Raymond 2012; Raymond 2003), prefaces like *Oh* and *Well* (Heritage 1998, 2015), and marked interjections like *Of course* (Stivers 2011). Here we see that, by indexing a contrast with the terms of the question, the *do*-construction, as part of an expanded repetitional answer, can perform similar interactional work that agentively resists the question's design.

In cases (12) and (13), questioners design their turns with declarative morphosyntax, thereby claiming a relatively knowledgeable stance (Heritage 2012). In addition, through the

---

[13] Of course, indexing epistemic or experiential primacy can also be used toward *dis*affiliative ends.

incorporation of negation, they are tilted toward a *no*-response. Nonetheless, in each case, the answer is actually affirmative.

```
(12) Italy

01  Bet: -> How(a)- How are yo:u doing.<Yeh didn:(t)
02       -> [n- end up going to Italy:_ (('sad' tone))
03  Nan:    [.tch
04          (0.2)
05  Nan: -> We:ll I di:d go tuh Ita#ly.=
06  Bet:    =You DI:::D!
07  Nan:    Yeah. I could[n't send you: (.) I could]n't=
08  Bet:                 [ <W : o n d e r f u l.>  ]
09  Nan:    =send you a postcard because ↓I was s:uch an idiot . . .
```

```
(13) CD Exchange

01  Lin: -> Yea:::h Waidaminit.=You d(h)on't l(h)ike hi:m?
02  Jor: -> Wha- I ↑do like him.
03          (0.2)
04  Lin: -> Because if you don' like him=
05          =I'll swi[:tch.
05  Jor: ->          [↑I ↑do like him!
```

Each of these questions addresses something clearly in the answerer's epistemic and experiential domain—in (12), the answerer's recent travel, and in (13), the answerer's musical preferences. Thus their being designed declaratively, and in a way that will be disconfirmed, renders them particularly inapposite from the answerers' perspective. In this sequential context, the use of the *do*-construction exerts agency beyond an unexpanded repetitional answer (e.g., 'I like him') by indexing a contrast with the terms and constraints established by the questions—especially polarity in the case of disconfirmations such as these.

But the *do*-construction is not only used to resist such strongly *no*-preferring polar questions; it can also be mobilized to push back on a question's basic presupposition of askability—that is, the presupposition that both *yes* and *no* are conceivable answers (see Stivers 2011). In (14), Margaret's pre-telling in lines 6/8 presents it as uncertain whether or not her sister,

Rachel, is aware that their parents have had an offer to buy their home (see Terasaki 2004[1976]).

The rising intonation of the turn, combined with its 'my side' characteristics, solicits confirmation

or disconfirmation from Rachel as to 'her side' (Heritage 2012; Pomerantz 1980; Stivers &

Rossano 2010). Rachel's *do*-construction response invokes a contrast with the question's inherent

presupposition that she might *not* be aware of this news, thereby confirming that only one answer

is possible, and even going on to specifically account for how and why she possesses this

knowledge (lines 9-10/11).

```
(14) Letter from Mummy

01  Mar:    I had ah=m .tch letter from mummy #yesterday:#,
02  Rac:    ↑Oh: [what'id she sa:y.    ]
03  Mar:         [She wrote some kinda] (0.2) interesting stuff.
04  Rac:    ↓Oh: reall[y:,
05  Mar:              ['bout Todd-Just a little bi:t.
06  Mar: -> .hhh[h I'ono if she told you tha:t or no:t=
07  Rac:        [Yea:h,=whad-
08  Mar: -> =about how they had an offer on their house and stuff?
09  Rac: -> Yea:h.=She did tell me they had an o:ffer.=
10       -> =Cuz I called her to talk to her about the- (.)
11  Mar:    [Yea:h.
12  Rac: -> [↓cost a the ↓plane tickets↓.
```

When the *do*-construction occurs in such (dis)confirmation-relevant contexts, a type of agentive,

marked (dis)confirmation is produced, just as we saw above in non-confirmation-relevant contexts.

I argue that, in addition to diverging from type-conformity (Heritage & Raymond 2012; Raymond

2003; Stivers 2010), such *expanded* repetitions accomplish the markedness of their

(dis)confirmation by indexing a contrast with the design of, and terms established by, the first-

position utterance.

DISCUSSION

Marked (Dis)confirmation, Other-Correction, and "Emphasis"

Providing (dis)confirmation with a *do*-construction—either in a context where it has been

solicited, or in one where it has not—seems to be a practice that is intimately related to the

phenomenon of other-correction (see Jefferson 1987). Turns-at-talk are taken to reveal speakers'

understanding of the interaction thus far, as well as their understandings of their recipient and the

world more generally. Thus, as we have seen in several of the cases discussed here, when a speaker

orients to that understanding in indexing a contrast with it, such a move constitutes an agentive

action that can work to 'correct' the recipient's previously displayed or presumed understanding.

In the specific context of providing marked (dis)confirmation via the *do*-construction, what

is at issue are the *terms* set forth by the prior turn, which Heritage and Raymond (2005) and Stivers

(2005) have previously observed to be of crucial importance to participants in their studies of

related phenomena. I argue that these terms are what the *do*-construction targets and attempts to

other-correct through the indexation of a contrast. Although this form of other-correction may be

more "embedded" than, for example, the case of a lexical replacement, the phenomenon of

correcting some feature of another's prior talk such that the 'doing' of correction does not become

the business of the talk—that is, in Jefferson's words, in a way that is "off the conversational

surface" (1987:100, footnote 4)—remains constant. Conceptualized in this way, we see another

set of ways in which 'error correction' can be used as an interactional resource (cf. Jefferson 1974,

1987), while simultaneously expanding our understanding of what *participants* can orient to as

'errors'.

This analysis, combined with Stivers's earlier observation that physicians can use the *do*-construction to provide confirmation of parents' candidate diagnoses (2005:156, footnote 8; see

also 2007:46), sheds light on the "emphasis" or "assertiveness" that the *do*-construction has been

reported to convey (e.g., Kallel 2002; Wilder 2013). The *do*-construction can be conceptualized as

invoking a contrast with the stance (be it implicit or explicit) that the truth value of the *do*-construction utterance has thus far been, or might otherwise be, conceived of as ambiguous,

hypothesized, unknown, or potentially still open for debate. The assertiveness of *do*-construction is then derived from the speaker's grammatically indexed contrast with this stance, agentively asserting the truth value of the proposition (cf. Höhle 1992) by confirming that *no* alternatives are possible.[14]

Consider one final case (15) in which the assertive emphasis of the *do*-construction is particularly evident. Here, Pat's house burned down the day prior and Penny is calling to check in on her. In response to Penny's asking how she is, Pat claims to be feeling "much bettih" in line 15, reasserted as "a LO:T better" in lines 19-20. She then goes on to explain that the reason she is feeling better is due to the fact that all of the family pets have now been found and are safe (data not shown). Following this, she comments that she has not yet seen the fire damage for herself, so the situation is "more real" for her husband (Brad), who has visited the house twice, than it is for her (lines 42-51). At this point Penny makes a move toward closing the call by saying ".hhh I don't wanna, (0.3) .t .hhh I don' wanna make yih ta:lk cuz I don'wanche tuh,", later completed with "upset yerself 'll ov'r agai:n," (lines 52-53/55-56). Patty interdicts this account for call closure with an overt "mNo", followed by a repaired *do*-construction: "I f- I really do feel a lot better." (line 54).

```
(15) House burning

09  Pat:      Penny?
10  Pen:      .khh-HHI:[:
11  Pat:             [Hi::. How are you.  hh [(hh)
12  Pen:                                     [I'm awri:ght that's w't
13            I hhwz gunn(h)uh a:sk you:.
14            (0.2)
15  Pat: ->   Um, pretty-g-I'm much bettih this aftihnoo:n.[(th'n) I] wa:s.=
16  Pen:                                                   [ Y e:h, ]
17  Pat:      =Yeah.
18  Pen:      [Yeah.
19  Pat: ->   [I wiz bad (la-st i-) night'n this morning (b't  )/(though) I
20       ->   feel m- really a LO:T better right now. hhhhh=
```

---

[14] Such an account may also explain the use of the use of the *do*-construction in various (first-position) politeness formulae (e.g., <u>Do</u> *let me know if there's any way I can help*.).

```
21  Pen:      =.hh- Yea:h,
22  Pat:       Yeah.=
23  Pat:       =See first of all we thou:ght (.) thet one a'th'cats wz=

                ((19 lines omitted))

42  Pat:       Brad's goin' up there now in about en- I d'know
43             en hou:r er so:,
44  Pen:       Uh huh.
45  Pat:       E::n, hh I don'know, I just I guess I ruh-I really haven'
46             been up there tuh see it=Brad's b'n up there twice uhready
47             so it's more real fuh (you)/(him).
48  Pen:       .HH-Yea:h.
49             (0.2)
50  Pen:       En it's not tuh you.Sure.[Oka:y.
51  Pat:                                [(Sure)/(mmmh)
52  Pen: ->    .hhh I don't wanna, (0.3) .t .hhh I don' wanna make yih
53       ->    ta:lk cuz I don'wanche tuh,*              (*<->*=1.3)
54  Pat: ->    mNo I f-I really do feel a lot [better. I feel like]
55  Pen:                                      *[ upset   yerself  ] 'll
56             ov'r agai:n,
57  Pat:       hhh hI-u-last night I wz- all night, I wz up all night
58             yihknow yih jist c-couldn't sleep'n th'n:, I slept this
59             morning'n evrything en th'n evr- the sun came ou:t'n hhI
60             started feeling better'n [.hhh
61  Pen:                                [Yeah.
```

Here, Penny's lines 52-53 effectively disregard Pat's earlier claims to be feeling "a LO:T better" (lines 19-20) by presupposing that continuing to talk will be emotionally difficult for Pat. In response, Pat indexes a contrast with this presupposition to emphatically re-claim that she is indeed feeling better. To do this, she abandons what was presumably going toward "I f(eel a lot better)" in favor of "I really do feel a lot better.", a *do*-construction with the intensifier "really" (line 54). By agentively invoking this contrast through an other-correction of Penny's understanding, Pat emphasizes her original claim in the context of it being disattended to, thereby reasserting rights over her own feelings. Note that Penny does not bring her initial utterance to completion for a full 1.3 seconds, during which time Pat produces her "mNo I f-I really do feel a lot" in the clear. Following this response by Pat, the end of Penny's turn is then designed such that it now actively attends to Pat's emphatic claim to be feeling better at the present moment in time: "…upset yerself *'ll ov'r agai:n,*" (lines 55-56).

Such an analysis of the *do*-construction broadens our understanding of its purported emphasis and assertiveness, which we have seen is not limited to complete 180-degree contradictions or "polarity emphasis" (Breithbarth, De Clercq & Haegeman 2013), but can also index other sorts of contrasts as well. Investigation of this phenomenon thereby allows us to ground our analytic conceptualization of emphasis in the perspectives and practices of *participants themselves*—that is, through the analysis of grammar as it is produced in naturally-occurring interaction.

Related Contrastive Resources in English

Taking English as an example, the ability to index a contrast appears to be an important feature of language. Here I have focused specifically on the *do*-construction, which I argue accomplishes this work through markedness at the morphosyntactic and prosodic levels. As we have seen, the *do*-construction is a pervasive grammatical construction that can index a contrast in a range of sequential positions and in pursuit of a variety of ultimate interactional objectives.

Yet this is not the only resource that English grammar provides its speakers for indexing contrasts. In addition to *do*, Stivers (2005) illustrates how other copulas and auxiliaries can be expanded and stressed to assert primary rights from second position (e.g., "'n the children're lovely." responded to with "↑Oh yes.=They ↑are lovely::"; pp. 144). The above analysis of the *do*-construction cases in modified repeats—as indexing a contrast with the first speaker's implicit claim to rights—can clearly be extended to these other copulas where *do* is grammatically not an option due to the presence of another auxiliary or copula (e.g., *will, would, could, be*, etc.).

In addition to the morphosyntactic and prosodic levels, various lexical items have been argued to invoke contrasts. Most notably, Clift (2001) investigates the use of the syntactically flexible particle *actually* as (at its most general) a marker of contrast and revision. In the case of

TCU-final *actually* in informings, for instance, speakers "propos[e] a contrast between what they claim and a prior claim made, or thereby understood to have been made, by another party" (265). Similar arguments might be made for other lexical indexes of contrast, such as contrastive conjunctions like *but* and *though* (see Mazeland & Huiskes 2001 on Dutch *maar* 'but'; see also case (6) above).

Although it is noteworthy that none of the 47 cases of *actually* reproduced in Clift (2001) include a *do*-construction, the two resources can indeed co-occur (e.g., "Actually she does have an ear infection"; Stivers 2002:328, footnote 16). In the present corpus of *do*-constructions, *actually* occurs in only one instance, combined also with contrastive *but*: "*But* I mean the fact that he- he *actually did* get an academic position, that- that's ah-", which, although abandoned, is undoubtedly on its way to asserting just how incredible and unexpected it is that one would be able to get a job in academia, as the rest of the sequence makes clear. This suggests that speakers may 'stack' various contrastive markers—prosodic, morphosyntactic, lexical, and/or others[15]—to index either a contrast that is designed to be *more* contrastive, or perhaps a contrast that is of a specific 'sort'. The deployment of such resources constitutes an example of what Clift (2001:265) calls "performed intersubjectivity", which is supported by the present analysis of the *do*-construction, and which future research will continue to disentangle.

CONCLUSIONS

This paper has argued that the core meaning of the *do*-construction is to index a contrast with a prior understanding. As the examples analyzed here have illustrated, such contrasts can occur very locally (e.g., in instances of same-turn self-repair), or they can occur at a greater

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[15] Moreover, looking cross-linguistically, the specific types of resources available to interactants, with which to index contrasts (of various sorts), are diverse. See, for example, Hogeweg (2009) on the Dutch particle *wel*, and Wu (2004) on the Mandarin final particle –*a*, as well as Raymond (2016) on shifts between second-person reference forms in Spanish.

distance (e.g., with respect some prior turn). In addition, the contrast can be with an understanding that has been overtly stated (e.g., through a prior assertion), or which has been conveyed through more tacit means (e.g., through the design of a prior utterance), or which has not (yet) been overtly conveyed at all. Nonetheless, what holds constant across these cases is that the speaker designs his/her turn such that it displays an orientation to the contrastive nature of its content.

The analysis also posited that indexing certain kinds of contrasts may be understood in context as a form of other-correction, thereby expanding our conceptualization of the sorts of things participants seek to 'correct' through the deployment of grammatical resources in interaction. In this view, concepts such as 'assertiveness', 'agency', and 'emphasis' are reconceptualized as more concrete, identifiable "members' resources" (Garfinkel 1967), which are enacted grammatically in the collaborative construction of talk-in-interaction. In sum, then, the specific construction analyzed here provides a case study in how inextricably linked grammar is, not only to participants' goals for action, but also to the specific terms of those actions within sequences of naturally-occurring talk.

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