

Article

Gaikokujin ja Arimasen (I'm Not a Foreigner): **An Analysis of the Interactive Construction and Contestation of Being a Foreigner in Japan**

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Participants of talk-in-interaction may make various categories and collections of categories relevant to their talk (Hester & Eglin, 1997; Sacks, 1992; Schegloff, 1992, 2007). From an ethnomethodological perspective, such categories are understood not as static possessions, but rather as being assembled by the participants on a moment to moment basis as they co-construct their interaction (Hester & Eglin, 1997; Nishizaka, 1995, 1999; Psathas, 1999; Watson, 1997). Additionally, the participants' co-construction of, alignment to, or contestation of categories may reflexively affect the sequential organization of their talk (Watson, 1997).

In the present research, I examine a service encounter between a Caucasian Japanese national, his two friends, and the racially Japanese staff of a public bath house in Japan. In the analysis, I use conversation analysis and membership categorization analysis to examine the specific ways in which the participants co-construct the categories of *Japanese* and *foreigner*, how they constitute the category *Japanese* as being bound to differential sets of attributes, rights, legal statuses, and so forth, and how they treat these mutually different categorical constitutions as being problematic for assembling the real-world activity of using the bath house facilities. I also consider how the sequential and categorial aspects of the talk jointly work to make the interaction visible as being a dispute as the participants align to or contest categories in their interaction.

Keywords: Conversation Analysis, Membership Categorization Analysis, Dispute Talk, Discrimination, Nationality

Introduction

One pervasive feature of social interaction is the work of assembling people and things into certain categories, which may be treated as being bound to or associated with certain rights, stances, characteristics, attributes, and so forth (Sacks, 1972a, 1972b). In this paper, I consider the participants' interactional construction (and contestation) of two categories in particular: *nihonjin* 'Japanese' and *gai(koku)jin* 'foreigner'. In lay-terms, these two categories are dichotomous, one being defined in opposition to the other. Such categories are commonsensical; people use them on a daily basis in a matter-of-fact manner. Similarly, in much of the research conducted in the humanities and the social sciences, such categories are often treated as given, being seen as parameters for defining and controlling groups of research participants rather than as topics in need of empirical investigation (Nishizaka, 1995).

In regard to Japanese nationality and what it means to be Japanese, however, Sakai (2005: 4) maintains that the notion of Japanese nationality is based on "the myth of a single ethnic society living within the discrete boundaries of the Japanese archipelago." He also problematizes the notion of Japanese ethnicity, arguing that if we define cultures not as things somehow intrinsically connected to nations or peoples, but rather as "modes of behavior or regimes of practices" (2005: 5), we see that any given society will contain *multiple* cultures. Thus, as Sakai argues, while it is true that groups of people associating with a nation-state may indeed exhibit broadly shared modes of behavior (i.e.

cultures), it is *not* possible to maintain that there is a unity between all of the various cultures that might exist within the nation-state. As Nishizaka (1995: 306) puts it: “[D]epending on what criteria are to be used, the Sri Lankans and the Japanese may not be any more culturally different than Bostonians and New Yorkers.”

In the present research, I apply the analytical tools of sequential conversation and membership categorization analysis to examine a service encounter between a racially-non-Japanese Japanese citizen, his two racially Japanese friends, and the racially Japanese staff members of a public bath house in Japan. By performing a fine-grained and in-depth analysis of the data, I will show how the participants construct, align to and contest categories on a moment to moment basis as they co-produce their talk, and how they treat the differential ways in which these categories are interactionally constituted as being problematic for the real-world activity of using the bath house facilities.

1. Conceptualizing Identity in Talk

(1) Identity as a Stable Entity

Lebra (1976) argues that “belongingness” is a central part of Japanese cultural identity. She links this belongingness to the notion of *ba* ‘frame’, put forth by Nakane (1970). According to Lebra, frame invokes the idea of group membership and stands in opposition to “attribute.”¹ Lebra (1976) maintains that Japanese people are culturally ingrained to conceive of identity not in terms of the individual but of the group. This ideology of group orientation has been reified in much of the anthropological, sociological and sociolinguistic research done on Japan, the Japanese and the Japanese language up to the nineteen-nineties (e.g., Doi, 1971; Ide, 1982, 1992; Kindaichi, 1957; Lebra, 1976, 1992; Nakane, 1970; Reischauer, 1970), and remains a common folk belief among both the Japanese and Japanophiles alike.

The ideology of group is seen as being intimately related with the notions of *uchi/soto* ‘inside/outside’ (see Lebra, 1976). Notions such as *uchi/soto* have been used as variables or parameters to study identity and its putative effects on human linguistic behavior (e.g. Ide, 1982, 1992; Matsumoto, 1988). However, such studies are premised upon the supposition that *uchi/soto*, taken as categories by which social experience might be organized, exist and are meaningful *a priori* to specific interactional moments, and that the propositional meanings of such categories are stable, clearly delineated and shared between participants (Suzuki, 2009). Additionally, many previous studies have presumed such categories to be interactionally omnirelevant to participants. Nishizaka (1995), however, contends that we must conceive of categories not as being given, but as occasioned interactional productions necessitating inquiry in their own right.

(2) Discursive Approaches to Identity

Within the tradition of ethnomethodological inquiry, identity is seen as being managed by the parties to the interaction in terms of various categories (see Bushnell, 2011 for a concise overview). There has been an enduring interest in the ways in which sequential and categorial aspects of talk-in-interaction interact with and inform each other (e.g. Bushnell, 2014; Eglin & Hester, 2003; Hester & Eglin, 1997; Housely & Fitzgerald, 2002, 2009; Stokoe, 2012; Watson, 1997). Discursive approaches to categorization have shown that categories are not relevant by default, nor are the meanings of categories static or inherent, but rather they are emergent and co-constructed on a moment to moment basis by the participants of the talk-in-interaction. It thus becomes necessary for the researcher to examine not only the ways in which the categories are used, but how they are responded to in the subsequent interaction.

During the course of an interaction, participants make categories relevant, or irrelevant (i.e. by making another category relevant in its place; see, e.g., Nishizaka, 1995, 1999); they use categories to display, align to or contest interactionally constructed positionings (Day, 1998; Hansen, 2004), and co-construct category relevancy not only by making it overt in the talk (see Schegloff, 1997), but also by engaging in certain describable practices or actions

¹ Lebra (1976) maintains that Japanese people will identify themselves in the context of a frame, such as work place, family, and so forth, rather than by mentioning individual attributes, such as professor, manager, etc.

(Egbert, 2004). Examining the interactions of a racially Japanese interviewer and several non-Japanese students in Japan, Nishizaka (1995, 1999) notes that the relevance of the categories of *foreigner* and *Japanese* was neither omnirelevant nor static, but accomplished by the participants on a moment to moment basis over the course of the unfolding of their interaction. In particular, Nishizaka (1995) shows how, for the participants in one example, it was the categories of *expert* and *layperson*, rather than *foreigner/Japanese* that were made relevant for the initial stages of the interaction. However, the Japanese interviewer eventually contests this categorization framework by making relevant the category *Japanese*. Nishizaka shows that the interviewer accomplishes this not by overtly mentioning his affiliation with *Japanese*, but rather by engaging in an activity expectedly and properly done by members of that category, that is, claiming an authority on matters pertaining to the Japanese language. Nishizaka also shows how, by making *Japanese* relevant, the interviewer makes *foreigner* relevant by association. In a similar vein, Moerman (1988) shows, in an analysis of Thai talk-in-interaction, that as a participant constructs herself as being a “real Thai,” who eats non-glutinous rice, she also invokes an opposing category, that is, “non-real Thai,” for glutinous rice-eaters. Thus, the use of one category may also imply a related and often opposing category. Sacks (1992) suggests that one important characteristic of categorization is that when one makes reference to a category of a given collection of categories, one also makes the other categories of that collection implicitly relevant to the subsequent interaction. For example, by making a category such as *mother* relevant, other categories seeable as being in a collection with this category, for example *child*, *father* and so forth, also become of potential relevance for the participants (see Sacks, 1972a, 1972b).

Some collections may have restrictions such that they can contain only a certain number of a given members (i.e., in non-polygamous/polyandrous societies, only one husband/wife at a time is permissible in the collection *family*). Furthermore, a category may be exclusive of another category (i.e. the category *dead presidents* cannot co-contain any member of the category *living presidents*). In this vein, Nishizaka (1995) states that the categories *Japanese* and *foreigner* are mutually exclusive in that one person cannot simultaneously be both a Japanese and a foreigner. In a more contextualized view of category analysis (see Hester & Eglin, 1997), however, categorization devices and collections are not seen as being natural (i.e. in existence *a priori*) but rather as being occasioned. As Hester and Eglin (1997: 18; original emphasis) argue, “it has to be decided in each and every case what the category *means* and this will involve a figuring out of what collection the category belongs to *for this occasion*.” A contextualized view of categorization requires us to carefully examine how the individual participants display their understandings of what a category, and membership in it, means to them on that particular interactional moment. Participants generate and manage categories in their talk by applying the resources of turn and sequence (Psathas, 1999; Sacks, 1992; Watson, 1997), as well as various formulations and labels (Bushnell, 2014). Furthermore, the deployment and subsequent management of categories in talk is reflexively intertwined with its the sequential structure (Bushnell, forthcoming a; Watson, 1978, 1997).

2. Research Questions

1. What membership categories do the participants make relevant in their interaction?
2. How do participants co-construct, align to, or contest the membership categories?
3. How do the categorial aspects and the sequential aspects serve to jointly define the interactional pattern as a specific unfolding activity?

3. Methodology and Data

(1) Methodology

I use the analytical tools of conversation analysis (CA) and membership categorization analysis (MCA) to perform a fine-grained analysis of the data. Watson (1997) argues for a synthesis of CA and MCA. He contends that,

though the tendency has been to foreground one analytical concern (e.g. sequence) while disattending to the other (e.g. category), such a dualism is “unhelpful in many respects (1997: 53).” Simply disattending, Watson maintains, to the categorial aspects of the talk does not mean that such aspects become inert in the participants’ actions. Furthermore, according to Watson, a purely sequential analysis must necessarily and unrelievedly rely upon membership categorization as a tacit and unexplicated analytical resource in making sense out of the data (1997: 52-53; see also Moerman, 1988).

According to Watson (1997), a combination of the analytical tools of CA and MCA can be usefully applied in describing the participants’ “documentary method of interpretation” (see Garfinkel, 1967). Garfinkel explains that the documentary method of interpretation of social members is a situated process of sense making which involves treating actual appearances (i.e., some observable features) as the document of (or as an indicator of, or standing in behalf of) an underlying pattern (1967: 78). These documents reflexively serve to both constitute the underlying pattern, and are themselves interpreted in reference to the underlying pattern. Drawing on Garfinkel (1967), Watson argues that the sequential aspects of talk-in-interaction should be seen as being in a reflexive relationship with membership categorial aspects of the talk, and that these two aspects jointly function to point to an “imputed underlying [interactional] pattern” (1997: 56) which then, in turn, potentially inform the sequential and categorial aspects of the talk. Watson argues that approaching the data from this viewpoint will help the analyst to avoid unwarranted extrapolation because it disallows the decontextualization of any of the features of the talk-in-interaction.

In the present study, I consider both the sequential and categorial aspects of the data. I also examine how these features jointly indicate the underlying pattern of the interaction, and, conversely, how that pattern reflexively informs the sequential and categorial aspects of the talk. While this may seem to beg the question, it is important to note that it is a fundamental concern of ethnomethodological inquiry to develop accounts of the actions of the participants and the mundane logic informing the production of these actions, regardless of whether or not such logic may appear to be circular. Indeed, in the real world, apparently circular logic often informs the assembly of even courses of action as grave as convicting a person of a serious crime (see, e.g., Onuki & Matsuki, 2003).

(2) Data

The data of the present study are a sign that was posted in front of a public bath house in Japan, forbidding foreigners to enter the facility, and an audio recording of a service encounter that takes place between a Caucasian national of Japan (i.e., a naturalized citizen), Debito,² his two racially Japanese friends, Abe and Baba, and the racially Japanese staff of the bath house (see Arudou, 2006, 2007). The eleven minute eighteen second audio recording was made by Debito himself on October 31, 2000, and subsequently posted to an internet forum by him, along with a transcript of the exchange. The ostensible purpose of the recording was to gather evidence of discriminatory practices by the bath house. For the purposes of the present study, the audio data were entirely retranscribed from the original audio according to CA standards (see Jefferson, 2004), though information about the physical environment of the interaction, and the actions of the participants was obtained through reference to the transcript made by Debito himself (see footnote 5), which features a number of comments about these things.

4. Analysis

(1) The Sign

A major concern of the present study is the ways in which the participants construct and contest certain membership categories. Though not part of the interactional data per se, I will first examine the categories invoked by a sign posted in front of the establishment (presumably by the management), and the ways in which this sign potentially functions to account for certain courses of action by the participants.

² ARUDOU, Debito’s actual name used by permission. All other names are pseudonyms.

Figure 1. The sign.³

First line (i. Romanized Japanese, ii. literal translation, iii. English gloss)

- i. gaikokujin no kata no nyuujoo o okotowari itashimasu
- ii. foreign people M entry O refuse
- iii. “We refuse the entry of foreigners”

Second line (English)

- i. Japanese Only

Third line (i. Romanized Russian, ii. literal translation, iii. English gloss)

- i. prosim instrannykh srazhdan ne vkhodit' v pomeshchenie
- ii. we ask foreign national not to enter DA premises
- iii. “We ask foreign nationals not to enter the premises”

The first element of the sign is written in Japanese. Five noteworthy features of this portion of the sign are that 1) it is written in Japanese, 2) it is written in formal, honorific language, 3) it features a number of Kanji characters, 4) it includes no *furigana* (‘phonetic guide’) for the readings of the Kanji characters, and 5) it mentions only foreigners in connection with who may or may not enter the premises. These five features work to make this particular message most readily consumable by a Japanese audience, and to make the sign readable not only as a prohibition to certain people to use the bath house, but as an explanation to the Japanese clientele regarding the bath house’s policy concerning members of the category *foreigner*.

Contrastingly, the medial portion of the sign is 1) written in English, 2) it features a fragmental syntactic structure (interestingly analogous to that of warnings and edicts such as no smoking, members only, and so forth), and 3) mentions only Japanese in regard to possible users of the facilities. These three features contextualize this part of the sign as being an edict to be consumed by an English speaking audience.⁴ Through deployment of the categorical label *Japanese*, together with the extreme case formulation (see, e.g., Edwards, 2000; Pomerantz, 1986) “only,” it delimits use of the facilities exclusively to members of *Japanese*. The final element of the sign is 1) written in Russian, and 2) formulated as a statement of the bath house management’s request to foreign nationals. In this way, this portion of the sign seems to have been designed as a message specifically to Russian-speaking members of the category *foreign national*, prohibiting members of this category from entering the bath house. Thus, in contrast with the Japanese portion of the sign, this portion not only selects its audience via the linguistic features of its formulation, it also directs its perlocutionary force as a prohibition to that audience. In this way, the message content of the sign is organized in

³ Photo by Olaf Karthaus and ARUDOU, Debito. Courtesy of Debito.org at <http://www.debito.org/photosubstantiation.html>

⁴ Although one of the anonymous reviewers suggested that the fragmental syntax is not necessarily indicative of an edict (citing, e.g., formulations such as “under construction”), I feel that when taken together with the other features mentioned, the sign is contextualized as being a prohibitory message aimed at English speakers.

and through the deployment of the categories *Japanese* and *foreigner* (i.e., the Japanese *gaikokujin* or the Russian *instrannykh srazhdan*)—associating these categories with certain eligibilities and courses of action in regard to the bath house facilities.

Finally, though the sign makes clear that 1) people reading in Japanese and Russian are to understand that foreigners will be refused entrance, and that 2) people reading the sign in English are to understand that the eligible clientele of the bath house are exclusively members of the category *Japanese*, the sign does not make clear who is to be understood on any specific interactional occasion as being a member of the categories *foreigner* or *Japanese*. In the analysis of talk-in-interaction presented below, I consider the ways in which the participants display their understandings of category meanings, and work to align with or contend membership in categories made relevant on that particular occasion.

(2) *Gai(koku)jin* ‘foreigner’ or *Nihonjin* ‘Japanese’?

In this section, I examine the talk-in-interaction produced by Debito (D), his two racially Japanese friends (Abe and Baba), and the racially Japanese front attendant at a public bath house in Northern Japan.⁵ Excerpt 1 is derived from the interaction between Debito and the front attendant of the bath house. It is situated just after Debito and the two friends accompanying him had entered the main lobby of the bath house.

Excerpt 1: Gaikokujin ja arimasen⁶

- 1 D: konban wa:
evening T
- 2 Attd: irasshaimase.
welcome
- 3 D: nto ne (.) otona no riyooken wa koko desu ne.
um P adult M pass T here C P
- 4 Attd: sumimasen ga gaikoku no kata no goriyoo wa okotowari
sorry but foreign M people M use T refuse
- 5 shiteru n desu yo.
doing N C P
- 6 D: gai:kokujin ja arimasen, nihonjin desu.
foreigner not Japanese C
- 7 Attd: (xxx) nihonjin (.) desu ka?
Japanese C Q
- 8 A: kika shitemasu.
naturalization doing
- 9 B: soo. nihonjin.
that Japanese
- 10 Attd: kika desu ka?=
naturalization C Q
- 11 D: =[soo desu. nihonjin desu.
that C Japanese C
- 12 A: [U:::n

English Translation

- 1 D: *Good evening.*

⁵ The data are from a conversation tape recorded by ARUDOU, Debito on October 31, 2000. Courtesy of Debito.org at <http://www.debito.org/yunohanatrascript103100.htm>

⁶ In regard to the transcripts, the first line appears in Romanized Japanese followed by a literal translation with grammatical elements in all capital letters. An italicized gloss in natural English is supplied immediately following each transcription. See the appendix for a list of transcription conventions.

- 2 Attd: *Welcome.*
 3 D: *Um, this is where the adult passes are, right?*
 4/5 Attd: *Sorry, but we are refusing use of the facilities to foreigners.*
 6 D: *I am not a foreigner. I am Japanese.*
 7 Attd: *You are Japanese?*
 8 A: *He is naturalized.*
 9 B: *Right, Japanese.*
 10 Attd: *naturalization?*
 11 D: *Right. I am Japanese.*
 12 A: *Yeaaah.*

In the following analysis, I show that 1) membership categorization is achieved by the participants of talk-in-interaction on a moment to moment basis, and 2) participants do not always share an understanding of how certain categories might be constituted. Categories and collections of categories do not have an *a priori* status, but rather are negotiated and assembled by participants on each occasion *as they engage in the interaction* (Hester & Eglin, 1997).

After entering the establishment and receiving a formulaic greeting, *irassyaimase* ‘welcome’, Debito approaches an attendant with a question about obtaining a pass to use the facilities. The attendant issues an utterance that echoes the language of the sign in front of the bath house (see above): *gaikoku no kata no goriyoo wa okotowari siterun desu yo* ([we] are refusing foreigners’ use [of the facilities]) (lines 4 and 5). The appendage of *n desu yo* marks the utterance as more than just a neutral statement, but as an explanation or account of the attendant’s action of not providing Debito with the information he requested concerning obtaining a pass to the facilities. In so doing, the attendant also simultaneously effectively denies Debito entrance to the bath house. In line 6, Debito contests affiliation with the category *foreigner* by deploying the negative copula, *ja arimasen*, and then formulating himself as being *nihonjin* ‘Japanese’.

Then, in line 7, the attendant initiates a repair sequence (Schegloff, Sacks & Jefferson, 1977). Abe and Baba chime in with *kika sitemasu* ‘(he) has naturalized’ and *soo nihonjin desu* ‘right, Japanese’, respectively. These actions show that Abe and Baba have oriented to the attendant’s prior turn as a display of a possible problem with understanding in regard to Debito’s claim of being Japanese. The attendant again initiates repair in line 10, this time in relation to Abe’s line 8 *kika shitemasu* ‘(he) has naturalized’, and Debito responds to this by again predicating himself as being a Japanese, latching onto the attendant’s turn and specifically beginning his utterance with a confirming *soo desu* ‘right’ (line 11). In line 12, Abe overlaps Debito’s utterance with an elongated and high-pitched *un* ‘yeah’, which functions to offer further and emphatic confirmation. Notably, these actions by Debito, Abe and Baba seem to be aimed at undermining the attendant’s attempt to prohibit Debito’s entrance into the facilities, contesting his (Debito’s) membership in the category *foreigner* through re-assembling him into another category glossable as *naturalized Japanese*. At this point, just after line 12, the attendant leaves and then returns approximately one and a half minutes later with the manager of the bath house. It may be noted that the attendant’s actions of bringing the manager works to display an orientation to institutional authority as a resource for dealing with the unfolding trouble.⁷

Excerpt 2 occurs after the manager arrives. The excerpt begins with Debito again requesting admission to the bath house.

Excerpt 2: Wakarun desu kedo

- 1 D: hai oban deshita::
 yes evening C
 2 (2.2)

⁷ I am indebted to a comment from one of the anonymous reviewers on this point.

3 D: hai. sore dewa, chotto yoroshiku onegaishimasu.
 yes then little good please

4 (1.2)

5 Man: e::: >ya< nto taihen mooshiwake [nai n desu kedo ne:=
 uh no um terrible sorry N C but P

6 A: [E?
 huh

7 D: =hai.
 yes

8 Man: =mooshi[wake nai desu. (kika sareteru no wa wakaru n) desu ke[domo:
 sorry naturalized N T understand N C but

9 A: [^HHHHH

10 D: [hai.
 yes

11 Man: nto uchi toshite wa:: gaikokujin o itioo okotowari shiteru
 um we as T foreigner O presently refusal doing

12 to iu katachi ni naru n desu yo::=
 QT say shape become N C P

13 D: =>watashi wa gaikokujin ja arimasen. =[nihonjin de-<
 I T foreigner not Japanese C

14 Man: [kika sareteru to iu no wa
 naturalized QT say N T

15 wakaru n desu kedo[::
 understand N C but

16 D: [hai.
 yes

17 (1)

18 Man: de: ma. hoka no: ma gaikokujin no koto mo aru node (.)
 and well other M well foreigner M thing also exist so

19 minasan ni okotowari shiteru n desu yo.=
 everyone to refusing N C P

20 D: =>(soo dakara) boku wa gaikokujin ja arima[sen. nihonjin desu.
 that so I T foreigner not Japanese C

21 Man: [n : : : : : : :
 [n : : : : : : :]

22 D: >nihon no kokuseki [o motteiru n desu. sore de=
 Japan M citizenship O have N C so

23 Man: [sore wa wakaru n
 that T understand N

24 D: gaikokuj- gaikokujin ja arimasen yo ne?]<
 foreign foreigner not P P

25 Man: d e s u k e d o n e : :]
 C but P

English Translation

1 D: *Yes, good evening.*

2 (2.2)

3 D: *Yes. Well then, I look forward to your services.*

4 (1.2)

5 Man: *Uh, no, um I am terribly sorry but, you know.*

6 A: *Huh?*

7 D: *Yes.*

8 Man: *I am terribly sorry. I understand that you have naturalized, but.*

9 A: *Ughhh*

10 D: *Yes.*

11/12 Man: *Uh, the state of things is that we are presently refusing foreigners.*

13 D: *I'm not a foreigner. I am a Jap-*

14/15 Man: *I understand that you have naturalized, but.*

16 D: *Yes.*

17 (1)

- 18/19 Man: *And, well, there's the issue of other foreigners, so we are refusing everyone.*
 20 D: *I'm not a foreigner. I'm Japanese.*
 21 Man: *Yeaaaaah.*
 22/24 D: *I have Japanese citizenship, so I'm not a forei- foreigner, right?*
 23/25 Man: *I understand that, but, you know.*

In the following analysis, I show how differences in the ways the participants assemble occasioned collections of categories inform the sequential structure of their talk-in-interaction, and how the categorial aspects and sequential aspects of the interaction jointly work to index the interactional pattern.

In lines 1 and 3, Debito first offers a greeting to the manager,⁸ after which he bids for entry to the bath house. Each of these moves results in silence (lines 2 and 4). Notably, Debito's line 3 constitutes the first pair-part of an adjacency pair which might be glossed as *bid for admittance* → *acceptance/refusal*. However, it is only after a 1.2 second gap that the manager undertakes his line 5 utterance, which through the reluctance markers (see Bilmes, 1988) “e::: >ya< nto” and an apologetic formulation (i.e., “taihen mooshiwake nai n desu kedo”), which features an upgraded level of politeness in comparison to excerpt 1, line 4 (i.e., “sumimasen ga”), projects a refusal. As this action becomes clear, Abe interjects with a response that is hearable as displaying disbelief (line 6), and Debito receipts by latching on with *hai* ‘yes’. In line 8, the manager again apologizes (possibly in response to Abe's line 6, which he may be treating as a repair initiation), and continues by stating that he is aware that Debito is a naturalized citizen. In line 9, Abe overlaps the manager's line 8 apology with a strong out breath, which is hearable as a display of disgust or frustration. In line 10, Debito again receipts with *hai*, overlapping the end of the manager's line 8.

In line 11, the manager delivers the projected refusal. This utterance is prefaced by “uchi toshite wa,” which casts it as a formulation of policy from the standpoint of the bath house as an institution, and is framed as an account for why Debito will not be admitted through the use of *n desu yo*. Thus, the manager's talk in lines 8 and 11 first recognizes Debito as having naturalized, and, following a deployment of the disjunctive conjunction *kedomo*, denies him access to the facilities by stating institutional policy prohibiting the use of the bath house by foreigners. In this way, the manager treats the category of *foreigner* as possibly being inclusive of naturalized Japanese citizens. Debito contests this proposed categorization framework by latching onto the manager's line 12 with a “first priority response” (Bilmes, 1993; Bushnell, 2014), which negates Debito's status as a *gaikokujin* ‘foreigner’, and formulates him as being a *nihonjin* ‘Japanese’. In this way, Debito treats naturalized citizens as properly being assembled into the category *Japanese*.

In lines 14 and 15, the manager again claims a recognition that Debito has naturalized, and Debito receipts this in line 16 with *hai*. Then, following a 1 second silence, the manager provides a further account for disallowing Debito's use of the bath house (lines 18 and 19). In this account, the manager mentions “the issue of other foreigners,” and, through the use of *node*, formulates this as being the rational basis for refusing “everyone.” The following two points may be noted. First, the manager deploys *n desu yo*,⁹ which strengthens the explanatory tone of this utterance. Here the manager is speaking on behalf of the establishment. Second, he deploys *hoka* ‘other’, which functions to assemble Debito into the category *foreigner*, along with “others.” Finally, the manager's use of the exhaustive term *minasan* ‘everyone’ functions to deny admittance to all members of the category *foreigner* with no exception. Debito immediately latches onto the manager's line 19 with a redo of his line 13, framed as such by *soo dakara*, which claims a status as Japanese and not foreigner. The manager overlaps part of Debito's utterance with an elongated *n*, which prima facie seems to claim a recognition of Debito's claimed status, but, through its stretched-out production spanning the duration of the second unit of Debito's utterance, may in fact function as a sort of “bomb” pin-pointing Debito's

⁸ Who does not self identify as such at this time. However, it becomes clear later in the interaction that he is indeed the manager of the bath house.

⁹ Yoshimi (1993: 276) suggests that *yo* can imply that “the license for this information is my context-relevant social role.”

claim to be Japanese (see Moerman, 1988). Then, in lines 22 and 24, Debito continues his utterance with the production of further units, which formulate a claim of his possession of Japanese citizenship, and take this as the basis for negating his status as a foreigner. Again, in lines 23 and 25, the manager overlaps Debito's utterance with a claim of understanding, which he (the manager) begins from the point the pragmatic trajectory of Debito's utterance becomes clear.

In this way, Debito seems to assemble the category *Japanese* into an occasioned collection glossable as *legal statuses*. He does this by first self categorizing as a member of *Japanese*, while simultaneously excluding himself from *foreigner* (lines 13 and 20), and second, by claiming possession of "Japanese citizenship", which he formulates as a basis for negating his status as a foreigner (line 22). On both of these occasions, however, the manager overlaps Debito's talk with opposition-relevant utterances (lines 14 and 15, 21, and 23 and 25). In this way, the manager contests the categorization framework proposed by Debito, and submits an opposing categorization framework wherein the category *foreigner* includes in its membership people with the legal status of being naturalized Japanese citizens.

The analysis of Excerpt 2 has shown how differences in the ways in which the participants assembled occasioned collections of categories reflexively informed the sequential structure of their talk-in-interaction. It has also shown how the categorial aspects and sequential aspects of the interaction jointly work to index the interaction as being a dispute. The participants were shown to have made the categories *foreigner*, *Japanese*, and *naturalized citizen*, as well as *institutional staff* and *patron*, relevant at various points in their interaction. As they worked to organize courses of action related to eligibility to use the bath house facilities, in particular, they made the constitution of the categories *Japanese* and *foreigner* an issue in their talk. This project-at-talk reflexively informed the sequential structure of their interaction such that the participants co-constructed a sequential pattern characterized by latching, overlap, repetition, and oppositional moves (Bilmes, 1995; Corsaro & Rizzo, 1990; Saft, 2000). These features, together with the categorial work, jointly index this interaction as being a disagreement or misunderstanding.

Excerpt 3 provides a final example of how the participants constitute, orient to and contest membership categories as they co-accomplish their interaction as a dispute. Here, Debito and his friends are preparing to leave the bath house. They have just finished putting on their shoes when Abe asks the manager if Chinese people would be permitted into the bath house. Excerpt 3 occurs at the end of the data, right before Debito, Abe and Baba have their money returned to them and leave the bath house.

Excerpt 3: Gaiken nan da yo ne

- 1 A: ja chuugokujin wa ii n da yo ne. soo sitara=
well Chinese T good N C P P if.that.is.the.case
- 2 D: =soo desu yo ne.=
that C P P
- 3 A: =kao no katachi mo nihonjin ni nite- niteru
face M shape also Japanese to rese- resemble
- 4 shi [yappari gaiken na n da yo ne::
and after.all appearance C N C P P
- 5 Man: [>dakara< (.) sore ↑wa↓:
so that T
- 6 kochira mo shaberanai to wakaranai to iu katachi ni na[ru (n desu)
this also don't.talk if don't.know QT say shape become N C
- 7 D: [a demo ima
ah but now
- 8 demo shoomee shimasita node (.) [sorezore no-
but proof did so each M
- 9 Man: [sore wa wakarimasu kedo:
that T understand but

((continues))

English Translation:

- 1 A: *Well then, Chinese would be permitted, right? In that case.*
 2 D: *That's right, huh.*
 3/4 A: *The shape of their faces resembles the Japanese, so it is outward appearances after all, right?*
 5/6 Man: *So, it's that we wouldn't know unless we talk with them.*
 7/8 D: *Oh, but since I've proven it now, each-*
 9 Man: *I understand that, but.*

In line 1, Abe mentions Chinese people as being possibly eligible users of the bath house. Her *soo shitara* 'if that's the case' seems to index the manager's just prior statement (not shown) that he cannot let Debito enter because even though Debito is legally a Japanese citizen, the fact that he is not racially Japanese is visually available to other patrons of the bath house. Debito immediately aligns with Abe by "piggybacking" (Goodwin & Goodwin, 1990) onto her turn with *soo desu (yo) ne* 'that's right, huh'. In lines 3 and 4, Abe continues talk production by latching onto Debito's line 2 with an assessment of Chinese people as physically resembling Japanese people, and formulating an upshot that it must be a matter of "outward appearances after all." In this way, Abe invokes a category glossable as *Chinese people*, and treats physical resemblance to the Japanese as one feature bound to this category. She then bases on this an assertion that the issue is one of "outward appearance" (*gaiken*). Abe's talk thus reformulates the manager's prior talk as having treated the problem as being one of racial appearances rather than legal status (see Fukuda, 2014 regarding physical appearance as a category-bound predicate of *Japanese*).

In line 5, near the end of the initial unit of Abe's lines 3 and 4 utterance, the manager undertakes the production of talk. Notably, though the occurrence of *shi* 'and' at the end of a unit of talk may overtly signal transition relevance, such instances would typically be accompanied by the phonological characteristic of sound stretch, that is, *shi:::*. In this way, the utterance is constructed as one "trailing off" (Wong & Waring, 2010). However, Abe's production of *shi* is brisk, which seems instead to project further talk. Notably, she continues production of the talk following *shi* to a full grammatical, pragmatic and intonational completion, even as it is overlapped by the manager's talk. This indicates that the "overlap resolution device" (Schegloff, 2000) is not in operation here, and that the manager's turn in line 5 is being treated by Abe as an interruption (Sacks, Schegloff & Jefferson, 1974; Schegloff, 2000).

The manager's overlapping talk seems to be designed as a first-priority response (Bilmes, 1993), which should be deployed as soon as possible in order to avoid an interpretation of acquiescence. The manager begins his line 5 utterance with *dakara* 'so'. One turn-initial use of *dakara* seems to be to indicate that an account for actions or states of affairs problematized by one's co-participant is forthcoming. Thus, the action projected by the manager's line 5 seems to be that of justifying, rather than opposing or counter-arguing (in which case, he might have used *iya* 'no', *demo* 'but', etc.); this implicitly validates Abe's lines 1, 3 and 4 reformulation of his position as being based on issues of outward appearance, though it simultaneously treats Abe as having reached a faulty conclusion about the reason behind the manager's position-so-formulated. The manager continues on in line 6 to formulate this reason as being that, although the institution may allow Chinese to use the facilities, it is only because the staff cannot differentiate Chinese patrons from the Japanese based only on appearance; they would have to talk to every potential patron of the bath house in order to do so.

In line 7, Debito self selects, overlapping slightly at a transition relevance place in the manager's line 6. His turn begins with *a*, which can function in a manner similar to the English token *oh*, shown by Heritage (2002) to display a disagreement to a disagreement (Bushnell, forthcoming). He then follows this token with *demo*, which projects opposing talk. In line 8, Debito produces talk which indexes his action several minutes earlier of producing his

Japanese driver's license with his name written in Kanji characters on it¹⁰ (not shown). He then deploys *node*, which taken together with the micropause following it, may have been visible to the manager as indicating that Debito had concluded his turn-at-talk. Just as the manager begins an utterance, however, Debito continues with talk, which now becomes visible as an upshot to be based on the talk preceding *node*. This is overlapped by the manager's line 9, which effectively recycles the response he has already made a number of times throughout the interaction, claiming a recognition of Debito's status as a naturalized citizen. After this, Debito produces a lengthy, multi-unit turn (omitted for reasons of space). In this lengthy turn, Debito displays an understanding of the manager's actions of disallowing him (Debito) entrance to the bath house as being based upon issues of race. The turn itself contains five questions. These questions go unanswered by the manager, which seems to suggest that he is either unable or unwilling to produce (further) counter arguments (Bilmes, 1993, 1995). Debito then treats the manager's declination of further speech production as being closing-relevant (Sacks & Schegloff, 1973) and moves to make a final closing of the encounter.

The analysis of Excerpt 3 has shown that the participants have accomplished closing their interaction by using the mundane sequential structures of talk-in-interaction (cf. Sacks & Schegloff, 1973). However, the ways in which they co-construct, align to and/or contest membership categories has informed the sequential structure of their closing. Of particular interest is the way in which the participants co-constructed a category glossable as *eligible patrons of the bath house* as containing only members who share certain physical traits which Debito does not possess. Thus, although continually acknowledged throughout the interaction to have a legal status as a Japanese citizen, Debito is excluded from *eligible patrons*, while Chinese people who may not have such a legal status are included on the basis of racial appearance. Then, the stance continually displayed by the manager of disallowing Debito's use of the facilities is treated by Debito as declining further substantial participation in the interaction, and thus as an opportunity for the participants to initiate and accomplish closing.

5. Conclusion

In the present research, I have analyzed the language of a sign prohibiting foreigners from using a bath house in Japan, and talk-in-interaction taken from a service encounter in which the policy indicated on the sign is contested between a non-racially Japanese citizen of Japan and his two racially Japanese friends. In the analysis, I considered the following research questions:

1. What membership categories do the participants make relevant to *this* interaction?
2. How do participants co-construct, align to, or contest the membership categories?
3. How do the categorial aspects and the sequential aspects serve to jointly define the interactional pattern as a specific unfolding activity?

A close analysis of the data using CA and MCA has revealed that the participants have accomplished making-categories-relevant not only by producing speech overtly mentioning the categories (cf. Schegloff, 1992), but also by performing and mentioning category-bound attributes, rights, and so forth. A point of particular interest has been the occasioned manner in which participants have co-constructed, aligned to, or contested categories.

Matters of identity and belonging are likely to become increasingly important as Japan continues to push for globalization, and more non-Japanese people take up permanent residence, or become naturalized citizens. The participants in this interaction made the categories *Japanese* and *foreigner* relevant at various points in their talk-in-interaction. However, the fact that they constituted these categories in very different ways, by treating them as being bound to the categories different attributes (i.e. legal status, racial appearance, etc.), informed the organization of the talk so that the sequential and categorial aspects, taken together, worked jointly to index this particular encounter as a

¹⁰ As one part of the procedures for becoming a naturalized Japanese citizen, candidates with non-Kanji names must provide Kanji transliterations of their names.

dispute. For the participants, their use of categories-in-talk had grave ramifications on their real-world courses of action; in the end, the category work performed on this occasion resulted in providing the bath house management a resource for disallowing Debito's use of the facilities. However, the results of the present research should not be taken to mean that non- racially Japanese may never be assembled into the category *Japanese*. This is an issue at talk for the participants of the interaction, and thus may turn out very differently under other circumstances.

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Appendix: Transcription conventions

^	glottal stop
↑	rising intonation
↓	falling intonation
>word<	delivered at a quicker pace than the surrounding talk
<word>	delivered at a slower pace than the surrounding talk
[onset of overlapped speech
=	“latching” (i.e. there is no pause between utterances)
(3.1)	length of pause measured in seconds and tenths of seconds
(.)	unmeasured pause
(xxx)	unclear utterance
((word))	commentary by transcriptionist
:::	lengthened sound
WORD	delivered in a louder voice than the surrounding talk
<u>word</u>	delivered with more emphasis than surrounding talk
wo-	cut-off
,	continuing intonation
.	(full stop) falling intonation
?	rising intonation

Interlinear Key	P: Interactional particle (<i>yo, ne, sa, na, etc.</i>)
C: Copula	Q: Question marker
D: Dative particle (<i>he, ni</i>)	QT: Quotation marker
M: Noun modification particle (<i>no, na, etc.</i>)	S: Subject marker
N: Nominalizer	T: Topic marker
O: Object marker	

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