A Comparison of Praising Skills in Face-to-Face and Remote Dialogues

Toshiki Onishi1,*, Asahi Ogushi1,*, Yohei Tahara2,*, Ryo Ishii3,1, Atsushi Fukayama3,1, Takao Nakamura3,1, Akihiro Miyata2,†
1Graduate School of Integrated Basic Sciences, Nihon University, Tokyo, Japan
2College of Humanities and Sciences, Nihon University, Tokyo, Japan
3NTT Human Informatics Laboratories, NTT Corporation, Kanagawa, Japan
*{chto22002, chas22009, chyo19046}@g.nihon-u.ac.jp
†{ryo.ishii.ct, atsushi.fukayama.ap, takao.nakamura.vp}@hco.ntt.co.jp
‡miyata.akihiro@acm.org

Abstract
Praising behavior is considered an important method of communication in daily life and social activities. An engineering analysis of praising behavior is therefore valuable. However, a dialogue corpus for this analysis has not yet been developed. Therefore, we develop corpuses for face-to-face and remote two-party dialogues with ratings of praising skills. The corpuses enable us to clarify how to use verbal and nonverbal behaviors for successfully praise. In this paper, we analyze the differences between the face-to-face and remote corpuses, in particular the expressions in adjudged praising scenes in both corpuses, and also evaluated praising skills. We also compare differences in head motion, gaze behavior, facial expression in high-rated praising scenes in both corpuses. The results showed that the distribution of praise scores was similar in face-to-face and remote dialogues, although the ratio of the number of praising scenes to the number of utterances was different. In addition, we confirmed differences in praising behavior in face-to-face and remote dialogues.

Keywords: multimodal interaction, dialogue corpus, praise

1. Introduction
Praising behavior is considered an important method of communication in daily life and social activities. Praise is a verbal and nonverbal behaviors expression of approval that is directed toward the behavior and character of the target [Brophy, 1981] Jenkins et al., 2015 [Kalis et al., 2007]. In addition, praising behavior is considered to be a complex social communication rather than simple one-way communication of intention from a person who gives praise to a person who receives praise [Henderlong and Lepper, 2002]. Many studies on praising behavior have analyzed the results of questionnaires and evaluations conducted after specific tasks to understand the effects and influences of praising behavior [Henderlong and Lepper, 2002] [Ennis et al., 2018]. An engineering analysis of praising behavior is valuable and would contribute to communication in the scenes of business and education, as well as to the study of pedagogy and psychology. However, a dialogue corpus for this analysis has not yet been developed. Therefore, we have not been able to clarify how to use verbal and nonverbal behaviors for successfully praise. In this paper, we analyze the differences between our face-to-face and remote corpuses. Human verbal and nonverbal behaviors are known to differ in face-to-face and remote dialogues in terms of the information transmitted between the parties [Doherty-Sneddon et al., 1997]. In particular, nonverbal behavior is considered to be conveyed to a lesser degree in remote dialogue. In the case of praising behavior, the method of conveying verbal and nonverbal behaviors as well as the important behaviors of praising a partner are considered to differ in face-to-face and remote dialogues. An understanding of praising behaviors in the two dialogue environments enables successful praising in both face-to-face and remote dialogues. The contribution of this paper is an initial examination of the differences between face-to-face and remote corpuses, focusing on the evaluation of praising skills and behaviors such as head motion, gaze behavior, and facial expression during praising.

2. Related work
2.1. Studies on praising behavior
Many studies have been conducted on praising behavior to clarify their functions and effects. However, the majority of the studies have focused on praising behaviors in educational scenes, while few have focused on praising behaviors in daily life and business scenes. Brophy (1981) suggested that praising behavior by teachers is widely recommended as a means of reinforcing students and has various functions other than reinforcing students’ behavior and performance. Teacher praise has been shown to have a variety of
functions beyond reinforcing students’ behavior and academic performance, including (1) spontaneous expressions of surprise and admiration, (2) maintaining balance in response to previous remarks, (3) proxy reinforcement (praising one student to tell the rest of the class that they should do so), (4) avoidance of negative expressions (teaching through praise without negative expressions), (5) a means of relieving tension, (6) student elicitation, (7) transition rituals (signaling the end of a task and the transition to the next task), and (8) comforting awards and encouragement. [Henderlong and Lepper (2002)] described the effects of praising behavior on children’s intrinsic motivation and perseverance as complex and diverse, ranging from valuable to marginally valuable to detrimental. In addition, they described that praising behavior may have different effects on the motivation of the receiver depending on the receiver’s traits such as age, gender, and culture. Moreover, praising behavior should be based on the results of behaviors, the behaviors should be clearly described, and praising behavior should be sincere in order to increase the effectiveness of praising behavior [Ennis et al., 2018].

2.2. Estimation of personality traits and performance

Many studies have analyzed behaviors and abilities in specific tasks and scenes using the verbal and nonverbal behaviors of humans. [Batrina et al. (2016)] investigated the automatic recognition of the Big Five personality traits (extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional stability, and openness to experience) from audio and video data collected in two scenarios: human-machine interaction and human-human interaction. [Aran and Gatica-Perez (2013)] investigated the prediction of personality traits of individuals participating in small-group discussions. [Lin and Lee (2018)] proposed a framework that models the vocal behaviors of both the target speaker and his/her contextual interlocutors to improve the prediction performance for scores of ten different personality traits in the ELEA corpus. [Jayagopi et al. (2012)] presented a framework for defining and extracting group behavioral cues characterizing speaking and looking patterns in face-to-face interactions. [Ramanarayanan et al. (2013)] presented a comparative analysis of three different feature sets to predict different human-rated scores of presentation proficiency. [Park et al. (2014)] presented their computational approach in using verbal and nonverbal behavior from multiple modalities of communication to predict a speaker’s persuasiveness in online social multimedia content and showed that having prior knowledge of the speaker’s sentiment partiality contributes to better prediction of the level of persuasiveness. [Nguyen et al. (2014)] proposed a computational framework to automatically predict hirability in real job interviews using the nonverbal cues of applicants’ and interviewers’ extracted from audio and visual modalities. [Sanchez-...]

3. Research goal

As discussed in 2.1, many studies related to praising behavior have been reported. These studies clarified the functions and effects of praising behavior. Therefore, they have not clarified how to behave in actual dialogue scenes. In addition, as discussed in 2.2, many studies have analyzed behaviors and abilities in specific tasks and scenes using verbal and nonverbal behaviors. These studies have analyzed speakers’ personality traits and abilities, such as presentation, empathy, and self-disclosure during communication. However, few studies have analyzed praising behavior using human verbal and nonverbal behaviors. Therefore, the behaviors that are expressed during praising behavior in actual dialogue have not been clarified. In this study, we attempt to analyze the praising behavior from an engineering point of view and to clarify which behavior is important in praising behavior. However, there has not been a dialogue corpus available to analyze these behaviors. We develop corpuses of face-to-face and remote two-party dialogues with ratings of praising skills, for the first time to the best of our knowledge. These corpuses of face-to-face and remote dialogues enable us to clarify how to use verbal and nonverbal behaviors to praise successfully. Our research goal is an initial examination of the differences between face-to-face and remote corpuses, focusing on the evaluation of praising skills and behaviors such as head motion, gaze behavior, and facial expression during praising.

4. Dialogue corpus

We developed corpus of face-to-face and remote two-party dialogues with ratings of praising skills for the first time to the best of our knowledge. In our previous work (Onishi et al., 2020), we recorded face-to-face two-party dialogues, annotated the dialogue data, and evaluated the praising skills. In this paper, we developed the face-to-face corpus with increased number of dialogue participants and annotators from previous work. In addition, we newly recorded remote two-party dialogues, annotated the dialogue data, and evaluated praising skills.

4.1. Face-to-face dialogue

4.1.1. Recording of two-party dialogue

We recorded face-to-face two-party dialogues to record verbal and nonverbal behaviors. The participants in the
two-party dialogues were 34 university students in their twenties (28 males and six females) who were divided into 17 pairs. Among the 17 pairs, 14 pairs included participants meeting for the first time, two pairs included acquaintances, and one pair included friends. To begin recording dialogues, we requested participants to prepare two or more episodes about what they had been working hard to prepare materials for the dialogue. The participants were seated facing each other and separated by 180 cm apart, as shown in Figure 1. The dialogues were recorded using a video camera to record each participant’s head and face behaviors and a microphone to record each participant’s voice. Each pair of participants (participants A and B) performed dialogues (1) to (3) in accordance with the experimenter’s instructions.

(1) A self-introduction (5 min).

(2) Dialogue with participant A as a praiser and participant B as a receiver (5 min).

(3) Dialogue with participant B as a praiser and participant A as a receiver (5 min).

We recorded 17 pairs of dialogues (1) to (3) for a total of 255 minutes of two-party dialogues. Dialogue (1) (self-introduction) was not used in our analysis because many of the pairs were meeting for the first time, and its purpose was simply to relieve the tension between participants. In dialogues (2) and (3), the receiver was instructed to discuss the things that they had been working hard to accomplish. To ensure that the participants conversed naturally regarding a variety of topics, we also allowed them to discuss topics that they had not prepared beforehand. The praiser was instructed to praise the receiver. However, we allowed the participants to raise questions and react freely to avoid any unnatural dialogues that would have involved unilateral praising. This procedure was approved by the ethics committee.

### Table 1: Information about utterance scenes and praising scenes in face-to-face corpus.

| Type               | Scenes | Mean (sec) | Max (sec) | Min (sec) |
|--------------------|--------|------------|-----------|-----------|
| Utterance (praiser)| 2701   | 1.324      | 23.117    | 0.062     |
| Utterance (receiver)|3413   | 2.040      | 26.234    | 0.018     |
| Praising scenes   | 228    | 2.018      | 9.127     | 0.368     |

**4.1.2. Annotation of dialogue data**

We annotated the dialogue data recorded in 4.1.1. We used ELAN (Brugman and Russell, 2004), a tool for annotating video and audio data, to manually annotate utterance scenes in the video and audio data of each participant. The results of the utterance scenes are presented in Table 1.

**Utterance scenes**: a continuous voice intervals with a silent interval of less than 400 ms.

In our previous work (Onishi et al., 2020), we used continuous voice intervals of less than 200 ms of silence. However, we confirmed that the utterances were separated into small intervals. In this paper, we set continuous voice intervals of less than 400 ms so that the intervals of utterances were natural.

**4.1.3. Evaluation of praising skills**

The evaluation of praising skills was conducted by five third-party annotators who did not participate in the two-party dialogue. The annotators did not have any training or qualifications to avoid the influence of prior knowledge or preconceptions. They made the following judgments and evaluations for each utterance scene of the praiser extracted in 4.1.2, referring to the video data recorded from the video camera set up in front of the praiser and the audio data recorded from the microphone attached to the praiser.

- Judgment of whether the praiser praises the dialogue partner in the scene.
- If the praiser was praising the dialogue partner, the evaluation of praising skills on a 7-point Likert scale from 1 (I do not think the praiser is successfully praising) to 7 (I think the praiser is successfully praising).

From the above judgments and evaluations, we defined praising scenes and praising scores. The information of praising scenes is shown in Table 1.

**Praising scenes**: the scene in which three or more annotators judged that the praiser was praising in each utterance scene.

**Praising scores**: the mean of the evaluations by annotators who judged that the praiser was praising in each praising scene.

We evaluated the rate of concordance of praising scores among annotators using intraclass correlation coefficients (ICC) (Shrout and Fleiss, 1979). We calculated
the ICC for each combination of three to five annotators, and calculated the weighted average by considering the number of samples. The results were $ICC(2, k) = 0.571$. This result suggests that praising scores are reliable data with a medium level of concordance among annotators. In our previous study (Onishi et al., 2020), an annotator judged whether utterances were praising, and participants who were the receiver in each dialogue rated the praising skills of the partner. However, we were concerned that the judgments and evaluations would be subjective, so the judgments and evaluations were performed by five annotators.

4.2. Remote dialogue

4.2.1. Recording of two-party dialogue

We recorded two-party remote dialogues using an online communication tool to record verbal and nonverbal behaviors. The participants of the dialogues were 40 people (20 males and 20 females) in their twenties to fifties, and each participant talked three times with a different partner. We recorded a total of 60 pairs of dialogues. The age and gender of the participants in each group were the same, and they had not met each other. The participants were seated in front of a PC, as shown in Figure 2. The recording of dialogues used Zoom,[1] an online communication tool. We recorded the video of each participant using the camera on a PC set up in front of the participants, and the audio of each participant using the microphone on a PC. The participants (participant A and B) performed the following three dialogues according to the experimenter’s instructions, as in 4.1.1.

(1) A self-introduction (5 min).

(2) Dialogue with participant A as a praiser and participant B as a receiver (10 min).

We recorded 60 pairs of dialogues (1) to (3) for a total of 1500 minutes of two-party dialogues. The topic of dialogues was specific experiences and stories about oneself having worked hard in the past. We asked the receiver to continue the dialogue on the above themes. To avoid unnatural dialogues, we told the receiver to talk about their experiences in natural dialogues rather than speeches or presentations. We asked the praiser to praise their partners’ experiences when they felt necessary to praise. In addition, we allowed the praiser to raise questions, as appropriate.

4.2.2. Annotation of dialogue data

We automatically annotated utterance scenes for each participant’s voice data using ASR[2], an automatic speech recognition system. The results of the utterance scenes are presented in Table 2.

| Utterance (praiser) | Scenes | Mean (sec) | Max (sec) | Min (sec) |
|--------------------|--------|------------|-----------|-----------|
|                    | 16351  | 1.233      | 11.180    | 0.450     |
| Utterance (receiver)| 27834  | 1.959      | 13.430    | 0.450     |
| Praising scenes    | 236    | 1.998      | 10.610    | 0.470     |

Table 2: Information about utterance scenes and praising scenes in remote corpus.

(3) Dialogue with participant B as a praiser and participant A as a receiver (10 min).

We recorded 60 pairs of dialogues (1) to (3) for a total of 1500 minutes of two-party dialogues. The topic of dialogues was specific experiences and stories about oneself having worked hard in the past. We asked the receiver to continue the dialogue on the above themes. To avoid unnatural dialogues, we told the receiver to talk about their experiences in natural dialogues rather than speeches or presentations. We asked the praiser to praise their partners’ experiences when they felt necessary to praise. In addition, we allowed the praiser to raise questions, as appropriate.

4.2.3. Evaluation of praising skills

The evaluation of praising skills was conducted by five third-party annotators who were not participating in the two-party dialogue, using the same method as in 4.1.3. Specifically, annotators made the following judgments and evaluations for each utterance scene of the praiser extracted in 4.2.2, referring to the video data recorded from the PC set up in front of the praiser and the audio data recorded from the microphone.

- Judgment of whether the praiser praises the dialogue partner in the scene.

- If the praiser was praising the dialogue partner, the evaluation of praising skills on a 7-point Likert scale from 1 (I do not think the praiser is successfully praising) to 7 (I think the praiser is successfully praising).

From the above judgments and evaluations, we defined praising scenes and praising scores.

Praising scenes: the scene in which three or more annotators judged that the praiser was praising in each utterance scene.
Figure 3: The distribution of praising scores in face-to-face and remote dialogues.

|         | Mean  | SD    | Max  | Min  |
|---------|-------|-------|------|------|
| face-to-face | 4.124 | 0.808 | 6.250 | 1.333 |
| remote  | 4.280 | 0.931 | 7.000 | 1.000 |

Table 3: The statistics of praising scores in face-to-face and remote dialogues.

Praising scores: the mean of the evaluations by annotators who judged that the praiser was praising in each praising scene.

The information of the praising scenes is shown in Table [2]. We calculated the ICC for each combination of three to five annotators, and calculated the weighted average by considering the number of samples. The results were ICC(2, k) = 0.701. This result suggests that praising scores are reliable data with a high level of concordance among annotators.

5. Comparison of face-to-face and remote dialogues

5.1. Praising scores

We compared the praising scenes and praising scores that were extracted and calculated in 4.1.3 and 4.2.3, respectively, between face-to-face and remote dialogues. First, we compared praising scores between face-to-face and remote dialogues. The distribution of praising scores in face-to-face and remote dialogues is shown in Figure [3]. The statistics of praising scores in face-to-face and remote dialogues are shown in Table [3]. We performed an unpaired t-test between face-to-face and remote dialogue using praising scores. The result was t(457) = 1.931 (p = 0.054), indicating no significant difference. Thus, we consider that the dialogues recorded in this paper are face-to-face and remote dialogues with a uniform distribution of praising scores. Second, we compared the praising scenes in face-to-face and remote dialogues. The percentage of praising scenes was 8.4% of all utterances in face-to-face dialogue, as shown in Table [3]. On the other hand, the percentage of praising scenes was 1.4% among all utterances in the remote dialogue, as shown in Table [2]. Thus, the number of scenes in the remote dialogue was the same as in the face-to-face dialogue. However, the overall dialogue had fewer praising scenes in remote dialogue. In addition, we checked how many praising scenes existed in one round of dialogue. The statistics of the number of praising scenes in face-to-face and remote dialogues are shown in Table [4]. Thus, we confirmed that face-to-face dialogues have one or more praising scenes. On the other hand, the remote dialogues have one or more times of the praising scene, although some dialogues have no praising scene. Thus, we considered that praise behavior is more likely to be generated in face-to-face dialogue, while praise behavior is less likely to be generated in remote dialogues.

|         | Mean  | SD    | Max  | Min  |
|---------|-------|-------|------|------|
| face-to-face | 6.909 | 4.297 | 18   | 1    |
| remote  | 1.967 | 2.446 | 15   | 0    |

Table 4: The statistics of the number of Praise scenes in face-to-face and remote dialogues.

5.2. Facial behaviors

5.2.1. Feature extraction

We extracted features related to head, gaze, and action units from video data captured by a video camera or PC set up in front of the participants using OpenFace (Baltrušaitis et al., 2016), a face image processing tool.

Head motion: We used the variance (\( \text{var} \)), median (\( \text{med} \)), and 10th (\( \text{p10} \)) and 90th percentile values (\( \text{p90} \)) of the rotation angles around the x-axis (pose\(_{Rx}\)), y-axis (pose\(_{Ry}\)), and z-axis (pose\(_{Rz}\)) of the head when the face was viewed from the video camera side and the x-axis was from left to right, the y-axis was from bottom to top, and the z-axis was from the front to the back.

Gaze behavior: We used the variance, median, and 10th and 90th percentile values of the angles in the x-axis (gaze\(_{Ax}\)) and y-axis (gaze\(_{Ay}\)) of gaze when the face was viewed from the video camera side, and the x-axis was from the left to the right, and the y-axis was from bottom to top.

Action units: Action units (Ekman and Friesen, 1977) represent the fundamental actions of individual muscles or muscle groups. We used the variance, median, and 10th and 90th percentile values of the intensity of the action units used in OpenFace. The action units used in this paper are listed in Table [5].

5.2.2. Comparison of features

We confirmed the difference in behavior between face-to-face and remote dialogues in successfully praising
Ay, AU04, AU06, AU23, and AU45. Ay represents the behavior of moving the head related to gaze that the dominant features in the remote dialogue are actively used in remote dialogue. Although the variance of AU07 was dominant in face-to-face dialogue, the median, 10th percentile, and 90th percentile values were dominant in remote dialogue. AU07 represents the behavior of eyebrow tensing. This behavior is considered to be more intense in remote dialogue, while the eyebrows are tensed in face-to-face dialogue.

### 6. Discussion

From the analysis in Table 5.2.1 we confirmed that the distribution of praising scores is similar in face-to-face and remote dialogues, although the ratio of the number of praising scenes to the number of utterances is different. In particular, the number of praising scenes for the number of utterance scenes was lower in remote dialogues than in face-to-face dialogues. Therefore, we administered a questionnaire to the participants who were the receivers after the dialogue. The participants answered the following questions on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (disagree) to 7 (agree).

**Q1:** The partner praised me even if my actions were trivial.

**Q2:** The partner accepted what I had to say without criticism.

The results are shown in Figure 3. In Q1, we performed an unpaired t-test on the results of face-to-face and remote dialogues, and the results showed no significant difference. Thus, the participants who were receivers in both face-to-face and remote dialogues felt that their partners praised them even for trivial points. On the other hand, in Q2, we performed an unpaired t-test on the results of face-to-face dialogue and remote dialogues, and the results showed a significant difference.

| Item | Content | Item | Content |
|------|---------|------|---------|
| AU01 | Inner brow raiser | AU14 | Dimpler |
| AU02 | Outer brow raiser | AU15 | Lip corner depressor |
| AU04 | Brow lowerer | AU17 | Chin raiser |
| AU05 | Upper lid raiser | AU20 | Lip stretcher |
| AU06 | Cheek raiser | AU23 | Lip tightener |
| AU07 | Lid tightener | AU25 | Lips part |
| AU09 | Nose wrinkler | AU26 | Jaw drop |
| AU10 | Upper lip raiser | AU45 | Blink |
| AU12 | Lip corner puller | | |

Table 5: The list of Action Units.

| Feature | Mean (face-to-face) | Mean (remote) |
|---------|---------------------|---------------|
| AU07_var | 0.213 | > 0.132 |
| AU45_var | 0.121 | < 0.301 |
| gaze_Ay_p10 | 0.011 | < 0.141 |
| AU04_p10 | 0.188 | < 0.334 |
| AU06_p10 | 0.797 | < 1.556 |
| AU07_p10 | 1.071 | < 1.768 |
| AU09_p10 | 0.059 | < 0.009 |
| AU26_p10 | 0.206 | > 0.064 |
| gaze_Ay_med | 0.074 | < 0.184 |
| AU06_med | 1.158 | < 1.924 |
| AU07_med | 1.619 | < 2.213 |
| AU09_med | 0.186 | > 0.060 |
| AU23_med | 0.563 | < 0.156 |
| AU26_med | 0.519 | > 0.330 |
| gaze_Ay_p90 | 0.140 | < 0.251 |
| AU06_p90 | 1.533 | < 2.295 |
| AU07_p90 | 2.145 | < 2.601 |
| AU09_p90 | 0.405 | > 0.230 |
| AU23_p90 | 0.251 | < 0.531 |
| AU45_p90 | 0.672 | < 1.018 |

Table 6: The features with significant differences between face-to-face and remote dialogues.
at the 1% level. Thus, face-to-face dialogue is more likely to make participants feel that their partner is listening to them. From the above, we consider that face-to-face dialogue is more likely than remote dialogue to receive and praise their partner’s stories. In this paper, as an initial study, we analyzed the distribution of praising scores and the statistics of praising scenes. In the future, we would like to analyze praising skills in face-to-face and remote dialogues by analyzing the content of utterances, interviewing dialogue participants, and investigating what annotators liked when they judged praise.

In addition, from the analysis in 5.2.2, we confirmed the difference in the behavior of praise between face-to-face and remote dialogues. In this paper, as an initial study, we compared the behaviors of head motion, gaze behavior, and facial expression in the high group of praising scores and compared the behaviors of face-to-face dialogues and remote dialogues. In the future, we would like to conduct a more detailed analysis to clarify how to behave to successfully praise.

7. Conclusion

In this paper, we discussed the differences between face-to-face and remote corpuses, focusing on the evaluation of praising skills and behaviors such as head motion, gaze behavior, and facial expression during praising. We developed corpuses of face-to-face and remote two-party dialogues with ratings of praising skills, for the first time to the best of our knowledge. In particular, we analyzed the expressions in adjudged praising scenes in the face-to-face and remote corpuses, as well as evaluated the praising skills. In addition, we compared the differences in head motion, gaze behavior, and facial expression between face-to-face and remote dialogues in high-rated praising scenes. The results showed that the distribution of praising scores was similar in face-to-face and remote dialogues, although the ratio of the number of praising scenes to the number of utterance scenes was different. In addition, the results of the questionnaire suggested that face-to-face dialogue were more likely than remote dialogue to receive and praise their partner’s stories. Moreover, the difference in behavior in face-to-face and remote dialogues was confirmed. The corpus developed in this paper, as well as the results of the analysis in this paper, are expected to contribute to the analysis of praising.

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