

From Felt Sense to Words: Construction and Analysis of a Focusing Dialogue Dataset for Verbalization



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Contributions

- Constructed a multimodal **dataset of Focusing dialogues** between participants and trained Focusing experts.
- Analyzed Focusing dialogue characteristics** in terms of verbalization progress, subjective evaluations, and dialogue acts.
- Proposed **design implications for Focusing dialogue systems**.

Motivation

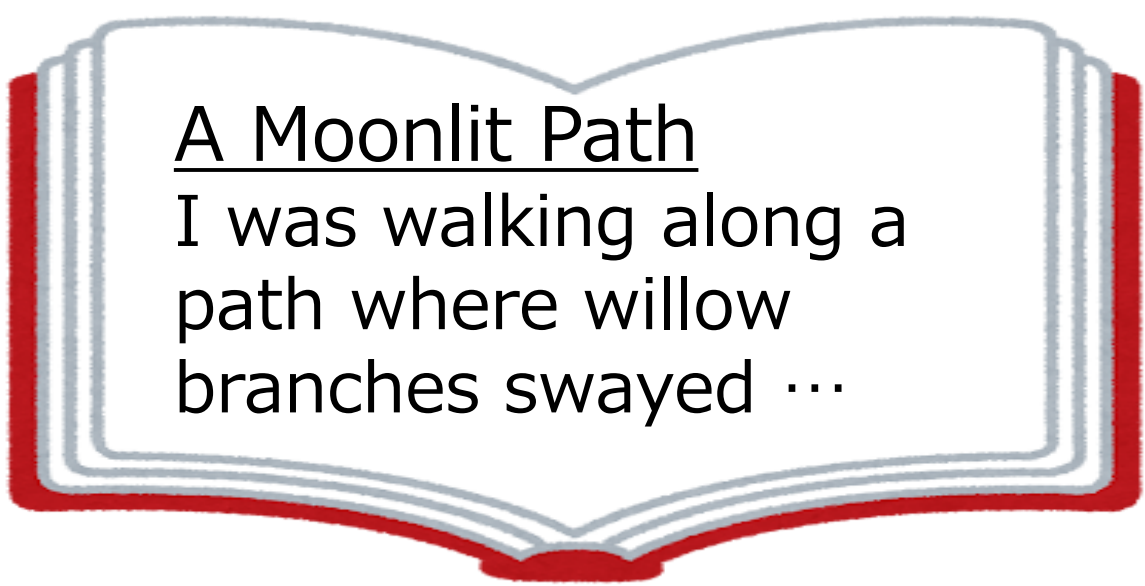
- **Verbalization**, the process of expressing one's internal states in words, improves well-being **but is difficult for some people**.
- **Focusing-Oriented Psychotherapy** supports verbalization through dialogue.
- This motivates **Focusing dialogue systems** that make verbalization support more accessible.

What is Focusing?

- **A process of attending to a felt sense**—an internal state that has not yet been verbalized—and **gradually putting it into words**.
- The person practicing Focusing is called the **focuser**, and the certified Focusing trainer supporting the dialogue is called the **listener**.
- In Focusing dialogues, **the listener helps the focuser explore and verbalize the felt sense**.

Data Collection

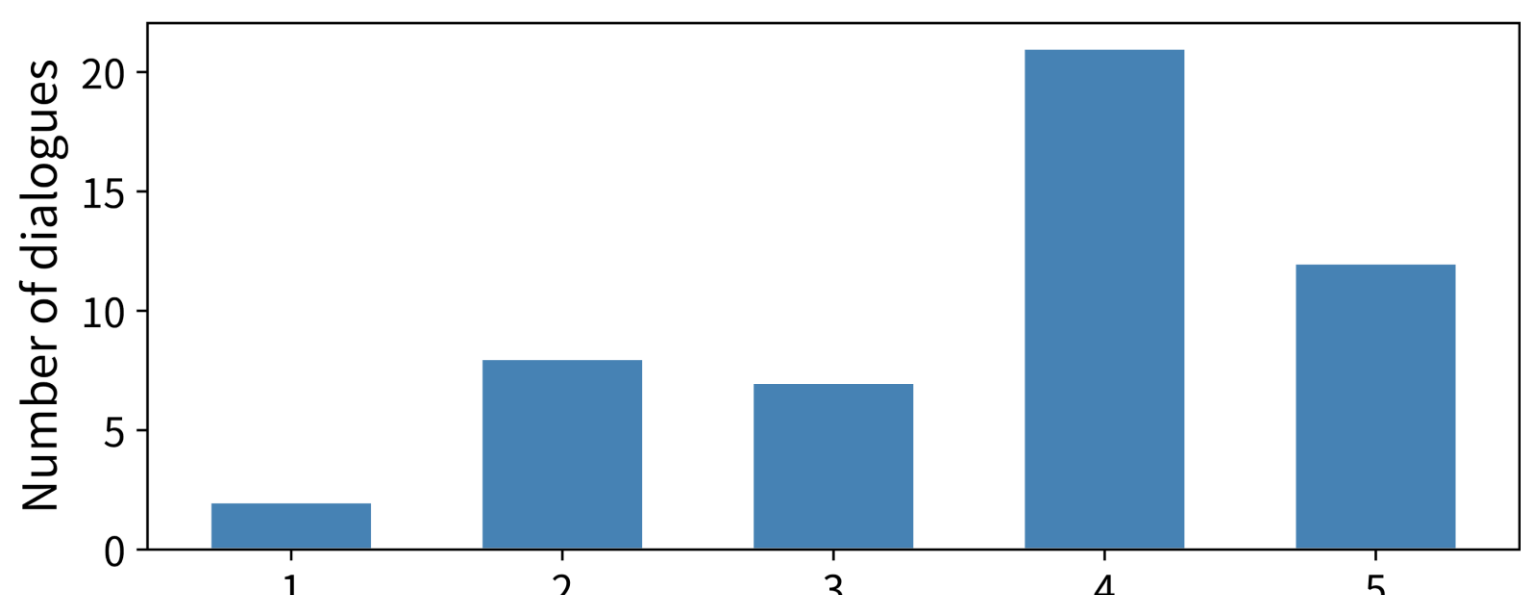
- **50 real-world Focusing dialogues** between a focuser and a listener.
- Focusers engaged in a **story-based Focusing work**, where they verbalized their impressions after listening to a short story.
- Annotations and Ratings
 - **EXP score**: listener-rated verbalization progress on a 5-point scale.
 - **J-SEQ**: subjective dialogue evaluation by both the listener and the focuser on a 7-point scale.
 - **FMS-18**: focuser's daily attitude toward felt sense, measured with 18 items across three factors: attention, acceptance, and distance.
 - **Dialogue acts (DA)**: 17 utterance-level DA tags proposed for attentive listening dialogues [2].



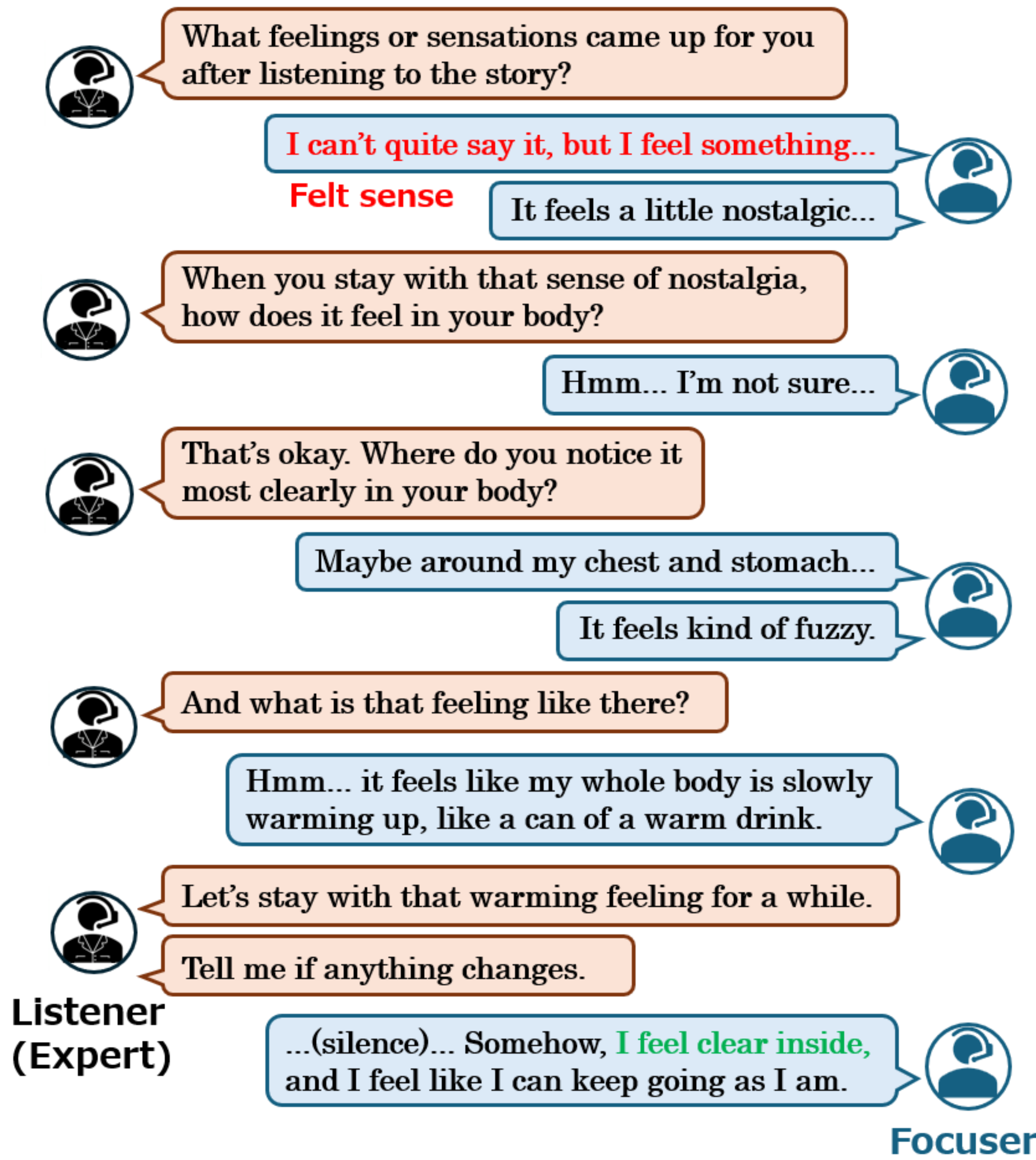
The story for Focusing work

	Listener	Focuser
No. of people	5	50
Total utterances	10,033	7,953
Mean utt. len. (chars)	18.8	13.0
Mean duration per utt. (sec)	2.9	2.1
Mean utt. per dialogue	200.7	159.1

Statistics of the dataset



Distribution of EXP score



Example of a Focusing dialogue



Experimental setup

Analysis (Questionnaires)

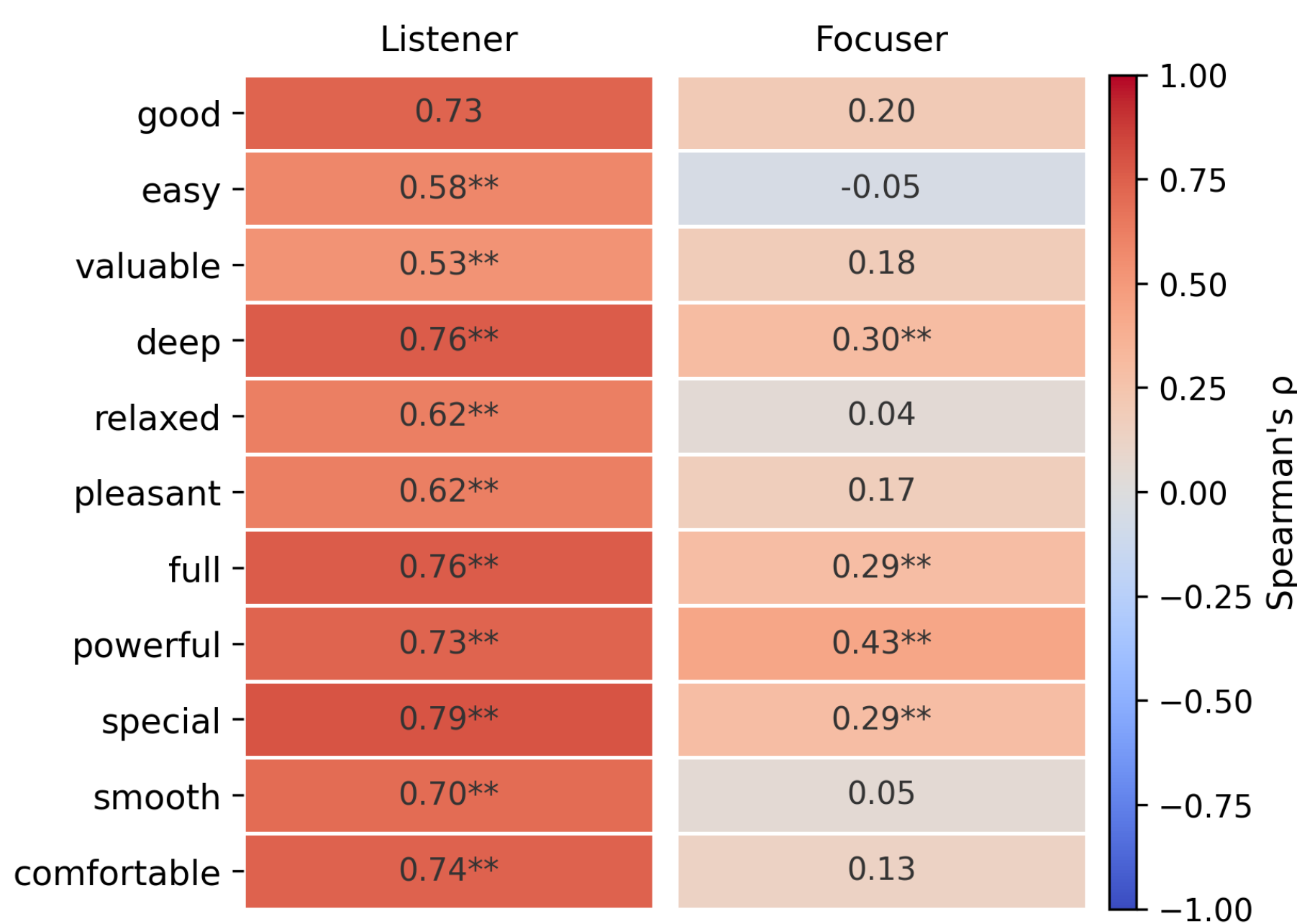
- A) Verbalization Progress (EXP) × Subjective Evaluations (J-SEQ)
- EXP scores were more strongly associated with listener than focuser J-SEQ ratings.
 - In high-EXP dialogues, listener and focuser evaluations were more closely aligned.
- B) Verbalization Progress (EXP) × Focusing Attitude (FMS-18)
- The FMS-18 attention factor showed a moderate correlation with EXP scores.
 - Focusers who tend to attend to their felt sense may show greater verbalization progress.

Analysis (Dialogue acts)

- C) Focusing listeners vs. Attentive Listening listeners [2]
- Focusing listeners used more ACK and less DISC.
 - Focusing listeners mainly support verbalization through responsive utterances.
- D) Verbalization Progress (EXP) × Listener DAs
- Listeners used more responsive utterances in high-EXP and more QUES in low-EXP dialogues.
 - Listener support varies depending on verbalization progress.
- E) Focusing Attitude (FMS-18) × Focuser Roles
- High-FMS focusers used more DISC (57.0% vs. 50.0%), while low-FMS focusers used more ACK (27.0% vs. 23.0%).
 - Focusing attitudes shape how actively focusers verbalize.

Implications for System Design

- Focusing dialogue systems should support both verbalization progress and users' subjective evaluations [A].
- Systems should adapt their responses to users' verbalization progress and Focusing attitudes [B,D,E].



A) Correlations between EXP and J-SEQ

Tag	High	Low	Sig.
FILLER	5.0%	7.0%	**
APPROVAL	0.0%	1.0%	*
PROPOSAL	5.0%	3.0%	**
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT (ACK)	44.0%	38.0%	**
SELF-DISCLOSURE (DISC)	3.0%	5.0%	**
PARAPHRASE	6.0%	4.0%	**
QUESTION (QUES)	16.0%	22.0%	**

D) Distribution of listener DAs in the high- and low-EXP score groups

Limitations and Future Work

- This dataset is limited to 50 Japanese dialogues based on a single story-based Focusing work.
- We will collect more diverse dialogues, analyze multimodal cues, and develop an LLM-based Focusing dialogue system.

[1] Gendlin, Focusing, 2nd ed., 1981.

[2] Meguro et al., ACM Transactions on Speech and Language Processing, 2013.