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Is "no" an acknowledgment token? Comparing American and British uses of (+)/(−) tokens

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Abstract

This study investigates uses of the response-token 'no' by British and American speakers. Results of the study indicate that the token is used differently by members of those two cultures: ubiquitously—as a 'continuer'—by the British, and selectively—as an 'affiliative'—by Americans.

Keywords: Acknowledgement; Affiliation; Continuer; US English; British English; Interaction

1. Introduction

In a talk he gave in the spring of 1987, at a conference in Bielefeld, Harrie Mazeland introduced a candidate phenomenon, "No" as an acknowledgment token. He proposed:

> Though—as far as I know—the conversation analytic literature has never described 'nee' (no) as an acknowledgment token, at least Dutch recipients may use 'nee', too, as a response token that belongs to the same class of response types as 'ja' (yes) and/or 'mhm'.

Mazeland located the phenomenon at points where a negatively framed utterance gets a minimal response.

Disregarding the 'Dutch recipients' disclaimer, I treated the proposal as relevant for conversation in general, and my reaction was that it isn't so. My feeling was that "no", following a negatively-framed utterance affiliated with it, could be understood as 'I feel the same way', 'I'd do the same thing', etc., i.e., 'I'm with you', whereas the acknowledgment tokens did not affiliate, but merely indicated 'I understand what you said'.

I realize now that I'd had one strong case as my reference point; a bit of interaction that I'd been fond of since I'd transcribed it in 1967, which I think became a sort of buried prototype of "No" as a response token. Here is that interchange:

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[In this and the following cases, an utterance is marked as either negatively (−) or positively (+) framed; the response "no" being marked as (−), while such responses as "yeah", "mhm", "yes", are marked as (+).]

(1) [JG:II(a):3:2:mso][1]

(Co-workers Maggie and Sorrell went to a wedding reception where Maggie had some sort of momentary blackout and felt ill. Next morning she phones Sorrell at work to say that she will not be coming to work, is going to the doctor))

1	Maggie:		.hh because I(*c*) (.) you know I told Mother what'd ha:ppened yesterday
2			there at the party,
3	Sorrell:		[°Yeah.°]
4	Maggie:		[a : :] n d uh, .hhhhh (0.2) uh you know she asked me if it was
5		(−)	because I'd had too much to dri:nk and I said no=
6	Sorrell:	(−)	=[N o : : : : : .]
7	Maggie:		=[because at the t]i:me I'd only ha:d,h you know that drink 'n
8			a ha:lf when we were going through the receiving line.
9	Sorrell:		Ri:ght.

In this case, Maggie is pretty much undertaking the impossible; attempting to deny what 'everyone knows' had to have happened: You go to a party, they're serving drinks, you 'black out'? You must have had too much to drink.

And, at least to my ears, her coparticipant's emphatic, prolonged "No:::::." had the ring of pure 'I'm on your side'. 'Of course you didn't. How could anyone think such a thing.' 'No:::::.'

I think my 20-year long attachment to this fragment had something to do with my reaction to Mazeland's proposal; my feeling that "No" just can't be a mere acknowledgment token; that it affiliates.

And I may have been influenced by yet another buried prototype, built up out of, not a single dramatic case, but years of exposure to materials for which the following fragment may stand as representative. Specifically, the minimal responses which I take to be 'acknowledgment tokens' are used, not only following positively framed utterances, but also following negatively framed utterances. In this case, the tokens are "Mm hm" and "Uh huh".

(2) [SBL:3:1:R:11:mso]

((Celia is trying to sell fruitcake to her friends and neighbors to raise money for a club she belongs to, and has had to improvise a bit with the samples))

1	Celia:		Well I ga:ve 'em a- a:: a cake today or a ha:lf a cake today 'n they're
2			going to cut it up in bite si:ze and uhm .hhh Wednesday night they'll
3		(−)	uh:m (0.3) .hh I mean see the samples never did ↓co:me.
4	Mary:	(+)	U[h huh,]

[1] Data are marked for source-transcript and position within that transcript, and the transcripts themselves follow Conversation Analysis conventions, which can be found in the Glossary.

5 Celia: [.hhhh]h And so: I called them and they said they have another sample
6 (+) bo:x on the wa↓:y.
7 Mary: (+) M[m hm,]
8 Celia: [.hh B]ut you have to have sa:mples to let the people ↑taste ↓'e:m.
9 Mary: You ↑should ha:ve iyeh.
10 Celia: .khhhhhh So uhm
11 (.)
12 Mary: However people (.) don't have to be quite so fussy 'cause if they know
13 (+) they like fruitcake they:'re usually very good fruit[cake.]
14 Celia: (+) [Mm:]hm
15 Celia: .t.hhh WE:LL uh I: can:'t eat fruitcake but I:'m going to keep a couple
16 (−) of 'em: because if anybody does drop in .hhh I never have anything to
17 serve ↓'em.
18 Mary: (+) Mm:[hm?
19 Celia: [.t.hhh[h
20 Mary: [(Th[at's what I] suh-] s e r v e.)]
21 Celia: [A : n d]you c]an keep th]em in: uh the refrigerator
22 (+) you can even ↑FREEZE ↓'E:M. = as far a[s↓ that goe:s,
23 Mary: (+) [°Mhm°

Notice the two cases of a negative (−) statement followed by a positive (+) response: in lines 3 and 4, and then again in lines 16 and 18. That minus-followed-by-plus configuration [(−)→(+)] holds for other negatives than the 'X never happened' which occurs twice in fragment (2) and for the acknowledgment token "Yeah" as well as the "Mm hm" and "Uh huh" of fragment (2):

(3) [SBL:2:2:3:R:25:mso] ((re this afternoon's bridge game))

1 Celia: (−) I didn't have too good of ha:nds today .hh[hhhh]
2 Salome: (+) [Ya:h.]
3 Celia: But ↑I: sure threw Jo that la:st time...

(4) [NB:II:3:R:6:mso]

1 Lottie: (−) I thought well maybe the people were still there or something so I didn't
2 ca:ll.
3 Emma: (+) eeYah,
4 Lottie: .t I didn't know what time you were going to get do:wn so I went out
5 sho:pping...

(5) [SBL:3:3:R:1:mso]

1 Milly: (−) But he said there wasn't much we could do now at this late a da*hhh*:te
2 tha[t's what I:] said =
3 Keith: (+) [Y e h]
4 Keith: = Yah.

(6) [TCI(a):14:4:mso]

1 Jerry: (−) Maybe I'll bring some rum 'n Coke. = I haven't had that for a yea:rs, =
2 Ron: (+) = Yeah.
3 (.)
4 Ron: Alri:ght,

(7) [TCI(b):16:48:mso]

1 Joan: (−) because I said, now I don't even have time to order another one from
2 these other catalogue =
3 Linda: (+) = e[Y e :]ah.
4 Joan: [thing]
5 Joan: (−) .hhh 'Cause it wouldn't get here in time for Christma[s. = So,]
6 Linda: (+) [Yeah,]
7 Joan: .mp.hh-.hhhh She said well...

In short, there seems to be a pattern of negatively-framed utterances being followed by positive acknowledgements, not by negatives. Given these buried prototypes, i.e., "No" as an affiliative response, and the usual acknowledgment tokens, "Yeah", "Mm hm", "Uh huh" as routine and unproblematic responses to all sorts of utterances including those which are negatively framed, my initial resistance to the idea of "No" as just another acknowledgment token is not surprising. Again, these were buried prototypes. I wasn't consciously using them when I reacted to Harrie Mazeland's proposal. I just had a strong feeling.

For some 5 years I'd now and then mull over "No" as an acknowledgment token, and when I'd bump into Harrie at a conference we would have the same exchange: I would say "I don't think so" and he'd say "I disagree with you". I felt I owed it to him to at least try to back up my resistance. The question was how to go to work? What to begin to look at? What were the relevant alternatives? Sometimes it seemed to me that the only reasonable procedure would be to make a study of all utterances and all responses!

Then, in two stages, a possible approach emerged. First, a bit of Dutch conversation caught in passing, in which a negatively-framed statement in the course of a little story was followed by a recipient's "Nee:", whereupon the storyteller produced what I'd characterized in a study of 'troubles talk' as an 'affiliation response'; very roughly, a bit of "emotionally heightened talk following an expression of sympathy" (Jefferson, 1988: 428). Here is one instance:

(8) [NB:IV:14:2:mso] ((Emma has broken out with virulent psoriasis))

1 Emma: I have to take two tub baths with tar in it every hhhhhh da:y?
2 Lottie: Yea:h?
3 Emma: .hhhhh And I have to have ointment oi put on four times a da:y and
4 I'm under:: violet ra:y for a few seconds, a:nd I got a shot in the butt
5 of vitamin: (0.2) A::. ski:n.
6 (0.5)

7 Lottie: → Je::sus.
8 Emma: → Lo:ttie honest to Go:d you know, I just broke out terribly...

That is, I heard in the Dutch conversation a prior speaker responding to a recipient's "Nee" as Emma in this fragment is responding to Lottie's "Jesus"; hearing it as sympathizing, etc., etc., and shifting from 'reporting' (lines 1–5) to 'emoting' (line 8).

A few days after overhearing the little "Nee" exchange came stage two. Driving home from grocery shopping, it occurred to me that doctors don't do it.

Although the thought occurred to me out of the blue, it was probably triggered by the connection I'd made a few days earlier to the affiliation/affiliation–response sequence in troubles-talk.

And why doctors might not do it could have something to do with a recurrent problem in doctor–patient interaction; specifically, that in the 'service encounter' of a visit to the doctor, persons can be found to be seeking, not advice, but sympathy, and getting, not sympathy, but 'treatment' (Jefferson and Lee, 1981).

The idea would then be something like the following: some or many 'negatively framed utterances' might be 'affiliation implicative'; utterances to which a recipient relevantly not only shows hearing-understanding of what was said, but gives (or recognizably withholds) support, agreement, sympathy, etc. But in the 'service encounters' of doctor–patient interaction, where 'treatment' has priority, where doctors routinely follow descriptions of pain and misery with responses other than expressions of sympathy, could doctors be found to be following negatively framed utterances with the non-affiliative 'positive' tokens? That is, would I find that doctors don't use negatives as acknowledgment tokens; that they 'don't do it'? With 'doctors don't do it' as a checkable hypothesis, I had a way to begin looking at data with reference to the question 'is "No" an acknowledgment token?'.

2. Distribution across user populations

At the time I began this study, I had some 20 sessions of British doctor–patient interaction recorded in 1979 by Christian Heath (Heath, 1986),[2] some of which I'd transcribed back then, most of which I'd done more recently. I sat down with the transcripts and was immediately rewarded.

In the first doctor–patient session I looked through, of the first 15 instances of negatively framed utterances followed by a minimal response, the first five were "Yes"s or "Yeah"s. Then came two "Hm"s and an "Mm". Then, the 9th minimal response to a negatively-framed utterance, was a "No". Then 3 more "Yes"s or "Yeah"s, another "Hm", and one more "No".

So a 9:2 (+):(−) ratio with four, as it were, abstaining (i.e., the three "Hm"s and the "Mm"). Sheer numbers aside, the details of the talk in this session gave me a strong sense of the 'affiliative' character of the "No"s in contrast to the 'mere

[2] More recent work based on these medical interviews is found in Heath (1986) and Hindmarsh and Heath (2000). [ed.]

acknowledgment' character of the "Yes"s and "Yeah"s. Perhaps a sense of the acknowledgment/affiliation distinction can be gotten from two interchanges which occur within a few minutes of each other in that session.

Unfortunately, permission to use these materials was rescinded by the clinic at which the recordings were made. But since these materials were the catalyst for this study, and since this paper is as much an account of the study as it is a report of the phenomenon being studied, I cannot but make reference to them. I will provide descriptions and paraphrases rather than the verbatim transcripts—except for the (surely adequately anonymous) response tokens, which I will be showing in transcript-detail.

Here, then, are the two contrasting interchanges within the same session:

(9) [MSD:4:(3):16]

> The patient's ex-wife is having difficulties with their pre-teenaged son. The patient produces a negatively framed utterance, remarking that he doesn't have a problem with the boy, to which the doctor responds with a flatly-intoned positive token, "Yeh".

(10) [MSD:4:(3):18]

> The patient mentions that his son is very aggressive, and goes on to produce a negatively-framed utterance, that he doesn't know what to do about it. To this, the doctor responds with a slightly cursively intoned negative token, "No:".

One possibly relevant difference between the two sets of negatively framed statements and their responses is that in case (9) the patient formulates the problem as his ex-wife's, claiming that he can handle it, while in case (10), he formulates the problem as his own. And that—shall we say 'confession'—receives the first "no" to a negatively-framed utterance of a series comprised of eight priors which did not receive negative response tokens.

In the end, for this corpus of 20 sessions, the (+):(−) ratio dropped from 9:2 to 6:4. So, in the end, in terms of sheer numbers, nothing much emerged.

But in terms of the details of the interactions, the alternation between affiliation and mere acknowledgment seemed to be holding strong. Which is to say, 'doctors don't do it' didn't mean that negatively framed utterances are not followed by "No". In fact they were, in almost 40% of the cases. Rather, it seemed that the matter could be most fruitfully looked at, not as a matter of sheer distribution, but of distinctive interactional activities.

That is, 'doctors don't do it' caught the possibility that doctors don't deploy "no" as a mere acknowledgment token equivalent to "Yeah", "Yes", "Mm hm", "Uh huh", but that they deploy it as an affiliation token—with which they are decidedly selective.

Given the interesting results of the search through the British doctor–patient materials, I undertook a full data run of all my materials, British and American, doctor–patient and civilian, pulling out all cases—or as many as I could recognize—of negatively-framed utterances followed by the range of minimal response tokens.

The results can roughly be stated as: Not only British doctors, but American doctors and American civilians don't do it. On the other hand, British civilians certainly do seem to use "No" not only as an affiliation token but as an acknowledgment token, i.e., as Mazeland proposed to be the case for Dutch conversation.

I'll briefly mention the results in distributional terms, and then go on to discuss them by means of case-by-case considerations.

When I drafted this paper, the results in distributional terms could stand as no more than proposals to be tested, because the samples were inadequate—in particular the doctor–patient samples. For one, there were terribly few (63 British doctor–patient cases and 53 American doctor–patient cases, in contrast to 193 British civilian cases and 248 American civilian cases). And the doctor–patient samples were horribly mismatched. All the British samples were from a single general medical clinic, and, while the American materials represented a mixture of therapeutic encounters, there were no strictly medical materials. The best that could be said was that there was a degree of numerical consistency within the civilian set (193 British and 248 American) and within the professional set (63 British and 53 American).

There has been one slight, but interesting change. Recently I began transcribing some data from an American general medical clinic, in various ways quite well matched to the British general medical clinic. So far, I've come across 15 instances of a patient's negatively framed utterance followed by a doctor's minimal response token, which brings the American case-count up to 68, and reduces somewhat the mismatching of British versus American doctor–patient samples. And among those 15 new cases, there was not one (−) response, i.e., the count of (−) responses by American doctors is holding at 0.

Here are the results, in terms of lowest to highest percent of negative tokens following negatively-framed utterances (Table 1).

Table 1
Negative response-tokens following negative statements, by country/occupation

Country, occupation	Negative-tokens post-negative statements	Negative statements (*N*)	Negative response-tokens (%)
American, doctors	0	68	0
American, civilians	67	248	27
British, doctors	23	63	37
British, civilians	166	193	86

Most roughly, it appears that American doctors literally don't do it, i.e., that they simply do not respond to negatively phrased utterances with negative tokens. And of course there is a stereotype to that effect, voiced in the fragment below by a caller to an American suicide prevention center:

(11) [Sacks:SPC:NYE'64:4] ((This is an attempt to replicate Sacks' 1964 transcript in the particulars of its details, including its spacing, the absent apostrophes, etc.))

pt Ive got a date coming in a half hour and I (sob)
dr. I see

pt I cant go through with it I cant go through with the evening I cant (sniffle)
dr uh huh[3]
pt you talk I don't want to talk
dr uh huh
pt (laugh sob) It sounds like a real professional uh huh uh huh uh huh sniffle

Again, then: it appears that American doctors literally don't do it; do not follow negatively-framed utterances with negative tokens.

At the opposite pole, it appears that British civilians do it, and with a vengeance: 86% (166 out of 193) negatively-framed utterances being followed by negative minimal tokens.

And it appears that American civilians exhibit the same sort of use-rate as that of British doctors. That is, these two populations make use, but decidedly selective use, of the negative tokens (27% by American civilians, 37% by British doctors). [While the British doctors use it somewhat more often, the difference is not significant. ed.]

It is striking that the similarity falls out that way. One might expect closer similarities between civilians, British and American, than between American civilians and British doctors.. But comparing the civilians, there is a virtually reversed deployment of positive versus negative tokens, British 86% (−), Americans 73% (+). [Indeed, Chi square tests show that the British doctors are significantly different from their 'civilian' counterparts, as are the American doctors from their 'civilian' American counterparts. The level of significance of the British vs. American doctors and British vs. American 'civilians' is also highly significant. All those differences are significant at well beyond $P < 0.0001$. ed.]

So. To the question "is "no" an acknowledgment token?" the numbers suggest that there is no single, comprehensive answer, but that the answer varies across populations of users.

Perhaps American civilians, in the course of their daily lives, and British doctors, in the course of their daily work, can best be described as using the (+) tokens for acknowledgment, reserving the (−) tokens for affiliation, while American doctors, it seems, just don't use the negative token as a response to negatively-framed statements. In contrast, British civilians, in the course of their daily lives, use (−) tokens—as Harrie Mazeland proposed for the Dutch—for mere acknowledgment of negatively-framed utterances.

3. Case-by-case considerations

I'll turn now to the conversation materials, exploring differences in usage that could begin to account for the vast differences between British civilians and, not only their American cousins, but their own countrymen in the medical profession.

[3] It may be that what Sacks transcribed as "uh huh" was actually "mm hm". The tape of this particular conversation is missing, but other conversations recorded at the same time, with a speaker who I'm quite sure is this same doctor, show almost exclusive use of the token "mm hm".

3.1. Dramatically affiliative cases of (−)/(−) responses: Neg→"No"

Recalling the buried prototype of a negatively framed utterance followed by "No" [fragment (1)], I would say that that utterance is in the first place a strong candidate for 'affiliation', given the deeply problematic character of denying having had too much to drink. That is, a denial of having had too much to drink may make it relevant, at that point, that the recipient displays not merely hearing-understanding of the utterance, but a position vis-à-vis the denial. And having said that, I would want to ask of the whole collection of cases, if this sort of strong affiliation relevance recurs, and if so, how it is dealt with across the three user populations (the fourth, American doctors, yielding no cases of Neg→"No").

I would have to begin by showing that the denial of having had too much to drink *is* 'deeply problematic'. Having done that, I would have to go on to show that each of the collected cases involves something of that nature—if not 'too much to drink', then something also deeply problematic. For the purposes of this paper, I will attempt the former but merely assert the latter.

Specifically, 'too much to drink' is a first order account. Not only is it the first account that is offered for various sorts of behavior, but if it is a possible account, then it becomes the likely account [see Harvey Sacks' (1992) considerations of 'a possible account' as 'the likely account', e.g., Vol. 1, pp. 355–356 and 412–413].

So, for example, here are a couple of cases of problematic behavior accounted for via 'too much to drink':

(12) [NB:IV:10r:17:mso]

((Lottie has just returned from a visit with her friend Caroline, who recently married a wealthy man and now is living in a mansion with a heated pool, in which Lottie and she swam until 2:00 in the morning, "in the nu:de."))

1	Lottie:	ho ho: God it was: fun.
2	Emma	.hh She still drinking her little dri:nks?
3		(0.6)
4	Lottie:	Ye:ah 'n the[: n]
5	Emma:	°[Yea]h°

(13) [TCI(b):8:13:mso]

((Dick and his brother-in-law did some complicated auto repair work, about which EJ is asking technical questions and getting such answers as "Ya:h something like that."))

1	EJ:	You're awfully vague were you full of bee:r?
2	Dick:	.t No::,
3	EJ:	↓Hm.

With such materials as the above, an argument might be made that 'too much to drink' is, in general, a first order account. And, at least for case (1), there is evidence

as to the 'deeply problematic' character of this account. In a later conversation with another friend, the lady who had a momentary blackout at the wedding reception goes to some lengths to argue that her symptoms were absolutely not those of, as she puts it, "too much booze":

(14) [JG:II(a):1:5–6:mso]

((At the wedding reception, recovering from her momentary blackout, Maggie found herself in a cold sweat, unable to catch her breath. Having described these symptoms to her friend Barbie, she goes on to sum up))

1	Maggie:	.hhh Alright first of all you do:n't do this when you've got too
2		much boo:ze.
3		(0.3)
4	Maggie:	You get the co:ld sweats when you come ou:t. of having been
5		pa:ssed out from too much boo:[ze.
6	Barbie:	[Yeah.

Given the possible workings of "No" as an affiliative, and the possibility that there are certain environments in which affiliation may be particularly relevant, the (0.3) silence following Maggie's negatively-framed utterance—in effect, a denial that the symptoms she exhibited were the result of too much to drink—can be seen as a place in which an affiliative response- at the very least a "No"—might have occurred. It might eventually be argued to constitute an observable absence of affiliation. [See Sacks' (1992) methodological considerations of 'observable absence', e.g., Vol. 1, pp. 293–295 and 670–671, and Vol. 2, pp. 35–36].

Having argued that her symptoms were absolutely not those of "too much booze", Maggie goes on to complain that, because of jealousy over a man whom she and her co-worker Sorrell (see fragment 1) had met on vacation, he having demonstrably preferred Maggie, Sorrell had begun "poison pen" activities such that when Maggie arrived at work on Monday morning, "the word" had been spread.

(15) [JG:II(a):1:8:mso]

((Maggie's version of Sorrell's "poison pen" report to their co-workers of her illness at the wedding reception))

1	Maggie:	.hhhh ↓I was the one who was drunk at the party, .hhh
2		↓I: was the one who was staggering around ↓I was the
3		one who pa:ssed out,

With such materials bearing on 'too much to drink', I would want to argue that denying that one had too much to drink implicates something more than 'acknowledgment' from a recipient; something more than 'heard and understood'. Rather, it entails 'affiliation'; i.e., 'I believe you', 'I'm on your side', etc. In that sense, then, such a negatively-framed utterance would constitute a strong candidate for affiliation.

I'm going to consider a few more negatively-framed utterances that I would call strong candidates for affiliation. These do get "no" from their recipients. And I would want to argue that that response is characterizably 'affiliative'. However, I am not going to do the work required to build a case for the status of each one as a 'candidate for affiliation'. And such work is necessary if any claim of serious analysis is to be made. For now, I will just assert that, like denying that one had too much to drink, these are also strong candidates for affiliation.

First, three strong candidates for affiliation among American civilians. In a sense, fragments (16) through (18) are the reverse of the denying-the-obvious of fragment (1). Here, we get powerful negatively framed assertions or invocations of the obvious—of how things are or ought to be.

(16) 2.1.5 [SBL:2:1:8R:mso]
((Nora is complaining about an acquaintance who returned home from a trip abroad, and is suddenly an expert on international politics))

1 Nora: Although she: (.) said she went into ho:mes why that doesn't mean
2 (–) anything one home in each country doesn't mean a thing
3 Bea: (–) No↓:.

(17) [NB:II:2:R:19:mso]
((Nancy, talking to a friend of hers, is rehashing a conversation she just had with her former mother-in-law, who hadn't heard from her son (Nancy's ex-husband André) on Mother's Day. He later told his mother that he'd spent all day Mother's Day trying to call her))

1 Nancy: (–) a:nd she: (.) knows better than tha:t because André never stayed
2 home all day to call ↓anybod[y,h .hhh]hh
3 Emma: (–) [n::No:,]

(18) [NB:IV:13:R:24:mso]
((Emma is having trouble with one of her neighbors, whom she describes as "that little whorey thing", that "dirty filthy thing"))

1 Emma: (–) She doesn't belo:ng in that apa:rtment.
2 Lottie: (–) No:.

And one more American case, a strong candidate for affiliation—again, a negatively framed assertion of how things are or ought to be—which receives heavily ironic affiliation.

(19) [TCI(b):13:3:mso]
((Jerry has a chance to work several hours overtime, but he and his wife Linda are helping out at some sort of neighborhood festivity that evening. So, although they "could have used the money," he'll have to let the opportunity pass))

1 Jerry: Well this: thing's more important anyway,
2 (0.3)
3 Linda Uhhhhh Well it's all set up is the thi:[ng.]=
4 Jerry: [Oh:]=
5 Jerry: =[y : e a : : h .]Right.]
6 Linda: (–) =[I mean we can't t]urn ba]:[ck.
7 Jerry: (–) [nNo::, heavens no.

I'm proposing, then, that such assertions as 'X doesn't mean a thing', 'X never did Y', that someone 'doesn't belong', that 'we can't turn back', are, in ways that remain to be demonstrated, strong candidates for affiliation, and in each of these American instances those strong candidates for affiliation get the response token that I'm claiming does affiliation, i.e., "No".

And here—now among British civilians—are another three cases that I would claim to be strong candidates for affiliation. In the first, (20), similarly to the foregoing American cases, we find a powerful negatively framed assertion evoking how things should be but are not; in the remaining two—(21)–(22)—similarly to fragment (1), we find problematic denials.

(20) [Holt:X(C)1:1:6:4:mso]

((Leslie and her mother are complaining together about British Telecom: On top of high prices, there's a £17 service charge))

1 Mum: (–) I've never ↓had any service from them. ↑Ne↓ver.
2 Leslie: (–) No:. No:.
3 (.)
4 Leslie: Oh I haa (.) we ha:ve,
5 Mum: °Ha[ve yo[u°
6 Leslie: [.hhh [Because they're a:lways going wrong here
7 [at Bridgewater,
8 Mum: [(Tha:t's it. ↑yes.)

(21) [Holt:088:1:8:10–11:mso]

((re an egregious mutual acquaintance who is always getting people to do her work, who had recently phoned Leslie to say that Joyce had suggested that Leslie take on one of those tasks))

1 Joyce: Hon↑est↓ly (.) Les she treats us all like (.) ↓di:rt.
2 Leslie: And ↑then she rang me up 'n said that (.) Joyce suggested that I
3 [( ])
4 Joyce: [Ahhhh::::]
5 Leslie: ↑huh [hah huuh↑
6 Joyce: [Ohhh::::::::::.
. .
. ((ca 10 lines omitted))
. .

17 Joyce: She: said um::n eh::mn did I know if you were tea:ching.
18 (0.2)
19 Joyce: (–) I didn:'t suggest you at all [she-]
20 Leslie: (–) [No n]o: n[o:
21 Joyce: [°Isn't she[dreadfu[l,°
22 Leslie: [.hhh [Ye:s yes

Let me just note here the occurrence at lines 2 and 3 above, Leslie starting to produce a paraphrase, "[She] said that...", which has as its next expectable component the pronoun "you", i.e., "[She] said that you suggested", switches to a direct quote, "[She] said that (.) Joyce suggested". It may be that "[She] said that you suggested..." has, and is seen by Leslie as having, a more accusatory character than the direct quote, and that Leslie therefore switches formats in mid-utterance, replacing the accusatory "you suggested" with a report of what the woman actually said.

(22) [Rahman:I:3:mso]

((Hallie went out to do some errands before her youngest son got home from school. She'd left him a note telling him what time she'd gone, where she was going, and that she'd be back soon. Nevertheless, she got home and, "We:ll he was in tea:rs"))

1 Hallie: (–) But I hadn't been go:ne that [long I was ba]ck [↑here=
2 Moira: (–) [N o : : : : .] [N o,
3 Hallie: =before six,
4 Moira: Oh:: heck, (.) and I rang Janice up last night...She was out
5 at the ↑club wasn't she and left Su:san who is only te:n.
6 Hallie: Ye::s,
7 Moira: uh:: on her own. She'd be on uh lo:- own til about half past
8 ele:ven °last night ('n she was)°
9 Hallie: [Oh: well this's it

It may be a fluke of the collections or it may be something real, but in each of these three British cases a strong candidate for affiliation receives a multiple "No" [see (20) line 2, (21) line 20, and (22) line 2]. It might be wondered whether in British conversation, if "No" serves for both acknowledgment and affiliation, there are ways to mark the token for its status as 'mere acknowledgment' or as 'affiliation'.

Turning most briefly to British doctors, here are two more cases of strong candidates for affiliation to add to case (l0). Again, these are taken from the rescinded clinical materials and will not be shown verbatim, except for the negative response token of the doctor. In each of these cases, a patient is producing a problematic denial; one denying overeating, the other—drinking too much.

(23) [MSD:4:(5):14]

A patient with foot problems exacerbated by her overweight isn't losing weight and doesn't know why. She's on a diet, and says emphatically that she's not eating anything that she shouldn't eat. The doctor responds with a flat "No."

(24) [MSD:2:(5):16]

A patient about to go on holiday says she needs the rest, and that perhaps a few of the gin and tonics that her hosts will be offering her will do her good. This generates some laughter and teasing by the doctor, whereupon the patient says that she doesn't drink a lot, that she's not a drinker. And the doctor responds with a flat "No."

Most roughly, it appears that, at least for strong candidates for affiliation, American civilians and British doctors offer affiliation with the token "No" (albeit markedly flatly in the case of British doctors). This, in contrast to American doctors who, as in fragment (11), can be found following such a *cri de coeur* as "I can't go through with the evening I can't!" with "uh huh"[4], and- if the apparent regularity in fragments (20), (21), and (22) holds up- in contrast as well to British civilians who, using "No" across the board, may need to do extra work to mark the affiliative cases (whereas the British doctors, using the token selectively, can perhaps do affiliation with a single, flatly intoned "No").

3.2. Skewed deployment of (+)/(−) acknowledgment tokens across 'use environments'

A closer look at the materials on a case-by-case basis yields recurrent differences in the deployment of the (+)/(−) tokens. I'm going to run through four sets of data; four distinctive types of negatively-framed utterances, for which there is a strongly skewed occurrence of the tokens. Here I'll be focussing on British and American civilians, in part because of the vastly larger data base for those two user populations.

In the course of the full data run, I found myself experiencing a sort of culture shock. Working with American materials, I quickly lost my sense of what counted as a candidate for a "No" receipt. I began to exclude certain types of utterances. But on returning to British data, I'd rediscover that these things did get "No". I had to keep alternating between British and American data to refresh my sense for what could take a "No". That is to say, some utterance types had to *get* a "No" for me to see that they could *take* a "No". Three of the four sets I will be considering here have that character (at least for my sense of what takes "no").

3.2.1. Negatively-framed statement + "You know"

My problem with this format was that by the time the utterance is responded to, it has become one that elicits a positive response, i.e., "You know?" ought to get "Yes [I know]". And massively, that's how the American cases run off. Following are just a few.

(25) [SBL:3:2R:1:mso]

((Someone misunderstood when a bridge game was to be played and agreed to join the bridge party, but it turns out that she cannot play on the actual night of the game, and now Celia can't find anyone to take her place))

1 Sara: I mean I(*d*) (.) I don't think it's fai:r to you. Celia I mean you know to

[4] Or probably "Mm hm", see footnote 2.

2 plan on it 'n then all of a sudden to have to (.) scurry arou:nd. . .I mean
3 it's just ridiculous to have so much confu:sion
4 Celia: ehYaa:h
5 Sara: (−) going o:n I mean I don't think it's fai↓:r. You kno[:w.
6 Celia: (+) [iYah=
7 Celia: =We:ll: ah: I thought I made it plai:n: an:d she said. . .

(26) [NB:IV:10R:51:mso] ((Lottie drove straight through to Palm Springs))

1 Lottie: When I got down there Sunday night I was hun:gry you know and
2 she fixed me: she had a (.) tamale an:d ü-an:d uh: she fixed that for:
3 (−) me 'n with some ground round in it 'cause I didn't want to sto:p 'n
4 ↑ea:t you kno[:w,
5 Emma: (+) [°Mm hm:°

(27) [TCII:15E:2:mso] ((Carla has a new student whose father is. . .))

1 Carla: a multI milliona[i::re.]
2 Jo: °[Yeh:]° The one that bought the Forester Ran[ch
3 Carla: [Yeah=
4 Carla: =Do you know him?
5 Jo: .hhh No I just heard him talking about it.
6 Carla: (−) Oh I didn:'t uh: I didn't hear him: about it you se[e.
7 Jo: (+) [°Ye:ah.°

I only found two cases of American civilians following "You know" with "No". I will assert that they are highly affiliation-relevant but not try to build a case for that relevance, and I'll show just one—a rather special case because the "you know" occurs as an utterance on its own—a post-gap pursuit of response- rather than as a 'tag', as it does in all other cases, British and American. The candidate for affiliation here is a negatively-framed evocation of how things ought to be, "And that isn't right".

(28) [SBL:2:2:3R:34–35:mso]
((The last bridge club game was chaotic. Zoe and Celia are promising each other that the next session will be calmer))

1 Zoe: I'm not going to say my cou:nt or: w- I don't understa:nd you or:-:
2 uh (0.2) .t.hhh (.) a stuu (.) PRA:CTICALLY asking what'll I do:.
3 Celia: Uh hu[h
4 Zoe: (−) [And tha:t isn't ↓ri::ght,
5 (0.7)
6 Zoe: → You ↓kno:w,
7 Celia: (−) nNo and I don't think you sh (.) y' should groa:n like I do. . .

This comes off as one hell of a counter-case for the proposal that Americans massively and routinely follow Neg+"You know" with a positive token. Here, if anywhere, I would have expected a "yeah".

But this is also one hell of a sensitive bit of interaction. Celia has been given the delicate choice of disagreeing with a moral imperative that Zoe has just produced (i.e., "That isn't right"), or agreeing with the negative self-assessment implicit in it (i.e., that Zoe had done something wrong). And, although there are resources available for a prior speaker to remove such a burden from a coparticipant, for example to incorporate what is now a growing inter-utterance gap into an intra-utterance pause with, e.g., a 'continuation' such as "so I'm just not going to do that anymore" or "so next time I'm going to shape up", etc., what we get is a pursuit of response, "You know".

Celia's solution is lovely. With her "No", she affiliates to the moral imperative thus disposing of the problem of 'disagreement', and then, with her self-accusation about groaning (line 7), leaps into the same boat as the implicit negative self-assessment thus ameliorating the problem she'd just created by agreeing with the moral imperative.

Again, then: I found only two cases of American civilians following "You know" with "No", and both of those cases are highly affiliation-relevant. Indeed, negatively-framed statements + "You know" are so routinely followed by (+) tokens in the American civilian data that I had to keep going back to the British civilian data to reassure myself that "You know" does not necessarily implicate a (+) response.

In strong contrast, *all* the British civilian cases of negatively-framed utterance + "You know" are responded to with "No". Here are a few of them.

(29) [Holt:X(C)2:l:2:22:mso] ((re Joan's teenaged son))

1	Joan:	(−)	And I don't think he's that interested in ↓girls at the moment you
2			kno[w,
3	Leslie:	(−)	[No:.

(30) [Holt:M88:2:4:39:mso] ((Deena's daughter is getting married))

1	Deena:		And eh the other thing Mark if they hadn't got a hou:se? (0.8) then
2		(−)	there's no way we would be lavishing out on a ↑wedding °for them
3			we'd° (.) you kno[w we would...
4	Mark:	(−)	[No:.

(31) [Wheatley(1):19:mso] ((re a trip requiring a change of trains in Paris))

1	Alice:	(−)	We didn't fancy the change you kno[w
2	Marian:	(−)	[n:No::.

(32) [Rahman:(16):8:mso]

1	Eva:	(−)	and I've dusted the sitting room and just hoovered- I never move
2			things ou:t, you know.
3	Hallie:	(−)	No:.

As for British doctors, I could only find three cases in which "You know" is followed by a (+) or (−) token response. I'll show none of them, but simply note that two were (+), and the (−) case may again be affiliation-relevant, a patient with a stomach complaint tagging "You know" onto a denial of eating a lot of fried food.[5]

3.2.2. "...don't know..." statements

In the American civilian data, I couldn't find any "no"s following "...don't know..." statements. Those which got a token got a (+) token. Here are just a few:

(33) [TCI(b):16:11:mso] ((Joan has some difficulty cutting her son's hair))

1	Joan:		I know how to cut it anyway =
2	Linda:		= Yea[h
3	Joan:	(−)	[But I just don't know how to cut the ne:ck.
4	Linda:	(+)	Yeah.

(34) [TCI(b):8:2–3:mso] ((re some medication for poison oak))

1	EJ:	(−)	And I don't know where she keeps that sort of stu:ff,
2	Dick:	(+)	y:Yah

(35) [SBL:2:2R:1:mso] ((re a relative's problematic health))

1	Jean:	(−)	Allen doesn't know anything new out there either.
2	Clara:	(+)	Uh huh,

In the British civilian data, I found both (+) and (−) tokens, with a strong tendency towards the (−). Here are some of the (−)s.

(36) [Wheatley:1:15:mso] ((re a friend's travel plans))

1	Alice:	(−)	So I don't kno::w, (.) you know when she's com[ing
2	Marian:	(−)	[No::,

(37) [Holt:SO(II):2:8:10:mso] ((re the cause of a friend's illness))

1	Mum:	(−)	They don't exactly kno:w
2	Leslie:	(−)	No.

(38) [Rahman(2):2:mso] ((Hallie's sons ordered some items from Eva))

1	Hallie:	(−)	But I(*k*) I don't know what quite,
2	Eva:	(−)	nNo:. No.

[5] This material can be found in [MSD:2(4):910].

In fact, I only found two British civilian (+)s, both by the same speaker, each possibly doing other work than 'acknowledgment'. Here they are.

(39) [Rahman:I:10:mso]

((Hallie noticed a moving van at Moira's next door neighbor's house. Now there seems to be disagreement as to whether it's the neighbor moving out or sending some furniture to auction, or the new neighbors moving in))

1	Moira:		Well that's k- üthat- would be: (.) Missiz Boyd's I should
2			thin[k.
3	Hallie:	(−)	[Yeh well maybe, [I don't kno:w,
4	Moira:		[Yeh.
5	Moira:	(+)	Ye[h.
6	Hallie:		[Mm,

Most roughly, Moira, with both her "Yeh"s (lines 4 and 5), may be holding to a position she posed at lines 1–2, which Hallie's "Well maybe" and "I don't know" are casting doubt upon.

(40) [Rahman:(14):13:mso]

((Hallie, shopping in town today for something to feed the guests arriving tomorrow, couldn't find anything suitable))

1	Moira:		So you'll have to go down again to[morrow
2	Hallie:		[I have to go down
3			to[morrow and 'n] sort of have a look round =
4	Moira:		[y : Y e : s .]
5	Hallie:	(−)	= Don't know what I'm going to do for them.
6	Moira:	(+)	°Yeh°[.h ↑Anyways I'll pr]ob'ly see you on Thursday
7	Hallie:		[° B u t ° u h :]

Moira's soft, minimal "°Yeh°", which is immediately followed by an abrupt shift from Hallie's concern about what to feed her guests, to when Moira and Hallie will be seeing each other, may be a case of 'merest token acknowledgment→shift', a class of occurrence that forms one of the sets under consideration in this section, and is one for which British speakers routinely do seem to use the (+) token. (See Section 3.2.4. below.)

So, of the two British cases I could find, in which "...don't know..." statements get (+) tokens in response, one may not be an acknowledgment at all, and the other may be less an acknowledgment than it is a 'pre-shifter'.

Earlier, I mentioned the problem my American ear gives me with the "you know"s (roughly, I hear them as eliciting a positive response). I have a similar sort of problem with the "don't know"s. To my ear, a "no" to "[I, he, they] don't know" would be agreeing with, confirming, etc., that statement. And, in the cases I've seen, it would be agreement or confirmation with no basis, i.e., the recipient has no access to whether I, he, or they know or don't know.

Once again, it looks as if Americans use (+) tokens as acknowledgment tokens, for both positive and negative utterances, reserving (−) tokens for affiliative work vis-à-vis negatively-framed utterances, but that British civilians do not seem to invest (−) tokens per se with so much 'meaning'. They don't, then, have the problem of a literal, local hearing of "you know"→ "No" as "No, I don't know", or of "I don't know" → "No" as "No, I know you don't know." My troubles with these two formats may be ethnocentric, based on American usage.

Indeed, among British civilians, "No" does seem to be used as a way of saying 'heard-and-understood' in the environment of negatively-framed statements, as Mazeland proposed in the first place for Dutch interaction.

The British doctor–patient cases were equally divided between (+) and (−) tokens following "...don't know..." statements, there being three of each.

One of the three (−) cases is (10), in which the patient says about his young son's aggressiveness that he doesn't know what to do about it, to which the doctor responds with "No:.", a case I proposed to be strongly affiliation-relevant, involving a sort of 'confession'. And I will just assert here that the other two (−) cases are also affiliation-relevant.

Of the three (+) cases, two seemed to be routine enough acknowledgment tokens, similar to the American civilian use. The third case, in which a British doctor follows a patient's "...don't know..." with a (+) token, may be, in a manner similar to case (39) above, a reaffirmation of a prior statement.[6]

So far I've run through two sets of negatively-framed statements followed by (+) or (−) tokens:

- For the first set, neg + "you know", I found among American civilians mostly (+) tokens, with a few affiliation-relevant (−) tokens. Among British civilians, all cases I found were responded to with (−) tokens. As to the British doctors, based on a sample consisting of three cases, I'd guess that they use the tokens more or less in the American fashion, reserving "No" for affiliation.
- For the second set, the "...don't know..." statements, I found among American civilians that all "don't know"s which got a token response got a (+) token. Among British civilians, I found a strong tendency to (−) tokens, the two cases of (+) tokens being possibly special. As for the British doctors, again there is a small sample—only six cases—and again I would guess that they use the tokens more or less in the American fashion, reserving "No" for affiliation.

3.2.3. *Negatively-framed background information bit*

I'll turn now to one other type of negatively-framed statement followed by (+) among American civilians and (−) among British civilians. (I didn't find any cases of this type in the British doctor–patient materials.) It appears that the 'background' aspect is highly relevant to the response such an utterance receives. Specifically,

[6] This material can be found in [MSD:1(6):6].

some new information is received, not with a 'news receipt' (e.g. "oh."), but with a token from the (+)/(−) collection under consideration.

Roughly, it looks as if both Americans and British distinguish between negatively-framed new information which is 'news'—which may well be enlarged upon, becoming the topic of subsequent talk—which they mark with 'news receipts', and negatively-framed new information which is 'background', not to become the topic. Both Americans and British mark the latter with an alternative to news receipts: American civilians mark the latter with the acknowledgment tokens "Yeah", "Uh huh", etc., and British civilians with "No".

At this point, I've only got five cases of such negatively framed non-"news": three American civilian and two British civilian. One of the three American cases occurs in fragment (2), receiving a (+) token, as do the other two. Here is the relevant chunk of fragment (2).

(4l) [SBL:3:1R:l1:mso] ((re the fruitcake sale))

1	Celia:		they're going to cut it up in bite si:ze and uhm .hhh Wednesday
2		(−)	night they'll uh:m (0.3) .hh I mean see the samples never did ↓co:me.
3	Mary:	(+)	Uh huh,
4	Celia:		And so...

And here are the other two cases of American civilian negatively-framed background information bits.

(42) [Krakowski:DR:12R:mso]

((Young couple living in Delaware. Sam is phoning from Chicago, Terry has to be in New York tomorrow- Friday- evening for a dress fitting. Sam's mother had phoned from New York, wanting to know if Terry was coming in to the city this weekend))

1	Terry:		she called me the beginning of the week .hhh and I told her I'd-
2		(−)	(0.3) Well I didn't find out until the middle of the week that the
3			dresses were in.
4	Sam:	(+)	Yeh.
5	Terry:		.t.hhh I told her that I would be in, you know (0.4) lots and lots this
6			mo:nth but I...didn't know ↓whether or not I was coming↓ in this
7			week or no:t

(43) [Novins:Diamond:10R:ftf:mso]

((Sorority sisters. Stacey, needing an escort to the sorority's big dance, called up an ex-boyfriend. To her joy, he was enthusiastic, but needs to readjust his schedule, after which he'll phone her back))

1	Stacey:		So he goes, well what's your phone number so he took my pho-
2		(−)	he 'cause he didn't have the house phone [numbers you know=
3	Kim:	(+)	[Yeah.
4	Stacey:		=he only had my o:ld- old dorm number. .hhh So...

(Note the lovely way in which each of the three background-information bits is spliced into the talk; in each case a narrative element being cut off in mid sentence—in the third case, indeed in mid-word.)

In the two British civilian cases I've been able to find, that item I earlier mentioned as a possibly relevant alternative to the (+)/(−) tokens, the 'news receipt', appears to be an actually-occurring alternative; in the following fragments "Oh are you?" and "↑Oh::.", respectively:

(44) [Holt:SO(II):1:3:3–4:mso]
((The monthly church dance will be held next Saturday instead of this Saturday))

1	Leslie:		Oh ↓good. ↑Oh well the that makes it possible (.) f:or us to go
2		→	↑We're going to ↓Ken:t this Saturday[to see]my moth]er
3	Hal:	→	[Oh are] y o u : ?]
4	Leslie:		hhh[h
5	Hal:		[Yih- =
6	Leslie:	(−)	= A[h we ↑haven't been back↑ since befo:re uh:m the hurricane?
7	Hal:		[↓Ye:h.
8	Hal:	(−)	NO[:
9	Leslie:		[.hhh And [everybody tells us the trees are all flat still.
10	Hal:		[No.

(45) [Wheatley:(1):22–23:mso]
((Peggy, an old friend of Marian's on a short visit to the city where Marian and her husband live, invited them to dinner at the hotel where she was staying))

1	Marian:	→	I hadn't seen her since at (.) .p ë- Valerie's weddin:g.h
2	Marian:		[.hh
3	Alice:	→	[↑O[h : :
4	Marian;		[If you reme:mb[e:r I sta:yed [with Peggy [the fi:rst ni:[ght =
5	Alice:		[M-hm: [Ye:s. [Ye:s. [Yes.
6	Marian:		= and you: the second ni[:ght .hhhhh
6a	Alice:		[Ye:s
7			(.)
8	Marian:	(−)	And so I hadn't seen her for ten yea::rs =
9	Alice:	(−)	= N[o,
10	Marian:	(−)	[.hhh And (.) pre::viously to tha:t, (.) I hadn't ü-seen her since
11			ni:neteen forty ni:ne. =
12	Alice:	(−)	= [No:.
13	Marian:		= [.hhh So: ü- (0.3) that's o:nce in thi:rty y(h)ea(h)rs
14	Alice:		↓Ye::s

Now, American civilians certainly do produce news receipts (Terasaki, 1978), and in these two British fragments, we can see them in actual alternating occurrence to the (+)/(−) tokens.

In each of these two fragments, there is one information-bit which is treated by a recipient as 'news': "We're going to Kent this Saturday" gets "Oh are you?" and "I

hadn't seen her since at Valerie's wedding'' gets ''Oh''. The two loop-backs, ''We haven't been back since before the hurricane'' and ''And previously to that I hadn't seen her since nineteen forty nine'', although most likely equally new information, do not get news receipts but (−) tokens, ''No''s. Again, my American ear hears this sort of ''No'' literally, locally. As I hear ''you know''→''No'' as ''No, I don't know'', and ''I don't know''→''no'' as ''No, I know you don't know'', I hear these post-background information ''No''s as claiming knowledge of the facts being presented, and confirming them, i.e., ''We haven't been back since...'', ''no, I know you haven't'', and ''I hadn't seen her since...'' ''No, I know you hadn't'', where other features of the talk indicate that the recipients know nothing of the kind. And again, these ''no''s all seem to be free of 'meaning', simply matched to the surface (+)/(−) character of the statements that they follow.

The three preceding considerations dealt with the American-British alternation between (+) and (−) tokens in terms of the sorts of utterances they were responding to:

3.2.1 Negatively-framed statements + ''you know''
3.2.2 ''...don't know...'' statements
3.2.3 Negatively-framed 'background information' bits

The user categories 'American civilians' and 'British civilians' are, in these three specific use environments, especially polarized. American civilians produce exclusively (+) tokens, except in very strong affiliation-relevant cases. And British civilians produce exclusively (−) tokens, except in two special cases [(39) in which a (+) token may be reasserting a prior-stated disagreeing position, and (40) in which a (+) token may be an instance of the device I'll now consider]. The very few British-doctor cases indicate that this user category produces its (+)/(−) alternation in a manner similar to American civilians.

3.2.4. 'Merest token' usage

This fourth set of materials, 'merest token' usage, turns, not on what a recipient is responding to, but on what a recipient's own project might be. In this collection, a negatively framed statement gets a (+) or (−) token followed by a topic shift, or, in the case of overlapping talk, a return to one's own, overlapped utterance.

All but one of the American civilian instances of response-token→shift/return yield (+) tokens. Here are a few cases (see also Jefferson, 1993: 3–4, 1983: 3):

(46) [SBL:3:3R1:mso] ((the recording begins here))

1	Milly:		Yeh well that's it. Uh Mister Osterhath agrees =
2	Milly:	→	= it w[a s] p o o r l y] .hh
3	Keith:	(−)	[We do]n't care w]hether they raise 'em or no:t. =
4	Keith:		= Be:[↓cause:
5	Milly:	→ (+)	[°Yah.° .hhh It was poorly do:ne...

(47) [TCI(b):16:33:mso]
((Joan saw a toy that Linda's little girl might like for Christmas))

1	Linda:		Where was tha:t?
2	Joan:		At Toys R Us it was onl[y two dollars I [think,
3	Linda:		[° ( )° [Hm::.
4	Joan:	(−)	It wasn't (.) very mu:[ch.
5	Linda:	→ (+)	[Yeah. = When did you go out there.
6	Joan:		.hhhhhh Uuh:::. uhh-hhuh-hnh-huh, .hhh
7			(.)
8	Joan:		About a month ago::?[°nh-hn°
9	Linda:		[°Mm:.°
10	Joan:		.hhhu:hhhh
11	Linda:		Oh well their stock is (.) they have so mu:ch.

(48) [SBL:2:1:8R:6–7:mso]

((Nora has invited two ladies for lunch and is considering taking them to an expensive restaurant. One of the ladies is not a friend of Nora's but is the person Nora's friend is staying with. Inviting her is unavoidable))

1	Nora:	(−)	You can't very well a:sk u:h
2	Bea:	(+)	°Mm[hm°
3	Nora:	(−)	[.hh (.) one: (.) the gue:st without asking her-er
4	Bea:	(+)	Mm hm, .hhehh[hhh
5	Nora:		[hostess.
6			(0.2)
7	Bea:	→	Was last night the first time you met Missiz Reilly?
8			(1.0)
9	Nora:		Me:t who:m?

The one case I've found of an American pre-shift "No" occurs in the course of the most sensitive of conversations.

(49) [NB:IV:18:mso]

((Two middle aged sisters, alternately weeping together and trying to be cheerful with happy little stories, one of which is about a party Lottie went to with her more-or-less estranged husband during a reconciliation brought on by his mother's imminent death))

1	Lottie:		. . .gee I wore my wi:g. ((snort))
2	Emma:		Oh I bet you looked beau:ti[ful::.
3	Lottie:	→	[I uh:::-uh-uh I had it cut real short. It
4			was too much hair. You know.[Looked-
5	Emma:	(−)	[Yeah, and we're get- I don't like it
6			too long as we get older.
7	Lottie:	→ (−)	No and [I had her cut it and gee it was good and uh everybody was =
8	Emma:		[((sniff))
9	Lottie:		= looking at me and I didn't tell Earl he says God your hair looks
10			beautiful. . .

We might, indeed, treat it as an index of the sensitivity of this particular conversation, that even when Lottie is giving mere token response to her sister's remark,

she does so with the token which it seems that Americans reserve for 'affiliation', rather than what appears to be the usual token (both for this use environment and for this particular speaker), i.e., a (+).

Interestingly, when it gets down to this 'merest token' usage, British civilians do use the (+) token- perhaps as frequently as they use the (−) token.

I will start off with a couple of cases in which a (−) token occurs prior to a shift.

(50) [Holt:SO88(II):2:7:2–3:mso]

((Leslie is filling Petra in on a story she'd missed, about a distant mutual acquaintance with a tendency to drink too much. The story starts when this guy failed to show up at the weekly afternoon badminton game))

1	Leslie:			Well a↑pparently he's (.) k-ë-he's quite in the habit of turning up
2				about two o'clock in the ↑mo:r↓ning.
3				(.)
4	Leslie:			hets- ü-o:r ↑three↓:. HO:me.=
5	Petra:			=Which- ↑Oh:.
6	Leslie:	→		And u[m
7	Petra:		(−)	[↑Oh(h)o dear I'm glad I'm not married to hi[m.
8	Leslie:		(−)	[nNo.=
9	Leslie:	→		=↑wu-What's his wife's kaw- (0.3) n[ame.]
10	Petra:			[Ann.]
11				(0.2)
12	Leslie:			Sorry?
13	Petra:			A:nn.
14	Leslie:	→		Ann. Well ↑Ann rang↑ up...

(51) [Holt:X(C)2:2:5:6–7:mso]

((Mum is coming up for a visit tomorrow. Good weather has been predicted))

1	Mum:	→		That'd be marvelous. ↑Okay ↓lo[ve
2	Leslie:			[↑Oka::y,h
3	Mum:			Be ↑seeing you,
4	Leslie:			.hh Yes ↑have a good↑ journey=
5	Mum:			=Ye:s rest well and thank you very ↓mu:ch [(for-)
6	Leslie:			[Righto=
7	Leslie:		(−)	=↑Don't carry anythin:g (.) ë-heavy,=
8	Mum:		(+)	=°↓Yeh° I'm only bringing the one case ['n that's a]ll=
9	Leslie:			[ë Y e s]
10	Leslie:			='N don't bring a heavy case ei[ther.
11	Mum:			[No no, nope no ( ) I'll just
12	Mum:			bring what I ↓need
13				(0.8)
14	Leslie:			↓Ye:[s.
15	Mum:	→		[Okay love
16				(.)
17	Leslie:			No tow:els or .hh[h

18 Mum: [Plus my ma::t
19 (0.5)
20 Leslie: ëYe:s:
21 (.)
22 Leslie: (−) ë-Nothin::g extra that I can't provide=
23 Mum: →(−) =No ↑Okay lo[ve
24 Leslie: [.hhhh Righto[: haa-] Have a ↑good journey
25 Mum: [R i]g h t

The focal occurrence here is Mum's third attempt to close the call (see lines 1, 15, and 23); this *N*th-in-a-series recycle preceded by a merest token acknowledgment of a prior, negatively-framed statement, with the token produced in the negative.

I want to note the presence here of a tension between doing something on one's own initiative versus at another's behest. At one point, Leslie instructs Mum, "Don't carry anything heavy", to which Mum responds in terms of her own course-of-action-in-progress with "I'm...bringing" (lines 7 and 8). The second time around, Leslie's "And don't bring a heavy case either" (line 10) gets a response *posed* as responsive (lines 11 and 12); for one, preceded by a rash of fitted, negative tokens, and then formulated as projective, "I'll...bring", in contrast to the course-of-action-in-progress "I'm...bringing". However, the substance of the response, "I'll just bring what I need", is not responsive insofar as it undercuts the relevance of Leslie's concern, i.e., the weight of the luggage.

One detail of that series of exchanges is that Mum's own-initiative response (lines 7 and 8) is preceded by a merest token acknowledgment of a negatively-framed statement, the token in this case being a (+): "Yeh I'm only bringing the one case". This particular merest-token acknowledgment is not shift-prefatory, and may represent a general use-environment in which British civilians can be found to be producing (+) tokens in response to negatively framed utterances; most roughly, where discord or disagreement of some sort is occurring. And having here posed such an environment, returning to case (39) above—where someone is holding to a prior-stated position across a coparticipant's expressions of doubt—we may be seeing one of the perhaps many specifications of 'discord or disagreement'.

The preceding two fragments were shown as instances of (−) tokens occurring in a use environment in which British civilians, who tend to produce (−) tokens, also produce (+) tokens, i.e., prior to a topical shift. (And in the course of working through fragment (51), a possibly general use-environment for (+) tokens turned up, i.e., discord).

Now, I had initially selected the following two fragments simply as instances of British (+) tokens produced prior to a topical shift, i.e., of (+) tokens being produced by a user population which in other use environments follows negatively framed utterances with (−) tokens. But the first of these fragments yielded a possible specification of that use-environment; a series in which the (+) token may be a characterizable *N*th occurrence of a token.

(52) [Heritage:V:1:8:1R:mso] ((All of Helen's dog's puppies died))

1	Helen:		And then of course: I: had to take her over to the vet uh:m .hh to
2			have uh:m: ë-injection to take the milk awa:[y.
3	Kate:		[Ye:s I suppose you ↑do::.
4	Helen:	(−)	But (.) actually the milk wasn't too bad because of course it hadn't
5			been stimula[:ted.]
6	Kate:	(−)	[No :,] No:,
7	(Kate):		.hh
8	Kate:	[→]	[(So how'r you:)
9	Helen:	(−)	[She had a lot to sta:rt with. .hh But as it wasn't stimulated it didn't (.)
10			go on coming through too mu:ch:.
11	Kate:	→ (+)	°Yes. Well here we a[re ( ) n]ever mind,°
12	Helen:		[So: anyway,h] here we a:re,
13	Kate	→	Well apart from that how (h)a(h)re [you
14	Helen:		[ehh huh-h[eh-hn
15	Kate:		[uh-eh

If the utterance at line 8 actually is "So how are you"—parenthesized utterances being insecure hearings—then the interchange of which it is an element is yet another case of a British (−) token following a negatively-framed utterance and preceding a topical shift, as seen in the prior two fragments at lines 7 and 8 and 22 and 23, respectively.

And it is the utterance which constitutes either a next or an initial attempt to get off the topic of the milk-laden mother dog which is prefaced by the (+) token I'm focussing on.

It would be interesting if this were indeed a series, i.e., where a first attempt, produced with a fitted (−) token, fails. A next attempt is then produced with the non-fitted (+) token, perhaps exhibiting less deference than did the prior attempt, to the negatively-framed utterance it follows.

Given the series-possibility that emerged from this fragment, I went back to the transcript from which I'd excerpted the second of the two cases of British (+) tokens following a negatively framed utterance which turn out to precede a topical shift. And I found in the immediately prior talk (my original fragment began at what is now line 12), what appears to be the start of a series, of which the (+) token in question may be an *N*th.

(53) [Wheatley(1):35–36:mso]

((Alice is telling a story about an obligatory over-the-fence chat she'd had with her next door neighbor whose mother just died, who went on and on talking on a very cold day))

1	Alice:		I[t was s[o co:ld.
2	Marian:	[→]	[Ih- [.t.h
3	Alice:		[(yesterday)
4	Marian:		[O h : : : : : y e : : : s.=
5	Marian:	→	=.h[h I s s h : :-]

6 Alice: (−) [And I hadn't a] car:digan o[n.
7 Marian: (−) [nNo::: ee- (.) it =
8 Alice: =(I) got r[ea:::lly]
9 Marian: [co::::::l]d. Ye::[s::.
10 Alice: [fro:zen.
11 (0.2)
12 Alice: (But I [didn't like y' s]ee)
13 Marian: [Y e : : s .]
14 Marian: [→] [.hhhhh
15 Alice: (−) [You know you don't like to rush[:
16 Marian: →(+) [iYe:s, .h [Is sh:::-]
17 Alice: [She did t]alk a lo:t =
18 Alice: =and eh[::
19 Marian: [ëYë- ehheh heh heh heh
20 Marian: → .hhhhh Is SHE: uh:m
21 Alice: ( ),
22 (0.2)
23 Marian: → uh:: middle a:ge[d?
24 Alice: [Ye:s.

In a context that may well be ripe for affiliation (talk about the death of a neighbor's mother), Marian's initial attempt to pose a question about the neighbor's age is preceded by a strongly affiliative response to a prior utterance by Alice (lines 1 and 4), i.e., "It was so co:ld". gets "Oh ye:s.", to which is latched an attempt at the question which eventually emerges at lines 20 and 23, "Is she middle aged?", i.e., ".hh Is sh::-" (line 5) which is cut off as it is overlapped by a further story element, "and I hadn't a cardigan..." (line 6).

Now, this negatively-framed statement gets "no:", (line 7) which, although it is fitted in terms of the (−)/(+) alternation, may constitute mere acknowledgment in the British system where, Freud to the contrary notwithstanding, it appears that one "No" is not enough. That is, the single token may not be sufficient for affiliation (see pages 10 and 11 above re the multiple tokens in fragments (20)–(22), and also fragment (52) above with its doubled "No:," in the possibly affiliation-ripe context of the dead puppies).

The next exchange (lines 8 and 10) is also characterizably meager for affiliation. Marian appears to be attempting to hurry the story along with a collaborative completion to Alice's "I got...", "cold. Yes.", which recycles the descriptor Alice initially used (line 1), although without the emphasis "so cold" carries, and turns out to be drastically minimal given the description that Alice presses on with, during and after Marian's contribution, i.e., "...really frozen".

It may, then, be non-incidental that a next element of the story, although negatively framed, gets a (+) token prior to a next attempt to ask the question (lines 15–17), i.e., "You know, you don't like to rush" gets "Yes, Is sh-" (again cut off as it is overlapped by yet a next story element, "She did talk a lot..."). That is, this (+) token following a negatively framed statement is not simply *a* pre-shift/pre-return-to-

one's-own-utterance token, but an *N*th in a series of failed attempts, across which the will to affiliation appears to be flagging.[7]

The *N*th-in-a-series possibility shows up as well in an expanded chunk of the conversation from which fragment (40) [one of the rare British post-"don't know" (+) tokens] was excerpted.

Most roughly, Moira can be seen to be engaged in a project, 'making arrangements', while Hallie is setting out details of her troublesome day. Perhaps a bit more finely, Moira is trying to get a sense of when she and Hallie will be getting together, it appearing that tomorrow is problematic (see lines 1, 4, 6, 18, and 24 below), while Hallie's project seems to be building an explanation of why she will not be available to Moira tomorrow, and showing that it's not something she wants to be doing, not a happy alternative to their own getting together, but burden upon burden (see lines 2–3, 5–7, 8–10, 11, 13, 16, 19, and 22 below). Here is the expanded fragment:

(54) [Rahman:(14):13:mso]

1	Moira:	→	Are you going- You won't be going to the town tomorrow will you.
2	Hallie:		.h Well I have to go I:'m I've got some:: eh:: Lil and her husband
3			coming fo::r (0.7) ë- s- uh s- supper I [suppose] .hhhhhh] =
4	Moira:	→	[O h I: s]ee. = Yes.] = [8]
5	Hallie:		= So ë-there was[n o t a thing. I]: didn't know]wha:t =
6	Moira:	→	[So you'll be busy] t o m o r r o w]
7	Hallie:		= I was just going to have a look round and see: what there was to buy
8			but ↑honestly. .h there wasn't a thing in Marks:: .h
9	Moira:		A[h↓::]:::: =
10	Hallie:		[an:d]
11	Hallie:		= Hinton's was clo:sed,
12			(.)
13	Hallie:		the [corner was] c l o : s e d,]
14	Moira:		[Yes I know] Hinton's clo:]sed =
15	Moira:		= [Yeh,
16	Hallie:	(–)	= [.hhh And uh Frakety's don't have ↓much in[t h a t] [(do they), .hh
17	Moira:	(–)	[°n:↓No]:[: no°
18	Moira:	→	So [you'll have to go down again to[morrow
19	Hallie:		[So:- [I have to go down

[7] The series of which this (+) token is an *N*th may be yet more elaborate, starting at line 2 with Marian's "Ih-", which is conceivably a first attempt at the "Is"-begun question "Is she middle aged?" which eventually gets produced (see lines 20ff, and also including the inbreath at line 14, which yields to Alice's simultaneously-started utterance of line 15 (cf. the mighty inbreath at line 20 which precedes what turns out to be the successful attempt).

[8] While Moira's "Oh I see. Yes" is not as transparently focussed on her project as are her other utterances, it can at least be noted that an alternative response to Hallie's reference to tomorrow's business might be directed *to* that business, e.g., "Oh, how nice" or, finding in the details of Hallie's delivery (e.g., that she starts to refer to her guests as merely "some uh"...what? people coming? and, e.g., that the event was to be the dubious prospect of "uh s-supper I suppose") that this is not something she's looking forward to, "Oh, what a nuisance".

20 to[morrow and 'n] sort of have a look round =
21 Moira: [y : Y e: s .]
22 Hallie: (−) =Don't know what I'm going to do for them,
23 (0.4)
24 Moira: →(+) °Yeh° .h ↑Anyways I'll prob'ly see you on Thursday

Most briefly, it can be noted that, prior to the initially focussed-upon segment (lines 22–24, in which a negatively-framed utterance, "Don't know what I'm going to do for them" is received with a (+) token, "Yeh", plus a shift in topic, "Anyway I'll probably see you on Thursday"), there has been an attempted topic shift (lines 5–18), with Hallie developing the theme of her failed shopping expedition, that "there was not a thing"; that "there wasn't a thing in Marks, and Hinton's was closed, the corner was closed,", concluding with the negatively-framed utterance, "and Frakety's don't have much", at which point Moira produces a doubled (−) token "n:No:: no" plus a return to her own concern, i.e., whether or not they'll be getting together tomorrow, "So you'll have to go down again tomorrow" (lines 17–18).

Given that prior interchange, then the interchange comprising lines 22–24 above, which I originally showed in fragment (40) to be one of the rare British post-"don't know" (+) tokens, and which I then proposed to be a case of the 3.2.4 collection, that of minimal response prior to a topical shift, a collection in which it seemed that British civilians use (+) tokens with equal frequency to (−) tokens, may now be seen to constitute part of a sub-set which accounts for the significant presence of (+) tokens in that collection.

That is, it may turn out that although British civilians do use the (+) token prior to shifting topic or returning to prior overlapped talk, they do not use it in the same way that American civilians do. Rather, it may be that in a significant number of cases the (+) token has a sequential character not present in its production by American civilians, which is that the British civilian (+) tokens we find occurring prior to topical shifts and/or returns to one's own overlapped talk make their appearance as some Nth in a series of attempts.

As to British doctors, of some six cases of a negatively-framed statement followed by merest token acknowledgment + shift, in only one case is there a (−) token, in the rest, there is a (+). And the one (−) case may be occurring in an environment ripe for affiliation, the patient being a child, the doctor now talking to the mother.

(55) [Heath:15AB3:3–4]

> Doctor and mother are collaboratively concluding that an ear infection the child had two weeks ago and has since cleared up, is not worrisome. To the mother's negatively-framed assertion that the child doesn't have much trouble with ear infection, the doctor produces a (−) token response and shifts to a question about the child's ability to hear, which the mother reports to be fine.

The five remaining cases of British doctor–patient interaction, in which the doctor produces a minimal token prior to a topical shift and/or a return to his own overlapped talk, resemble the American civilian cases in that the (+) tokens are produced

on an initial attempt to accomplish shift and/or return, in possible contrast to the proposed British civilian *N*th-in-a-series production of (+) tokens.

Briefly recapping this section, it appears that there are recurrent differences between user-categories in the deployment of the (+)/(−) tokens. Four distinctive types of negatively-framed utterances have been considered:

- negatively-framed statements + "you know"
- "...don't know..." statements
- negatively-framed background information bits
- 'merest token' usage

The first three considerations focused on the American–British alternation between (+)/(−) tokens in terms of the sorts of utterances they were responding to, while the fourth consideration focussed on, not what a recipient is responding to, but what a recipient's own project might be—in the materials under consideration, those tokens occurring prior to a topic shift, or, in the case of overlapping talk, prior to a return to one's own overlapped utterance.

In the case of negatively-framed statement + "you know", in all but two American civilian instances, a (+) token was produced, and the two (−) tokens occurred in highly affiliation-relevant environments. In all the British civilian instances a (−) token was produced. And of the three British doctor instances, two had (+) tokens and the (−) token occurred in a possibly affiliation-relevant environment. That is, the British doctor instances appear to be similar to the American civilian instances.

In the case of "...don't know..." statements, all the American civilian instances have (+) tokens. The British civilian instances were comprised mainly of (−) tokens, and of the two (+) instances, one opened up the possibility of a general environment for British civilian (+) tokens, that of disagreement, discord, etc. The other converged with yet another use-environment, that of 'merest token acknowledgment' preceding a topical shift or return to one's own overlapped talk, the occurrence in this case being a topical shift which happened to follow a "...don't know..." statement. And in the few British doctor instances the (−) cases seemed to be reserved for affiliation; again, similar to American civilian (−) token usage.

In the case of negatively-framed background information bits, of the few instances I have so far collected (among which there was none involving British doctors), each of the American civilian recipients produced a (+) token, and each of the British civilian recipients produced a (−) token.].

And in the case of 'merest token' usage, it appears that American civilians, except in strongly affiliation-relevant environments, produce exclusively (+) tokens, and British civilians produce exclusively (−) tokens, with the exception of what may be the general environment for British civilian (+) tokens opened up during the consideration of "...don't know..." statements, i.e., disagreement/discord, and the possibility which emerged during the consideration of 'merest token' usage, the *N*th-in-a-series attempt to shift topic or to return to one's own overlapped talk. And British doctors in this use-environment again seem to be reserving the (−) token for affiliation, otherwise producing (+) tokens as do American civilians.

4. Discussion

A broadest conclusion that might be drawn from these materials and considerations is that there appear to be cultural differences in the production of minimal response tokens following negatively-framed statements. For the two cultures I looked at, Americans use a (+) token to acknowledge and a (−) token to affiliate, whereas the British use the (−) token both to acknowledge and to affiliate, and may have ways to mark the distinction, e.g., by producing multiple (−) tokens to show affiliation.

However, the two cultures seem to share some systematic partitioning, across user populations and, within a user-population, across use-environments.

4.1. Systematic partitioning across user populations

There seems to be a difference in the deployment of the (−) token as between civilians and those in the medical professions.. This difference might roughly be described as 'increased discretion'on the part of the professionals, which results, in the British materials, in the use by British doctors of (+) tokens for acknowledgment, reserving (−) tokens for affiliation, while British civilians use (−) tokens across the board, for both acknowledgment and affiliation. In the American materials, this increased discretion seems to result in American doctors not using the (−) token at all, while American civilians use it similarly to British doctors, with (−) tokens doing affiliation and (+) tokens acknowledgment.

The rather odd result when comparing the two cultures is that British doctors deploy their response tokens more like a cross-cultural, cross-occupational user population (American civilians) than like, either the user population which stands in a co-cultural cross-occupational relationship to theirs (British civilians), or that which stands in a cross-cultural co-occupational relationship to theirs (American doctors).[9]

This may simply be a by-product of a speech- (or more generally, an activity-) productional rule for doctors, that whatever civilians do in their daily interactions, doctors in their professional interactions properly do something more reserved. The criterial factor would then be intra-cultural, i.e., a culture's professionals take the activities of their own culture's civilians as the starting point of their own response patterns. A question this raises is, what do professionals do when they're at home? Do they, *can* they, revert to civilian usage? Or is it a sort of occupational hazard, like calluses or black lung? That is, would we find that same increased discretion in their non-professional interactions?

Be that as it may, it can be noted that in both cultures, British and American, there is, within a given user population, a difference in the deployment of the (−)

[9] Another possible difference between British doctors and British civilians lies in the particular tokens used prior to topical shift and/or return to one's own overlapped talk. British civilians are evenly divided as between the token "Yes" and the token "Yeah". British doctors and American civilians stay consistently with the 'lesser' tokens, such as "Yeah" and "Mm hm".

token as between civilian users and those in the medical professions. In both cultures the professionals seem to use the (−) token with more discretion than do civilians.

4.2. Systematic partitioning of response types within a user-population, across use environments

It appears that across use environments there can be a systematic variation in the use of tokens within a single user population. That is, even British civilians, with their across-the-board deployment of the (−) token, can be found to be following negatively-framed statements with a (+) token in specifiable environments. For example, they sometimes will use (+) as a 'merest token acknowledgment' prior to shifting topic or retrieving some bit of their own talk which had been overlapped. And it may be that that environment can be further specified: it may turn out that the (+) token makes its appearance, not just now and then prior to some shift or retrieval, but specifically after prior attempts to shift/retrieve have failed, i.e., as an *N*th in a series. These British civilian (+) token responses to negatively-framed utterances may then, not be haphazard, but possibly systematic occurrences. And if that is so, then the use of the (−) token, although pervasive, may not be altogether indiscriminate. That is, it appears that there are specifiable conditions under which something less interactionally enaged than the (−) token will be produced (again, e.g., where one's coparticipant is displaying an insensitivity to one's repeated efforts to shift topic or retrieve a bit of one's own talk, or, e.g., where disagreement or discord is present).

One possibility that these sorts of considerations point to is that, in its use by British civilians, the (−) token retains some residual affiliativeness.

Something like the following may be the case. It may be that the base work of a (−) token following a negatively-framed statement is affiliation. It may be that the productional rule for (−) tokens is not a grammatical rule such as 'follow negatively-framed statements with negative tokens', but that the productional rule for (−) tokens is interactional in the first place. It is, perhaps, a sub-rule in a set of rules for the production of response tokens, couched in terms of such interactional work as 'acknowledgment' and 'affiliation'. The rules would go something like this: To acknowledge a prior statement, produce a token from the set of recognizable acknowledgment tokens (which would include things like ''mm hm'', ''uh huh'', ''yeah'', and whatever other tokens might do acknowledgment). To affiliate with a prior statement, produce a token with a heightened affinity to that statement (where, as it happens, a negative response-token would have heightened affinity with a negatively-framed utterance).

Now, if it is so that British doctors, in response to negatively-framed utterances, reserve (−) tokens for affiliation-rich use environments, otherwise producing (+) tokens, then they are indeed producing their tokens in a manner compatible with interactionally- rather than grammatically-couched rules of use. And if it is so that another British user-population, 'civilians', can be found, in affiliation-poor environments, to be introducing (+) tokens in response to negatively-framed utterances, then they are also producing their tokens in a manner compatible with interactionally-

rather than grammatically-couched rules of use. If these possibilities hold up, then they could be seen as evidence not only for the interactional character of the rules, but also for the cross-cultural character of those interactionally-based rules. That is, it may not be that Americans follow one set of grammatical rules [Neg→(+)] and British another [(neg→(−)],but that both cultures are working to a same rule-set; a rule-set which is interactional in character.

At a more technical, methodological level, it is interesting that if one collects a bunch of cases and starts to count the occurrence of (+) and (−) tokens, the resulting numbers suggest that the tokens are not deployed in all that orderly a fashion. That, for example, while British civilians very *often* follow a negatively-framed utterance with a (−) response token, they can also be found to be following such an utterance with a (+) token. But as one begins to work with the materials on a case-by-case basis — where one might think that the further into the details one gets the murkier things become (these are, after all, individual human beings we're looking at), in fact the manifest order intensifies. And if that is so, then there seems to be a real payoff to cutting into the materials, not only at the gross level of counting the number of occurrences — in this particular case, of (+) tokens versus (−) tokens — but at the rather finer level of the range of characterizable contexts in which they are occurring. And in large measure, those contexts cannot be posited in advance, but emerge out of case-by-case analysis.

5. Glossary

Glossary of Transcript Symbols (with revisions for computer)

[A left bracket indicates the point of overlap onset.

K: uhv never do anything (.) improp[e[r?
E: [Su:re.

] A right bracket indicates the point at which an utterance or utterance-part terminates vis-a-vis another.

K: en uh [g o for]ward,
E: [Mmhm,]

= Equal signs indicate no break or gap

A pair of equal signs, one at the end of one line and one at the beginning of a next, indicate no break between the two lines.

K: Hi:. =
E: =How'r you:.

A single equal sign shows no break in an ongoing piece of talk where one might otherwise expect it.

E: A:nd uh so I said I jis' find that hard to ima↓gine. = Now (0.4)
.p ↑since ↓then I've retained coun↓sel.

(0.0) Numbers in parentheses indicate elapsed time by tenths of seconds.

K: kin I git in: dih see you duhmorrow before I go: (.) in there et two?
(0.8)
E: If you wan' to

(.) A dot in parentheses indicates a tiny 'gap' within or between utterances. It is probably of no more than one-tenth of a second's duration.

K: Ehm: I:'m uh scheduled för ↑two duhmorrow afternoo:n.
(.)
E: Aah:: w*h*e:re.

```
_____
  |
(0.0)
__|__
```

Numbers in parentheses bracketing several lines of transcript indicate time elapsed between the end of the utterance or sound in the first bracketted line and the start of the utterance or sound in the last bracketted line.

```
K:          He i↓:[s.
E:    _____     [Ya:h.
        |
        |           (0.6)
E:  (1.3)  .p.k
        |           (0.3)
K:    __|__  °hHe is.°
```

In this case, then, one and three-tenths seconds elapse between E's "Ya:h." and K's "°hHe is.°".

Underscoring indicates some form of stress, via pitch and/or amplitude. A short underscore indicates lighter stress than does a long underscore.

E: Well Dean has: uh:,h totally coop'rated with the U.S. Attorney

:: Colons indicate prolongation of the immediately prior sound. The longer the colon row, the longer the prolongation.

K: The who:::le (.) enchilada?

:: __ Combinations of underscore and colons indicate intonation contours. Basically, the underscore 'punches up' the sound it occurs beneath.

wo:rd If a letter preceding a colon is underscored, the letter is 'punched up', i.e., the underscored-letter-followed-by-colon combination indicates an 'up-to-down' contour.

K: Hi:. =
E: =How'r you:.

wo:rd If the colon is underscored, then the colon is 'punched up', i.e., the letter-followed-by-underscored-colon combination indicates a 'down-to-up' contour.

E: He tell yih 'bout Dea:n*?*
(0.4)
K: No:*p*e?

wo:rd If underscoring occurs prior to the vowel preceding the colon, then the entire word is 'punched up', i.e., there is no mid-word shift in pitch.

K: he said the ↑rea:son thet wuz: ü-fer the ca:ll wz LaRue ed (.) tol:d hi:m. . .

In this case, the entire word "rea:son" is punched up, in contrast to the words "ca:ll" and "hi:m" in which pitch drops at the colon. This also holds for multi-syllabic words.

E: [He said] ë-I came dih you:,hh fr'm Mitchell,hh en I sai:d*,h uh↓: Mitchell needs money?

Here, the first mention of "Mitchell", with only the initial consonant underscored, is produced with the entire word punched up, while in the second mention, "Mitchell", with the underscored vowel, pitch drops at the second syllable. Likewise, the entire word "money" with only the initial 'm' underscored, is punched up.

↑↓ Arrows indicate shifts into especially high or low pitch.

E: A:nd uh so I said I jis' find that hard do ima↓gine. = Now (0.4) .p ↑since ↓then I've retained coun↓sel.

., *?* ? Punctuation markers are used to indicate intonation. (The italicized question-mark [*?*], substituting for the question-mark/comma of my typewritten transcripts, indicates a stronger rise than a comma but weaker than a question-mark.)

These symbols massively occur at appropriate syntactical points, but occasionally there are such displays as the following (an old favorite, from another corpus):

M: Oh I'd say he's about what. = five three enna ha:lf? = aren'tchu Ronald,

WORD Upper case indicates especially loud sounds relative to the surrounding talk.

K: I returned it 'n went over the:re (.) tih↑da:y, (0.5) A::ND uh (0.8) he said the ↑rea:son thet. . .

°word° degree signs bracketing a sound, word, phrase, etc., indicate especially soft sounds relative to the surrounding talk

K: He i↓:[s.
E: [Ya:h.
(0.6)
E: .p.k
(0.3)
K: °He i:s.°

t*,d* An asterisk following a consonant replaces the single sub- or superimposed dot which serves as a 'hardener'in my typewritten transcripts.

K: I w' jist (.) understa:nd thet* uh: you en I are deh- abs'ooly dihgether on tha:t,
E: No question about it*? = uh hHerb

In this case, while K produces "jist" and "tha:t," with the American-standard, soft 't', the 't' in "thet*" and in E's "it*?" are crisp, dentalized, i.e., 'hard'.

ä,ë,ï Two dots (trema, diaeresis, umlaut) over a vowel replace the single sub- or superimposed dot which, as well as a 'hardener', serves as a 'shortener' in my typewritten transcripts.

E: ë-he:: told me::*?* . . . an:d uh,h ï-he sid we:ll? (.) that does it,

Here, while conceivably the 'e-' in "e-he" and the 'i-' in "i-he" could be read as long sounds, "ee" and "eye", the diaeresis confirms that they are short. I don't show them as "eh" and "ih" because they are more fleeting than those spellings indicate.

The diaeresis does an additional job in transcripts where I'm using non-standard orthography. Many words get a range of oddball spellings, in keeping with the range of pronunciations they are subject to. On occasion such a word appears in its standard spelling. If that word carries a diaeresis, this means that while such a spelling could be the result of a lapse of transcriber concentration, in this case it does indicate the way the word was pronounced.

1 K: Ehm: I:'m uh scheduled för two duhmorrow afternoo:n.
: :
17 K: he said the rea:son thet wuz: ü-fer the ca:ll ez LaRue ed (.)
18 tol:d hi:m...

In this case, while K is shown at line 17 pronouncing the word 'for' as "fer", the diaeresis in "for" at line l indicates that it's not that the transcriber at that point simply wrote the word in its standard orthography, but that it is there pronounced as "for".

(*b*) A parenthesized italicized letter replaces the parenthesized letter with a sub- or superscribed degree sign which, in my typewritten transcripts, indicates an 'incipient sound'.

E: But they- (.) thë(*p*) the point is...

Here, after an initial "the", E is about to produce something beginning with a 'p' which remains unvoiced (perhaps 'point', perhaps not), and then starts again with "the" and goes on with "the point is...".

w*h*en an italicized 'h' appearing in such a word as 'which', 'where', 'what', 'when', 'whether", etc., indicates that while such words are often produced with the 'h' silent (as if they were the words 'witch', 'wear', 'wen', 'weather', etc.), in this case the 'h'was sounded.

3:8 E: En I said well Joh:n w*h*at 'n the world er yih talking ↓about*.
: :
6:15 E: See ↑what they've said duh Dean is thet he gets no consideration
6:16 from the:m, unless they c'n corrobor↓ate.

In this case, while at one point in the conversation (3:8) E pronounces the word 'what' with the 'h' sounded, at another point (6:15), he produces it with the 'h' in 'what' silent.

no*p*e An italicized letter replaces the sub- or superscribed degree sign which, in my typewritten transcripts, indicates unvioiced production, as in lines 1 (h*m*hh), 3 (°°R*i*ght°°), and 6 (°°Y*ea*h.°°) below.

1 E: He said We:ll? = h*m*hh ë-I came dih you:,hh fr'm Mitchell,hh en
2 I sai:d*,huh↓: Mitchell needs money?
3 (K): (°°R*i*ght°°)
4 E: = (0.6) Uh::: could* = uh we::: ca::ll Herb Kalmbach en ask im
5 duh raise ↓some.
6 K: °°Y*ea*h.°°

< A pre-positioned left caret is a 'left push', indicating a hurried start; in effect, an utterance trying to start a bit sooner then it actually did. A common locus of this phenomenon is 'self repair' (from two other sets of materials):

R: Monday nights we play, (0.3) < I mean we go to ceramics,
- - - and - - -
P: y'see it's diff'rent f'me:. < eh f' (.) the othuh boy:s

A post-positioned left caret indicates that while a word is fully completed, it seems to stop suddenly (again, from another corpus):

M: Uh well I fel' like my lef' side of my (.) chest I c'd (.) mah had a k- cramp <

- A dash indicates a cut-off.

E: An' I said (0.2) 'n dee- uh Dean said t'me

> < Right/left carets bracketing an utterance or utterance-part indicate speeding up.

> < Left/right carets bracketing an utterance or utterance-part indicate slowing down.

.hhh A dot-prefixed row of h's indicates an inbreath. Without the dot, the h's indicate an outbreath.

wohhrd A row of h's within a word indicates breathiness.

(h) A parenthesized 'h' indicates plosiveness. This can be associated with laughter, crying, breathlessness, etc.

£ The pound-sterling sign indicates a certain quality of voice which conveys 'suppressed laughter'.

w*gh*ord An italicized '*gh*'stuck into a word indicates gutteralness.

( ) Empty parentheses indicate that the transcriber was unable to get what was said. The length of the parenthesized space reflects the length of the un-gotten talk. If possible, nonsense syllables are provided to give at least an indication of various features of the un-gotten material.

N: . . .tell 'im tih (.) (offer sebbatikiss 'n to er:) start behaving

In the speaker-designation column, the empty parentheses indicate transcriber's inability to identify a speaker.

(word) Parenthesized words are especially dubious hearings or speaker-identifications.

(Ø) A nul sign indicates that there may or may not be talk occurring in the designated space. What is being heard as possibly talk might also be ambient noise.

(( )) Doubled parentheses contain transcriber's descriptions

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