

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

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From the Distal Demonstrative to a Stance Marker: On *na* in Mandarin Chinese Conversation

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the  
requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy  
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by

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## ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

From the Distal Demonstrative to a Stance Marker: On *na* in Mandarin Chinese Conversation

by

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Doctor of Philosophy in Applied Linguistics

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Demonstratives play an important role in communication. Traditional analyses of demonstratives focused primarily on their morphology, semantics, syntax, and to some extent, on their diachrony and acquisition. Based on a 257,000-character conversational database, this dissertation examines how *na* ‘that’ can shift from marking spatial deixis to signaling the speaker’s stance in Mandarin Chinese conversation by linking discourse-pragmatic analysis with interactional actions. More specifically, it identifies 1) functions of *na* and the relative frequencies of its different usages; 2) contexts in which *na* typically appears and reasons speakers use *na* in those contexts; 3) interrelations among different usages; and 4) functional preference of *na* across positions within a turn.

The results show that exophoric use is very much marginalized in natural conversation (2 tokens out of 1261 tokens, 0.2%). The predominant referential *na* is used as a discourse deictic demonstrative (315 tokens out of 1261 tokens, 25.0%). Anaphoric *na* is relatively frequent (191 tokens out of 1261 tokens, 15.1%), with its most salient occurrence appearing in medial position of an utterance (75 tokens). The previous understudied recognitional use is by no means sparse (98 tokens out of 1261 tokens, 7.8%). I show that recognitional *na* is not restricted to contexts where a referent is identifiable based on specific knowledge or shared common ground between the speaker and the addressee. The speaker routinely makes use of recognitional *na* even when he/she knows that the referent is *discourse new* and *hearer new*. I argue that in contexts like this, the speaker employs recognitional *na* as an interpersonal strategy to establish a solidarity between himself/herself and the addressee and create an in-group perspective to better engage the addressee in the conversation.

The non-referential *na* (655 tokens out of 1261 tokens, 51.9%) on the other hand, is routinely used by speakers to express contrastive meaning, encode attitudinal stances that are often disaffiliative, taking the form of disagreements, challenges, or criticisms. More specifically, I propose three functional categories of non-referential *na*: i) initiating a question (186 tokens out of 1261 tokens, 14.8%); ii) indexing a disaffiliative stance (179 tokens out of 1261 tokens, 14.2%); and iii) projecting a question or a disaffiliative stance (130 tokens out of 1261 tokens, 10.3%). The analysis also indicates that these interactional functions of non-referential *na* are linked to the distal demonstrative's deictic meanings in the sense that the *na*-prefaced turn indexes that the current turn is built from a prior turn but displays a shift in focus and often a contrastive or disaffiliative stance.

With respect to functional preference of *na* across positions within a turn, the results demonstrate that *na* tends to serve to register a turn that embodies contrastive information or disaffiliative stance in response to a prior turn in turn-initial position. In medial position within an

utterance, *na* functions to keep track of and orient the addressee's attention to an element of the ongoing discourse. In medial position inside a turn, an utterance-initial *na* does not show a functional preference; it either is used to track a referent or to signal contrastive information/disaffiliative stance.

The dissertation of Ying Yang is approved.

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2022

*To my grandparents.*

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

|         |                                           |
|---------|-------------------------------------------|
| 1, 2, 3 | first person, second person, third person |
| ATTR    | attributive                               |
| AUX     | auxiliary                                 |
| BEI     | Chinese <i>bei</i> passive structure      |
| BA      | Chinese <i>ba</i> construction            |
| CL      | classifier                                |
| COP     | copular                                   |
| DEHUA   | conditional marker                        |
| DEM     | demonstrative                             |
| ESP     | experiential                              |
| FP      | utterance final particle                  |
| FTU     | future                                    |
| INTE    | intensifier                               |
| NEG     | negation                                  |
| NMLZ    | nominalizer/nominalization                |
| PL      | plural                                    |
| PREP    | preposition                               |
| PRF     | perfect                                   |
| PROG    | progressive                               |
| PRT     | particle                                  |
| Q       | question particle/marker                  |
| RES     | resultative                               |
| SG      | singular                                  |

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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

This dissertation investigates the distal demonstrative *na* ‘that’ and its associated non-deictic and non-referential functions in Mandarin Chinese conversation from a discourse functional perspective. Apart from its canonical usage as a distal demonstrative, *na* has various kinds of extended and nuanced discourse and interactional functions. This research identifies and classifies different uses of *na*, with a special focus on its previously overlooked non-referential functions. More specifically, I analyze the sequential contexts, the functional accounts across different positions of *na* within a turn using both quantitative and qualitative approaches. The primary goal is to offer a systematic analysis that accounts for all the occurrences and functions of *na* by native speakers in actual everyday interaction. The secondary objective is to shed light on similarities and language-specific variations in the grammaticalization and/or pragmaticalization of demonstratives, particularly the non-referential uses of demonstrative-derived discourse markers.

### 1.1 Demonstrative and demonstrative-derived marker

Demonstratives appear to be a linguistic universal (Diessel, 1999; Dixon, 2003; Evans & Levinson, 2009; Diessel, 2013) and have long been one of the key research topics in linguistics, not only because they are highly pervasive in everyday communication, but more crucially because they provide insight into some of the most basic features of human language, such as pointing and naming (Bühler, 1934; Lyons, 1977). Demonstratives also link the structure of

language and the context in which a deictic expression is used (Levinson, 1983). This is of particular interest to pragmatics because demonstratives constitute “key points of juncture between grammar and context” (Hanks, 1992:47).

Within linguistics, the term *demonstratives* generally refers to deictic expressions being used as demonstrative determiners/adjectives or demonstrative pronouns, as in Examples (1) and (2) respectively:

(1) **This/That** car is broken.

(2) **This/That** is my book.

The demonstrative determiners or demonstrative adjectives in Example (1) are used to modify a noun (i.e. *car*) while the demonstrative pronouns in (2) are used as independent pronouns. In this dissertation, I adopt this traditional definition<sup>1</sup> of demonstratives as a subclass of deictic expressions whose primary function is deemed to pointing out the object(s) referred to in the physical world.

Across the languages of the world, demonstratives play an essential role in communication. Traditional classifications of demonstrative forms focused primarily on their morphology, semantics, and syntax (e.g. Frei, 1944; Fillmore, 1997; Anderson & Keenan, 1985; Calvo Perez, 1999). Apart from their canonical *exophoric use* (Halliday & Hassan, 1976), that is, when demonstratives are used to focus the hearer’s attention on concrete entities in the speech situation, demonstratives also have various kinds of extended grammatical and discourse pragmatic functions. Cross-linguistically, studies have shown that demonstratives provide a

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<sup>1</sup> Some studies (e.g. Lyons, 1977; Diessel, 1999; Dixon, 2003) used a broad definition of demonstratives and treated demonstrative adverbs such as *here* and *there* as demonstratives as well.

common historical source for a wide range of grammatical items such as definite/indefinite articles, adnominal determinatives, complementizers, possessives, noun class markers, verbal/nominal number markers, third person pronouns, and relative pronouns (Himmelmann, 1996; Diessel, 1999; Laury, 1997).

From a discourse pragmatic perspective, researchers also demonstrated that demonstratives could develop beyond their pointing and tracking uses to fulfill language internal functions. Halliday and Hasan (1976) labeled these functions *endophoric* demonstratives and they can be further divided into anaphoric uses, discourse deictic uses, and recognitional uses. These extended pragmatic functions of demonstratives are very robust cross-linguistically (e.g. Himmelmann, 1996; Diessel, 1999; Levinson, Cutfield, Dunn, Enfield & Meira, 2018; Næss, Margetts & Treis, 2020). In addition to developing into more pragmaticalized<sup>2</sup> endophoric uses (i.e. anaphoric uses, discourse deictic uses, and recognitional uses), demonstratives are also often used as discourse markers<sup>3</sup> to organize utterances or discourse segments and contribute to the overall coherence of discourse. In this type of use, demonstratives function partially like connectives (Nagaraja, 1985; Harms, 1994; Diessel, 1999; Diessel & Breunese, 2020), especially when they are not strictly referential. Moreover, demonstratives can even develop into discourse markers that convey different shades of the speaker's *subjective* and *intersubjective* (Traugott, 2010) stance (Næss, Margetts & Treis, 2020). For instance, Bliss and Wiltschko

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<sup>2</sup> Following Diwald (2011), grammaticalization is a complex process triggered by various factors rooted in pragmatics, so pragmaticalization can be seen as an integral part of grammaticalization (cf. Eide, 2016).

<sup>3</sup> Different scholars may use alternative terms (e.g. pragmatic marker, discourse particles, discourse connective, conversational particles) to define overlapping categories or similar concepts, or make reference to one another in literature. This dissertation uses discourse markers as a general term, which as Dér (2017) observed, appears to be the most frequently used and inclusive term in the English literature. They encompass linguistic items that are syntactically independent from their environment and do not change the truth condition of a sentence.

(2020) examined a group of “untranslatable” demonstratives in Blackfoot, an Algonquian language spoken in North America. In the oral stories they collected in Alberta, Canada, these “untranslatable” demonstratives typically were not associated with any clear referents or nominal complements. More importantly, they did not make any semantic contributions to the propositional content of the utterance. Bliss and Wiltschko’s analysis demonstrated that different morphological and prosodic properties of the “untranslatable” demonstratives usually took on various discourse functions such as marking a proposition as expected/familiar or unexpected/new, foregrounding a noteworthy event in a story, and encoding the speaker’s positive or negative attitude towards the content of the utterance.

Although it is generally believed that all human languages have demonstrative systems, there are, nevertheless, significant differences across languages in the inventory they possess and the uses and the functions that demonstratives serve. Furthermore, many features of demonstratives have not been fully chronicled and require further exploration in ongoing work. For instance, use of demonstratives and demonstrative-derived markers in spontaneous natural conversation has not been fully characterized for a wide range of languages. This might be because written and oral narratives are the most readily available texts for linguists, particularly before the 1980s. It is not surprising that as a consequence, extended uses and interactional functions of demonstratives in other contexts are less examined. We also have a limited understanding of the extent to which demonstrative-derived markers lose/preserve their primary deictic features over time, and in different contexts. Substantial insight can most likely be gained by looking at data genres as well as languages that are currently less analyzed because the full picture of the grammar of demonstratives does not emerge if the focus is on certain types of language production and language families only.

## 1.2 The Mandarin Chinese nominal demonstratives

Like English, Mandarin Chinese has two nominal demonstratives<sup>4</sup>, the proximal demonstrative *zhe* ‘this’, and the distal demonstrative *na* ‘that’. The plural forms *zhexie* ‘these’ and *naxie* ‘those’ are constructed by combining the singular forms with the indefinite measure word *xie* ‘some’. Table 1.1 below shows the Mandarin Chinese nominal demonstratives by semantic categorization:

**Table 1.1 Mandarin Chinese nominal demonstratives**

|                                       | SINGULAR     | PLURAL           |
|---------------------------------------|--------------|------------------|
| <b>PROXIMAL</b><br>(ENTITY-REFERRING) | <i>zhe</i> 这 | <i>zhexie</i> 这些 |
| <b>DISTAL</b><br>(ENTITY-REFERRING)   | <i>na</i> 那  | <i>naxie</i> 那些  |

The proximal demonstrative *zhe* ‘this’ typically refers to an entity that is relatively closer to the deictic center and the distal demonstrative *na* ‘that’ by and large is reserved for objects that are remote from the speaker. They can either be used adnominally as shown in Examples (3a), (3b), and (3c), or as stand-alone pronouns, as illustrated in Examples (4a), (4b), and (4c).

(3a) 这/那棵树很高  
*zhe/na ke shu hen gao*  
 DEM CL tree very tall  
 ‘This/That tree is very tall.’

(4a) 这/那是我的朋友  
*zhe/na shi wo de pengyou*  
 DEM COP 1SG ATTR friend  
 ‘This/That is my friend.’

<sup>4</sup> In line with Dixon’s (2003) typological classification, I use nominal demonstratives as an umbrella term for demonstrative determiners/adjectives and demonstrative pronouns.

- (3b) 这/那两棵树很高  
*zhe/na liang ke shu hen gao*  
 DEM two CL tree very tall  
 ‘These/Those two trees are very tall.’
- (4b) 这/那三个是我的朋友  
*zhe/na san ge shi wo de pengyou*  
 DEM three CL COP 1SG ATTR friend  
 ‘These/Those three are my friends.’
- (3c) 这些/那些树很高  
*zhexie/naxie shu hen gao*  
 DEM tree very tall  
 ‘These/Those trees are very tall.’
- (4c) 这些/那些是我的朋友  
*zhexie/naxie shi wo de pengyou*  
 DEM COP 1SG ATTR friend  
 ‘These/Those are my friends.’

Unlike English, however, Mandarin Chinese adnominal demonstratives often co-occur with a classifier (e.g. *ke* in (3a), (3b) and *ge* in (4b)). Classifiers are virtually obligatory when a noun is preceded by a demonstrative or a number (or certain quantifiers) in formal written discourse, but they can be omitted in certain contexts in casual talk or informal writing.

### 1.3 Previous research on *na*

As discussed in the previous section, Mandarin Chinese makes a two-way distinction between demonstratives: the proximal demonstrative *zhe* ‘this’ and the distal demonstrative *na* ‘that’. *Zhe* ‘this’ is used for entities that are close to the speaker and *na* ‘that’ is used when the speaker is referring to entities that are relatively remote from the deictic center (Lü, 1980). Starting from the 1980s, scholars started to inquire into uses of demonstratives that are not based on concrete spatial parameters, arguing that some of the referential demonstratives are not restricted to expressing the physical distance contrast (e.g. Teng, 1981; Lü, 1984; Xu, 1987). However, studies before the 1990s were either based on isolated contrived data or on texts taken from fictional works, and therefore tend to have a written language bias.

From a functional point of view, Tao (1994; 1999) analyzed the demonstrative pronouns (*zhe/na* ‘this/that’, *zheli(zhebian)/nali(nabian)* ‘here/there’, *zhe-ge/na-ge* ‘this-CL/that-CL’,

*zhexie/naxie* ‘these/those’, etc.) and demonstrative adverbials (*zheyang/nayang* ‘like this/like that’, *zheme/name* ‘this way, like this, such, so/in that case, so, thus’) in Mandarin Chinese natural conversation. He pointed out that the spatial distinctions do not account well for demonstratives in natural conversational data and suggested that the “non-concrete dimensions of indexical ground” (Tao, 1999: 97) should be taken into account in order to better understand the grammar of demonstratives. For instance, factors such as the speaker’s attitude toward the referent and the speaker’s assumption about the hearer play a crucial role in determining the use of Mandarin demonstratives. More specifically, the proximal *zhe* tends to be used when the speaker assumes that the referent is new or non-identifiable to the hearer, or when the speaker has a neutral attitude towards the referent, whereas the distal *na* is typically used for assumed new but identifiable referents, or when the speaker has a negative attitude toward the referent. In this sense, Mandarin Chinese’s demonstrative system involves the indexical ground not only on the spatial dimension, but also a social dimension.

In a similar line of approach, Huang (1999) argued that the distal demonstrative and the demonstrative compounds can be used as a definite determiner in Taiwanese Mandarin<sup>5</sup>. Mandarin Chinese syntax lacks the category of definite/indefinite articles; definite and indefinite nouns are distinguished either through context or word order (Chao, 1968; Li & Thompson, 1975; Light, 1979). But Huang pointed out that *nage* ‘that+classifier’ was regularly used to modify a referent that is identifiable to both the speaker and the addressee based on shared knowledge or information. In this sense, it is indistinguishable from the definite articles in article-bearing languages such as English. Based on a 76-minute database consisting of face-to-face conversations and radio interviews, Huang’s study (1999) also provided a detailed account

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<sup>5</sup> Fang (2002) argued that in Beijing Mandarin, *zhe* can be used as a definite determiner. However, *na* has yet to grammaticalize into a definite determiner in Beijing Mandarin.

of different uses of demonstratives and demonstrative compounds in Taiwanese Mandarin. In addition to some well-noted deictic uses, he also observed some of their discourse pragmatic functions. For instance, the distal demonstratives can function as a filler to signal “conceptual planning difficulty” and “lexical retrieval difficulty.” Similar to Chao’s (1968) observations, Huang (1999:89) also stated that the distal demonstrative can be used as a connective. It “marks either epistemic connections in conditionals, or two utterances as being loosely connected”. However, it is important to note that in Huang (1999), *demonstratives* included not only demonstrative pronouns, but various kinds of demonstrative adverbs, highly grammaticalized filler-type markers such as *nage* and *zhege*, and a few other categories that he did not specify.

As Chao (1968) and Huang (1999) noted, *na* can be used as a connective. The *Xiandai Hanyu Cidian: Hanying Shuangyu* ‘The Contemporary Chinese Dictionary: Chinese-English Edition’ states that as a conjunction, *na* is the “same as *name* [‘so; then’]” and it defines the use as “indicating a presumably result from what is entailed in the preceding sentence uttered by oneself or someone else” (2002: 1384). The examples provided for *na* are:

(5) 那就好好儿干吧!

*na jiu haohaoer gan ba!*

NA INTE good do FP

‘Then let’s do it well!’

(6) 你不拿走, 那你不要啦?

*ni bu na zou, na ni bu yao la?*

2SG NEG take go, NA 2SG NEG want FP

‘You are not taking it, (NA) does that mean you don’t want it?’

(*Xiandai Hanyu Cidian, Hanying Shuangyu* ‘The Contemporary Chinese Dictionary, Chinese-English Edition, 2002: 1383’, Pinyin, glosses, and parentheses added)

The dictionary examples indicate a strong association of *na*'s connective use with spoken language and casual conversation, but the definition and explanation do not provide adequate description when one looks at the connective uses of *na* in real conversational data. This motivates pioneering works on the function and behavior of *na(me)* 'so; then' as a connective at the discourse level in conversation.

Biq (1988; 1990) and Miracle (1989; 1991) analyzed the connective uses of *na(me)* in Taiwanese Mandarin Chinese conversation. Both highlighted that the unified function of *na(me)* is to establish the connection and relevance between two units of talk. Beside the well-attested conditional use, that is, when *na(me)* precedes the main clause in conditional (Chao, 1968; Lü, 1980; Liao, 1986), Miracle (1989; 1991) argued that *na(me)* is used to mark parallel topics, topic succession, topic shift, topic return (i.e. topic retrieval), and pause (i.e. turn-holding). Biq (1990) highlighted two types of relationships between units of talk that are marked by *na(me)*: topic succession and topic change. As a topic succession marker, *na(me)* can mark a continuation relationship between two immediately adjacent segments, or distantly related segments of talk. Biq and Miracle's arguments, however, are not undisputed. For instance, connectives link clauses or segments of discourse, so essentially all of them "serve to relate the content of connected segments in a specific type of relationship" (Sanders & Spooren, 2007). In a broad sense, connectives all mark somewhat of a succession relationship between two discourse units. Thus, the question remains unsolved as to what the unparalleled features of *na* are as a connective. Indeed, Biq (1990) herself acknowledged in the paper that given the complex and challenging nature of the characterization of topic succession, the framework she used calls for refinement and modification. In direct contrast to the topic succession marking function, *na(me)* can also preface some types of new topics in conversation. More specifically, she proposed three

types of new topic forms. First, *na(me)* can open a new topic in the form of a question directed toward the addressee. Secondly, it can also preface a new topic in a statement. Finally, it can be used in semi-conventional structures to close the ongoing conversation. However, her natural conversation data only contained one example of the topic change use and all the other examples on which her analysis was based were constructed sentences or dialogues.

While previous research has highlighted important issues related to the Mandarin distal demonstrative and uncovered some of the features and functions of the demonstrative, on the whole these studies focused more on the inter-clausal usage of *na* when it is employed to link clauses within one single sentence or utterances from one speaker and overlooked its sequential significance in opening a new turn in interaction. Secondly, most studies on *na* relied predominantly on written discourse, dialogic texts from fictional works, or TV/radio interviews (i.e. institutional conversations). Their data tended to be moderate in duration length, typically ranging from half an hour to one hour. Thirdly, most of the studies analyzed the functions of *na* based on the propositional information of successive turns and lacked a sequential perspective that embraces a broader context. Fourthly, very few studies provided the relative frequency of each individual function, without which it is difficult to gain a global picture of *na* in real conversation. Fifthly, previous research focused almost exclusively on connective functions of the demonstrative-derived conjunction *na* and there was no discussion of the intersubjective aspects of *na* that go beyond connective functions to index the speaker's stance. Finally, almost all the studies grouped various kinds of *na* compounds (e.g. *name* 'then, in that case', *na+classifier*) and analyzed them together with *na* as a whole, which failed to account for crucial differences among these constructions. More importantly, it can also be misleading to group *na* with various kinds of *na* compounds and analyze them as a whole because it confuses the

description of the demonstrative when treated as if they formed a homogenous group. For instance, previous studies and the dictionary considered the connective use of *na* and the conjunction *na(me)* as interchangeable. We will see in Chapter 4 how this assumption falls short of the polyfunctionality of *na* in natural conversation.

#### **1.4 Objectives of this study**

Linking discourse-pragmatic analysis with interactional actions (Couper-Kuhlen & Selting, 2001; Couper-Kuhlen & Selting, 2018), this dissertation investigates how *na* is used in Mandarin Chinese everyday conversation. More specially, it identifies and classifies different uses of *na*, with a special focus on its previously overlooked non-referential discourse pragmatic functions. The analysis emphasizes the importance of contextualized language use not only in terms of language structure, but also how it is locally constituted and managed in interaction. I analyze the sequential contexts and the functional accounts of *na* using both a quantitative approach and qualitative analysis. The goal is not only to account for all the occurrences and functions of *na*, especially the versatile non-referential usages, but also to examine and trace the interconnections among these usages.

Given the information absent in previous literature, this dissertation research sets out to answer the following research questions:

- 1). What are the discourse-pragmatic functions of *na* and what are the relative frequencies of different usages in Mandarin Chinese conversation?
- 2). In what kind of contexts does *na* typically appear and why do speakers use *na* in those contexts?
- 3). How does different positions of *na* within a turn interact with its discourse-pragmatic

functions?

4). What are the interrelations among different usages?

## **1.5 Overview of the dissertation**

This dissertation comprises five chapters. A general introduction on demonstratives and demonstrative-derived markers is presented in Chapter 1. The Mandarin Chinese nominal demonstratives are introduced, with review of previous studies on the Mandarin Chinese distal demonstrative. This chapter also highlights the objectives and research questions of the dissertation.

The present introductory chapter is followed by Chapter 2 on the dissertation's theoretical orientation. It introduces functional linguistics and the interactional framework underpinning this study. The chapter also explains crucial principles relevant to the analysis of the dissertation.

Chapter 3 describes the methodology of the data collection, transcription, and annotation of the dissertation. In addition, it provides ethnographic information of the subjects and justifies the corpus design choices I made.

Chapter 4 presents the quantitative results and qualitative analysis of the data. It first shows how *na* is used at the turn-initial position. It then examines the uses of turn-medial, utterance-medial *na*. Turn-medial, utterance-initial *na* and turn-medial, utterance-final *na* conclude the chapter.

Finally, Chapter 5 summarizes major findings of this dissertation. It also addresses the significance and implications of this dissertation project.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **THEORETICAL ORIENTATION**

This chapter presents the theoretical orientation and explains the major principles underlying the analytical approach and framework of the dissertation. First, I briefly introduce functional linguistics. Instead of detailing its historical development and various schools in both the United States and Western Europe, I only highlight some of the major theories and the consensus of ideas that all functional linguists share. I then discuss the interactional framework, focusing on the influence of Conversation Analysis (CA) on linguistics and how some of CA's concepts and methods can enrich the analysis of linguistics practices and regularities. Finally, I reiterate the principles that underlie the theoretical orientation of the dissertation.

#### **2.1 Functional linguistics**

The term functional linguistics does not simply refer to one single approach or theory. Generally speaking, there are four major approaches to the functional study of language: Functional Grammar or Functional Discourse Grammar, as developed by Simon C. Dik (1978; 1989; 1997); Systemic Functional Grammar, originated by Michael Halliday (1961; 1985); Role and Reference Grammar, as developed by Robert Van Vliin, Jr. and his colleagues in the 1980s (Foley & Van Valin, 1984; Van Valin, 1993; Van Valin & LaPolla, 1997); and Discourse-functional Syntax or West Coast Functionalism, initially developed by scholars such as Thomas Givón (1979), Paul J. Hopper, and Sandra A. Thompson (Hopper & Thompson, 1980; 1984; Hopper, 1987; 1988; 2011) in the United States, also during the 1980s. Although there is a

considerable diversity in terms of the research foci and analytical methods among these approaches, they all consider language first and foremost as a means of communication. This essential characteristic of functionalism sets the agenda for the central concern of all the functional approaches—the functionality of language.

It is also this common interest in the functions that language can serve that differentiates functional linguistics from structural linguistics. Structuralism draws a strict distinction between language as a sign system and the use of the sign system in speech (see Saussure, 1916 for differences between *lingua* (language) and *parole* (speech)) and maintain that language is a self-contained, self-regulating semiotic system, so structural linguistics is only concerned with the sign system itself, or the speaker's competence within the semiotic system of language (Chomsky, 1965). The speaker's performance, or how the linguistic system is used by speakers and the contextual meanings are largely irrelevant to structural linguists' analysis. While communicative functions of language take on a central role in functional analysis, language structure is not ignored or opposed for functionalism. Indeed, functionalism investigates communicative functions and motivations to explain linguistic forms and processes. It seeks to forge a connection between linguistic structure and language function.

The theoretical orientation of this dissertation is greatly influenced by works done by various sub-schools of the discourse and grammar tradition, especially those grounded in empirical interrogations of natural data. It also makes use of some well-recognized terminologies and concepts in Systemic Functional Grammar. Essentially, the dissertation shares the assumption that language is not a completely autonomous semiotic system with priori rules and patterns, but rather a communication tool heavily shaped by cognitive, sociocultural, and

physiological determinants. The structures and rules of language can only be best analyzed and understood with reference to the functions they fulfill.

## **2.2 Interactional framework**

With the advent of digital technology, audio and video recordings have become much more affordable and accessible. This access allows expansion of data types linguists collect and use for research, particularly after they get access to audio and video recordings of spontaneous conversations in natural settings. Inspired by Harold Garfinkel's (e.g. 1967a; 1967b) work on ethnomethodology and Erving Goffman's (e.g. 1964; 1983) concept on interaction order, a new research area on social interaction started to emerge in sociology towards the end of the 1960's. In 1974, Sacks, Schegloff, and Jefferson published "Simplest Systematics for the Organization of Turn-Taking for Conversation" in *Language*, the flagship journal of the Linguistic Society of America. Not only did this paper propose the model for the turn-taking organization for conversation, which laid the foundations of the field of Conversation Analysis (CA), it also pointed out that some commonly used words and phrases in conversation are by no means self-evident linguistically. A more plausible analysis calls for investigation in light of turn-taking organization. The paper soon brought CA to the attention of linguistics. In his highly influential textbook *Pragmatics*, Stephen Levinson referred to CA as "the outstanding empirical tradition in pragmatics" (1983: 285). Around the mid-1980s, linguists began to incorporate CA's concepts and explore grammar together with the structural organization of talk systematically in natural conversation (Auer, 1984; Houtkop & Mazeland, 1985; Fox, 1987; Ford, 1993). As this group of linguists increasingly turns to the analysis of the interactional role of grammar, CA's principles continue to illuminate the frameworks and methods linguists use in their analysis. These include

the turn taking system, the co-ordination of action, conversation building blocks such as sequence organization and repair, and data transcription convention. Compared with other approaches to social interaction, CA's equal emphasis on both the speaker and the addressee, perhaps more than any other traits, makes it distinctive.

Although CA has brought fresh perspectives and methods to linguistics, it is important to note that the two are ecologically distinct. The fundamental questions that guide CA research on language practices are how they coordinate turns at talk and how they construct or help construct actions in turns at talk. Being a field of sociological inquiry, CA is interested in showing social order through interaction, not in language per se. Thus, while CA provides a rigorous methodology on turn design and sequence organization, and consequently offers new dimensions for analyzing linguistic items in their situated contexts, detailed description of linguistic items on their nature, structure, and function has never been of much concern to conversation analysts.

This dissertation has its roots in and orientation to functional linguistics and shares an interdisciplinary approach to grammar and interaction with interactional linguistics (Couper-Kuhlen & Selting, 2001; Couper-Kuhlen & Selting, 2018). It will combine CA's concepts, methods, and transcription conventions into an interactional framework, but the central concern of the analysis is with the grammatical patterns in their contextualized discourse. This interactional perspective means that it is crucial that all the target linguistic phenomena will not be examined in isolated utterances or turns, but in the sequential contexts around them. Occasionally this comprehensive analysis can be achieved by examining a couple of turns adjacent to the turn of interest; predominantly, however, this will require a scrutiny of a much longer section of talk.

## CHAPTER 3

### DATA AND METHODOLOGY

As explained in Chapter 2, language's role as an instrument of communicating ideas and feelings between human beings is of paramount importance to functionalism. It is natural to argue that as the primordial form of human interaction, face-to-face natural conversation provides a more optimal solution in revealing language functions because what speakers actually say and mean in real life is much more plausible than what they can say and mean in theory. In addition, some grammatical features will only show up in natural conversation (Margetts & Margetts, 2012); emerging language uses most commonly also arise first in spoken language (Narrog & Heine, 2011).

#### 3.1 Database and subjects

The conversational data used for this dissertation project were primarily collected by me in mainland China between 2013 and 2020. Additional complementary data were recorded by my research assistants in Mainland China in 2019 and one conversation was recorded by participants themselves in Canada. For each individual recording, we made sure that the camera and/or the voice recorder run at least for one hour so that participants were more likely to relax and forget about the recording equipment. All participants were born, raised, and live permanently in China. They either only spoke Mandarin Chinese as the native language, or as one of the native languages. We did not set up preparatory discussions for the participants with respect to what they would talk about during a recording. Some of the participants were new

acquaintances but most of them were friends or family members. Within each group, every participant was fairly familiar with at least one of the co-participants. The vast majority of the data were recorded either during visits or gatherings at participants' home or on weekends at the participants' university apartments.

In all, more than 50 hours of conversational data were recorded. Approximately 13 hours have been selected to form a gender-balanced database with a range of speakers from different age groups for the analysis of this dissertation. The database consists of 20 (19 videotaped and 1 audiotaped) face-to-face casual conversations, including cross-gender and same-gender groups and it yielded more than 257,000 transcribed characters. There are 13 dyadic conversations, 6 triadic conversations, and 1 quartet. 90% of the conversations were recorded when the speakers were fully engaged in talk and there were no other activities involved. The remaining 10% was obtained from dinning-table conversations. Each conversation was intentionally selected from the middle portion of a recording where the participants were most relaxed and interactive. There are 44 different speakers, 22 female speakers, and 22 male speakers, from both southern and northern China<sup>6</sup>. All the participants were adult<sup>7</sup> native speakers of Mandarin Chinese. Their ages range from 19 to early 70s. At the time when they were recorded, apart from one speaker, the rest had finished their formal education with a high school diploma. In terms of occupation, 55% were college students, 40% were full time professionals from various areas, and 5% were retired professionals.

As the data used in this dissertation are spontaneous casual everyday interactions, the

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<sup>6</sup> The selected participants' local language varieties include Mandarin, Wu, Yue, Hakka, Xiang, Gan, and Min.

<sup>7</sup> All the subjects who participated in this project have reached the age of 18 at the time when they signed the consent form for recording.

recordings were of interactions among friends and family members and each selected conversation is at least 39 minutes long, and thus the topics constantly change. Instead of listing the contexts of each conversation and the speakers' demographic information in this chapter, where relevant, I will provide necessary background information of the excerpts when I analyze the data in Chapter 4. Table 3.1 below summarizes the general social and contextual information of each selected conversation. To protect participants' privacy, I randomly assigned two letters to each recording for tracking and storage purposes (i.e. the first two letters of the data code). The alphanumeric code after the underscore indicates the number of male speakers and female speakers in a recording. For instance, 2M1F means that there are two male speakers and one female speaker in the conversation.

**Table 3.1 Social and contextual information of each conversation**

| <b>No.</b> | <b>Data code</b> | <b>Speakers<br/>&amp;<br/>Gender</b> | <b>Relationship</b>         | <b>Age<br/>group</b> | <b>Length</b> | <b>Setting</b> |
|------------|------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|---------------|----------------|
| 1          | KA_2M1F          | 2M+1F                                | Friends                     | 18-20                | 40 mins       | Dorm           |
| 2          | ZX_2F            | 2F                                   | Roommates                   | 18-20                | 39 mins       | Dorm           |
| 3          | FT_2M2F          | 2M+2F                                | Friends & New acquaintances | 20-30                | 41 mins       | Dorm           |
| 4          | WY_3M            | 3M                                   | New acquaintances           | 20-30                | 39 mins       | Dorm           |
| 5          | FG_2M1F          | 2M+1F                                | Friends                     | 20-30                | 39 mins       | Dorm           |
| 6          | BL_2M1F          | 2M+1F                                | Friends                     | 20-30                | 39 mins       | Dorm           |

|    |          |       |                            |                  |         |                |
|----|----------|-------|----------------------------|------------------|---------|----------------|
| 7  | DY_2M    | 2M    | Roommates                  | 20-30            | 41 mins | Dorm           |
| 8  | GF_2M    | 2M    | Roommates                  | 20-30            | 39 mins | Dorm           |
| 9  | GM_1M+2F | 1M+2F | Husband &<br>Wife & Friend | 20-30            | 39 mins | Home           |
| 10 | LD_2F    | 2F    | Friends                    | 20-30            | 41 mins | Home           |
| 11 | JT_2F    | 2F    | Friends                    | 20-30            | 39 mins | Meeting room   |
| 12 | GM_1M1F  | 1M+1F | Husband &<br>Wife          | 20-30            | 39 mins | Home           |
| 13 | MG_1M1F  | 1M+1F | Colleagues                 | 30-40            | 40 mins | Meeting room   |
| 14 | OS_2F    | 2F    | Friends                    | 30-40            | 39 mins | Hotel room     |
| 15 | HW_1M1F  | 1M+1F | Husband &<br>Wife          | 30-40            | 40 mins | Home           |
| 16 | MM_2F    | 2F    | Friends                    | 30-40<br>& 20-30 | 39 mins | Restaurant     |
| 17 | AN_2F    | 2F    | Aunt & Niece               | 40-50<br>& 20-30 | 41 mins | Home           |
| 18 | LS_1M2F  | 1M+2F | Colleagues &<br>Friend     | 50-60<br>& 20-30 | 40 mins | Private office |
| 19 | FD_1M1F  | 1M+1F | Father &<br>Daughter       | 50-60<br>& 30-   | 41 mins | Home           |

|    |       |    |         |       |         |            |
|----|-------|----|---------|-------|---------|------------|
|    |       |    |         | 40    |         |            |
| 20 | EP_2F | 2F | Friends | 70-80 | 39 mins | Hotel room |

### 3.2 Data transcription

The data were first transcribed word-by-word verbatim, including all particles, minimal responses such as *mmh* and *erm*, repetitions, and repairs using InScribe. The guiding principles of this step were 1) all the articulated linguistic items as well as laughter, inhalation, and exhalations must be written down as they were produced; 2) speaker transition has to be accurately transcribed; 3) words are transcribed using standard Pinyin<sup>8</sup>. After the verbatim transcripts were obtained, they were then reviewed and corrected against the recordings three rounds by three different people. Once the transcripts were proofread, I searched for all the *na* instances. The *na* tokens then were examined manually to exclude *na* compounds such as the place deixis *nali/nar/nabian* ‘there’, the manner forms *nayang(zi)* ‘that way, like that’, *na* + (numeral) + classifier instances, and the hesitation marker *nashenme/nasha*, which is similar to the discourse marker *well* in English. I chose to exclude these *na* compounds because the purpose of this dissertation is dedicated to the use of *na*. More importantly, although these forms are related to the distal demonstrative *na*, they are structurally distinct from *na*, and they behave and function very differently as well. It will be immensely misleading to group and analyze them together with *na* because it confuses the issue when treated as if they formed a homogenous group. For the sequences that contain *na*, temporal and sequential relationships (e.g. simultaneous talk, latching, gaps, pauses) and paralinguistic elements (e.g. loudness, degree of emphasis, pitch change) were added and marked on the transcripts based on the Jeffersonian

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<sup>8</sup> Mandarin Chinese is a tonal language. However, on the basis of this dissertation project and the objectives of the analysis, tones will not be marked on the transcripts.

transcription conventions (Jefferson, 2004; Psathas & Anderson, 1990). The details of talk captured by these sophisticated excerpt transcripts alongside the sequential contexts serve more fine-grained analysis of the data (a detailed account of the transcription conventions can be found in the Appendix).

### 3.3 Data annotation

As one of the objectives of this dissertation is to answer how the position of *na* within a turn interacts with its discourse-pragmatic function, the *na* tokens were first annotated into two broad types, turn-initial *na* and turn-medial *na*. The annotation of the turn-initial *na* was based on the turn-taking mechanism represented in the transcripts (see Sacks, Schegloff & Jefferson 1974 for overviews on the turn-taking system in conversations). In everyday conversation, speakers take turns to talk, with one interlocutor taking a turn followed by another interlocutor taking another turn. I annotated a token as the turn-initial *na* when *na* occurs as the very first audible item at the left periphery in a new turn by a new speaker. This means that I have excluded cases where *na* is preceded by interjections such as response particles (e.g. *oh*, *ah*), hesitation markers (e.g. *mmh*, *er*), or laughter.

The turn-medial *na* were further divided into utterance-initial *na*, utterance-medial *na* and utterance-final *na*. For instances where a single turn-medial *na* constitutes one utterance, I categorized them as turn-medial, utterance-initial rather than turn-medial, utterance-final. For instance, the first *na* at line 04 in Example (7) below is a stand-alone turn-initial case while the second *na* at the same line is a stand-alone turn-medial, utterance-initial example. Example (8) illustrates an instance of turn-medial, utterance-medial *na*. Example (9) shows an example of turn-medial, utterance-final *na* (line 04).

(7) MM\_2F\_27:42-28:14

01 X: 我就- 我就难以想象.<sup>9</sup>

*wo jiu- wo jiu nanyixiangxiang.*

1SG just 1SG just unable.to.imagine

‘I just- I just can’t imagine.’

02 他们写东西的时(huh)候是什么样子.

*tamen xie dongxi de shi(huh)hou shi shenme yangzi.*

3PL write thing NMLZ time COP what appearance

‘What would it look like when they write.’

03 因为他们讲话都是这个样子.=

*yinwei tamen jianghua dou shi zhe ge yangzi.=*

because 3PL talk INTE COP DEM CL appearance

‘Because they talk like this.=’

04 M: → =那- huhh (3.8) 对啊. 就是- (0.2) 那- huhhuhh

=na- huhh (3.8) *dui a. jiu shi* (0.2) *na-* huhhuhh

NA right FP INTE COP NA

‘NA- huhh (3.8) right. It’s- (0.2) NA- huhhuhh’

(8) MM\_2F\_18:04-18:07

01 M: → 我意思就是说我也不知道那是什么样的书哦?

*wo yisi jiu shi shuo wo ye bu zhidao na shi zenmeyang de shu o?*

1SG meaning INTE COP say 1SG also NEG know DEM COP what.kind NMLZ book FP

‘I mean I don’t know what kind of book *that* is either (you know)?’

(9). KA\_2M1F\_14:41-14:49

09 当时那顿饭你没有在.

*dangshi na dun fan ni mei you zai.*

that.time DEM CL meal 2SG NEG have be.at

‘You were not there for that meal then.’

<sup>9</sup> I mark various aspects of speech delivery on the romanization lines. Where possible, I also mark them on the original language lines and the translation lines. However, due to morphosyntactic differences between Mandarin Chinese and English, corresponding markings are not always possible.

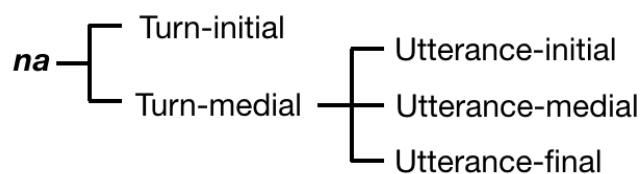
- 10        然后有一个大三的学姐。  
*ranhou you yi ge dasan de xuejie.*  
 then    have one CL junior NMLZ senior  
 ‘And there was this junior student.’
- 11        然后也是学人文的。  
*ranhou ye shi xue renwen de,*  
 then    also COP Study humanities NMLZ  
 ‘(She) also studies humanities,’
- 12        然后她好像在实习。  
*ranhou ta hoaxiang zai shixi.*  
 then    3SG seem    ASP intern  
 ‘And it seems that she was doing an internship.’
- 13        然后我就问她。  
*ranhou wo jiu wen ta.*  
 then    1SG just ask 3SG  
 ‘Then I asked her.’
- 14        → 我说那- (.) 人文学院的学生实习找什么呀?  
*wo shuo na- (.) renwen xueyuan de xuesheng shixi zhao shenme ya?*  
 1SG say    NA    humanities division ATTR student    intern find what    FP  
 ‘I said “NA- (.) What kind of internship can humanities students find?”’

Within a speaker’s turn, as shown in Example (7) at line 04, Example (8), and Example (9) at line 14, the criteria used to identify an utterance resemble those proposed by Chafe (1987), Do Bois (1991), Du Bois, Schuetze-Coburn, Cumming & Paolino (1993), and Tao (1996) for intonation units. Crucially, depending on individual context, an utterance can range from a single lexicon to a full-fledged clause and its constituents. Sometimes an utterance may not be a complete sentence from traditional syntactic point of view (e.g. *wo shuo na-* ‘I said NA-’ at line

14 in Example (9)), but it will be annotated as an utterance as long as it is been uttered under a single coherent intonation contour. It is also worth noting that each line on the transcripts does not necessarily represent one utterance. Sometimes, one single utterance may be long enough to take up a line, but most of the time a line is made up of multiple utterances.

If a speaker resets the baseline pitch level, or pauses, or cut off his/her talk, or accelerates syllables at the beginning of a stretch of talk, or lengthens the syllable(s) at the end of a stretch of talk (Du Bois, Schuetze-Coburn, Cumming & Paolino, 1993:47), that stretch of talk will be identified as an utterance. Based on these prosodic cues, when *na* opens a new but not first utterance within a speaker's turn, it will be annotated as turn-medial, utterance-initial *na*. Turn-medial, utterance-medial *na* refers to *na* when it occurs at the medial position in an utterance. Finally, Turn-medial, utterance-final *na* appears at the end of an utterance produced under a single coherent intonation contour, not necessarily at the end of a turn. Figure 3.3 below summarizes the positioning categorization of *na*.

**Figure 3.3 Positioning categorization of *na*<sup>10</sup>**




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<sup>10</sup> No turn-final *na* instances were identified in the database, which is mainly due to grammatical constraints of the language.

## CHAPTER 4

### DATA ANALYSIS

This chapter presents the quantitative and qualitative results of the analysis. I begin with the versatile functions of *na* in turn-initial position in Section 4.1. I then analyze how *na* is used in turn-medial, utterance-medial position in Section 4.2. In Section 4.3, I discuss the use of turn-medial, utterance-initial *na*. In Section 4.4, I focus on turn-medial, utterance-final *na* in repair practice.

#### 4.1 Turn-initial *na*

Table 4.1 below summarizes the major functions of turn-initial *na* identified in the database. There are significant differences in the prevalence of referential use and its non-referential counterpart. Most notably, the generally acknowledged primary function of the distal demonstrative, namely the exophoric use<sup>11</sup>—when *na* is used to refer to an entity in the environment surrounding the interlocutors but remote from the speaker’s deictic center—only appears twice in the entire database. The predominant referential use is the endophoric *na*. Following Diessel (1999), I treat endophoric use as a language internal function to help keep track of a discourse element in the unfolding conversation or locate a referent based on shared information or specific knowledge. This type of *na* is not employed to refer to an object, a person, or a place in the physical world of the conversation site, but is co-referential with a string of words in the surrounding discourse or a definite referent identifiable in the

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<sup>11</sup> Some scholars refer to this as situational use.

addressee's mental space. Within the endophoric domain, anaphoric *na* is co-referential with a noun or noun phrase in the preceding discourse and is used to keep track of the referent that has been introduced. The anaphoric *na* accounts for 9.3% (45 tokens) of all turn-initial *na* tokens, which is the second largest group among the referential cases. Discourse deictic *na* has the highest percentage within the referential category, making up 19.0% (92) of all turn-initial *na* instances. Discourse deixis makes reference to the propositional information expressed in a segment of the preceding discourse. Finally, turn-initial recognitional *na* is the least frequent among all uses, which only appears once (0.2%) in the database. Recognitional use of demonstratives in general has not been well studied in previous literature. Though sparsely present in turn-initial position, I shall show in Section 4.2.1.3 that this use is fairly pervasive in turn-medial, utterance-medial position.

In contrast with its referential counterpart, non-referential use is the most frequently occurring function as found in the database, which accounts for almost 71% (343 tokens) of all the identified turn-initial *na* instances. Among the non-referential usages, the largest group consists of *na*-prefaced questions, and together they comprise 25.3% (122 tokens) of the total turn-initial *na* tokens. The *stance initiator* category, that is, when *na* is deployed to index a stance, forms the second largest group, which makes up 24.4% (118 tokens) of the total. The third group of the turn-initial *na* is unified by the function of projecting either a question or a stancetaking turn, though less significant in terms of frequency (61 tokens, 12.6%), is closely related to the first two non-referential categories, indicating that initiating a question and encoding the speaker's stance are highly routinized functions of *na* in turn-initial position in conversation.

**Table 4.1 Frequency distribution of the functions of turn-initial *na***

|          | Referential <i>na</i> |              |                   |               | Non-referential <i>na</i> |                |                          |               |
|----------|-----------------------|--------------|-------------------|---------------|---------------------------|----------------|--------------------------|---------------|
|          | Exophoric             | Endophoric   |                   |               | Question initiator        | Stance marker  | Question /Stance prelude | Miscellaneous |
|          |                       | Anaphoric    | Discourse deictic | Recognitional |                           |                |                          |               |
| Tok. (%) | 2                     | 45<br>(9.3%) | 92<br>(19.0%)     | 1<br>(0.2%)   | 122<br>(25.3%)            | 118<br>(24.4%) | 61<br>(12.6%)            | 42<br>(8.7%)  |
| Sub. (%) | 2<br>(0.4%)           | 138 (28.6%)  |                   |               | 343 (71%)                 |                |                          |               |
|          | 140 (29%)             |              |                   |               |                           |                |                          |               |
| Total    | 483 (100%)            |              |                   |               |                           |                |                          |               |

#### 4.1.1 Referential *na* in turn-initial position

In this section, I present the analysis of referential *na* in turn-initial position. As shown in Table 4.1, the database only contains two instances of exophoric use, when *na* is used to refer to an entity in the situation surrounding the interlocutors. The distribution asymmetry between the exophoric use and the endophoric use may be due to the nature of the data. Dialogic situations such as chitchats and dinner table conversations involve very minimal object manipulation, and commonly revolve around experience, idea sharing, gossip, and storytelling; hence they naturally lack exophoric demonstratives which are used to directly orient the addressee to entities in the physical environment around the interlocutors.

##### 4.1.1.1 Exophoric use

In the example below, the referent of *na* is the mother-in-law of a common friend of the two speakers, who in the moment, is preparing lunch together with the common friend in the

kitchen while the two speakers chat in the balcony. In contrast to the endophoric use, Diessel (1999: 94) has identified three distinctive features of exophoric demonstratives: first, the speaker or some other person is involved as the deictic center; second, most of them indicate a deictic contract on a distance scale; and third, quite often they are accompanied by coreferential indexical gestures. The deictic center in example (10) is the two speakers. In between the balcony and the kitchen, there is the living room. Though there are no accompanied pointing gestures, S reorients her gaze towards the kitchen when she refers to the common friend's mother-in-law using *na* in line 02<sup>12</sup>.

(10) LD\_2F\_33:52-33:57

01 X: 我以为她妈妈真的在帮她煮那个[j-

wo yiwei ta mama zhen de zai bang ta zhu na ge [j-

1SG think 3SG mother really PRT PROG help 3SG cook DEM CL chicken

'I thought her mom was really cooking that (chicken) for her'

02 S: →

[那是她婆婆.

[*na* shi ta popo.

DEM COP 3SG mother.in.law

'That is her mother-in-law.'

03 X: 嗯.

ng.

PRT

'Yeah.'

---

<sup>12</sup> Researchers whose work encompasses not only human language, but also various kinds of displays made by the body (e.g. gesture, gaze, body movement) were drawn to the dynamic embedded properties of deixis in interaction. Among the questions of interest in these discourse studies are how deictic expressions interact with bodily conducts such as gaze orientations and gestures (Goodwin, 2003; Stukenbrock, 2014; McNeill, 1992) and how indexicals such as demonstratives are used to project possible upcoming actions in talk (Hayashi 2004).

#### 4.1.1.2 Anaphoric use

There are 45 anaphoric *na* tokens, which make up 9.3% of all turn-initial *na* instances. An anaphoric *na* is coreferential with a previously mentioned noun or noun phrase and is used to keep track of a discourse participant in the preceding discourse. Consider the following example:

(11) SF\_1M1F\_07:22-07:34

01 M: 我就- 我就带着他们去了:

*wo jiu- wo jiu dai-zhe tamen qu le:*  
1SG INTE 1SG INTE take-PROG 3PL go PRF  
'I I took them (there).'

02 去了那个什么:

*qu le nage shenme:*  
go PRF DEM.CL what  
'(We) went to hm.'

03 当时好像是在哪边搜到的. 反正-

*dangshi haoxiang shi zai nabian sou-dao de fanzheng-*  
that.time seem COP be.at where search-RES PRT anyway  
'(We decided to visit it) maybe (because) (I) saw (it) somewhere online. Anyway-'

04 啊! 对呀. 大同土林嘛.

*a dui a. datong tulin ma.*  
PRT right FP Datong Tulin FP  
'Ah! Right. (It's) Datong Tulin.'

05 F: 哦. (0.2)大同土林.

*o. (0.2) datong tulin.*  
PRT Datong Tulin  
'Oh. (0.2) Datong Tulin.'

06 M: 嗯.=

*ng.*=

PRT

‘Yeah.=’

07 F: =不知道.

=*bu zhidao.*

NEG know

‘=I have no idea (what is that).’

08 M: 对啊. 你下回:

*dui a. ni xia hui:*

right FP 2SG next CL

‘Right. Next time you:’

09 F: → 那是一个什么? =

*na shi yi ge shenme?*

DEM COP one CL what

‘What is *that*?=’

10 M: =看. 就这种样子的. ((M shows his cell phone to F.))

=*kan. jiu zhezhong yangzi de.* ((M shows his cell phone to F.))

look INTE this.kind appearance PRT

‘=See. (It) looks like this. ((M shows his cell phone to F.))’

11 F: 哦:: 土林. ((F looks at M’s cell phone.))

*o:: tulin.* ((F looks at M’s cell phone.))

PRT *Tulin*

‘Oh:: *Tulin*. ((F looks at M’s cell phone.))’

In this excerpt, M is trying to recall a tourism attraction he visited in Datong. The turn-initial *na* in line 09 is used anaphorically by F to refer to the tourist attraction *Datong Tulin* in the preceding discourse.

#### 4.1.1.3 Discourse deictic use

Unlike anaphoric *na*, which is co-referential with a prior NP, discourse deixis is used to refer to elements of the surrounding discourse. It can either point to a previous proposition or a subsequent one. The 92 (19.0%) discourse deictic *na* instances identified in the database, however, are all used to refer to discourse entities that precede them. Examples of this usage from the database include the following:

(12) MM\_2F\_17:51-18:03

01 X: 我觉得她一讲出这些. >就那几本书.<

*wo juede ta yi jiang chu zhexie. >jiu na ji ben shu.<*  
1SG think 3SG as.soon.as say out DEM INTE DEM several CL book  
'I think as soon as she introduced these. >(I mean) those books.<'

02 好像他们那些文学的学生都知道一样.

*hoaxing tamen naxie wenxue de xuesheng dou zhidao yiyang.*  
seem 3PL DEM literature NMLZ student all know same  
'(It) seemed that all those literature students knew (those books).'

03 但是对 >我们 huh 几个人 huh 来 huh 讲.< huhhh

*danshi dui >women huh ji ge ren huh lai huh jiang.< huhhh*  
but for 1PL several CL people come say  
'But for > me huh and my friends. huh< huhhh'

04 不仅不知道.

*bujin bu zhidao.*  
not.only NEG know  
'Not only didn't (we) know (those books).'

05 而且老师讲的 huh 那个书的 huhh 字

*erqie laoshi jiang de huh na ge shu de huhh zi.*  
also teacher say NMLZ DEM CL book ATTR character

06        我们都 huh 不认识.  
             *women dou huh bu renshi.*  
             1PL    INTE    NEG recognize  
             ‘We didn’t even huhh know the characters from those books the professor used.’

07 M: → 那也很正常啊.  
             *na ye hen zhengchang a.*  
             DEM PRT very normal        FP  
             ‘That (is) quite normal.’

08 X:    嗯.  
             *ng.*  
             PRT  
             ‘Yeah.’

This scenario begins with the ending part of a story X is sharing with M. X and her friends were invited to attend an academic talk on classical Chinese literature by their friend, though none of them had studied Chinese literature before. The talk turned out to be quite technical for them—“Not only didn’t (we) know (those books). We didn’t even huhh know the characters from those books the professor used” (lines 4, 5, and 6). In M’s turn at line 07, the speaker considers this as “quite normal”. One could argue that the turn-initial demonstrative in line 07 refers to the propositional content of lines 4, 5, and 6. Alternatively, it is also possible that the turn-initial *na* makes reference to the entire proposition expressed in lines 1-6. One may also plausibly argue that the *na* only refers to lines 5 and 6. Grammatically speaking, these are all valid interpretations. Perhaps only the speaker knows which segment she is referring to. Compared with anaphoric referents, the referent of a discourse deixis is relatively less ‘concrete’; which segment a discourse deictic demonstrative points to can sometimes be controversial (Webber, 1991; Himmelmann, 1996). Himmelmann (1996: 224) suggested that this controversy

could be due to the fact that the referent of a discourse deixis is “first created at the very moment when this use occurs.”

As noted in the previous section, the antecedent of an anaphoric demonstrative is a noun, or an NP introduced in the current discourse at a prior time. The co-referential noun or NP is a concrete syntactic constituent in a preceding utterance, which has already been introduced as a discourse participant prior to the use of an anaphoric demonstrative. In contrast with anaphoric demonstratives, discourse deictic demonstratives are used to orient the addressee’s attention on aspects of meaning expressed in the preceding discourse (Diessel, 1999). A discourse segment referent is dependent on aspects of meaning the speaker intends to refer to; thus, it is relatively flexible as compared with an anaphoric referent. Nonetheless, this flexibility is rarely an impediment to mutual understanding between speakers. The mutual understanding may benefit from the fact that the hearer can take advantage of this referential flexibility and identify the best referent based on context. More importantly, it seems that the speaker’s stance on the state of affairs being discussed is quite often more relevant to the unfolding conversation than the specific discourse referent. For instance, in Example (12): whether M is referring to X and her friends not knowing some of the characters from the books as “quite normal”, not knowing the books or some of the characters from the books as “quite normal”, or the literature students knowing the materials but X and her friends are not as “quite normal” is insignificant compared with M’s overall stance—a lack of familiarity with materials discussed in an academic talk among people outside the field is “quite normal”. In other words, a discourse deictic demonstrative targets overarching meaning expressed in the preceding discourse, not necessarily a specific string of words.

Some of the instances are characteristic of this type of discourse deictic use, as shown

in Example (12). However, the database also contains ambiguous cases. The turn-initial *na* in the following scenario at line 11 can either be interpreted as a discourse deixis or a ‘connective’.

(13) GM\_1M2F\_08:29-08:55?

01 T: 平时工作的话. 嗯. 应该也不会太忙吧.

*pingshi gongzuo dehua. ng. yinggai ye bu hui tai mang ba.*  
ordinarily work DEHUA PRT should INTE NEG certainly very busy FP  
‘Usually (when you’re at) work. Hm. (it) should not be very busy (I suppose).’

02 F: 也::: 也不是很那个.

*ye::: ye bu shi hen nage.*  
INTE INTE NEG COP very DEM.CL  
‘Not (like) that (idle).’

03 比如说我早上我坐班车嘛.

*biru shuo wo zaoshang wo zuo banche ma.*  
for.example say 1SG morning 1SG take shuttle FP  
‘See I take the shuttle (every) morning.’

04 然后六点半出来.

*ranhou liu dian ban chulai.*  
then 6 o’clock half come.out  
‘Then leave (home) at 6:30.’

05 T: 嗯.

*ng.*  
PRT  
‘Yeah.’

06 F: 六点半出来坐班车. 七点半到学校.

*liu dian ban chulai zuo banche. qi dian ban dao xuexiao.*  
6 o’clock half come.out take shuttle 7 o’clock half reach school  
‘(I) leave home at 6:30 to take the shuttle bus and get to school at 7:00.’

07 T: 嗯.  
*ng.*  
PRT  
'Yeah.'

08 F: 然后: 然后就开始啦. 七点半你就开始啦.  
*ranhou: ranhou ni jiu kaishi la. qi dian ban ni jiu kaishi la.*  
then then 2SG INTE begin FP 7 o'clock half 2SG INTE begin FP  
'Then: then you begin (to work). You begin (to work) at 7:30.'

09 一直到下午四点半放学.  
*yizhi dao xiaowu si dian ban fangxue.*  
continuously until afternoon 4 o'clock half dismiss.school  
'Until 4:30pm after students are dismissed.'

10 就没有一时是可以tin- 闲- 着的.  
*jiu mei you yi shi shi keyi tin- xian-zhe de.*  
INTE NEG exist one hour COP can stop unoccupied-AUX FP  
'There's no time that you can stop- that is unoccupied.'

11 T: → 那还蛮紧: 张的.  
*na hai man jin:zhang de.*  
NA INTE quite busy FP  
'That (is) quite bu:sy.'

In this segment, the two friends are talking about their normal daily schedule. After F describes what would a common day look like for her, Song delivers her comment at line 11 by saying "That (is) quite bu:sy". One way to interpret the turn-initial *na* in line 11 is to analyze it as a discourse deixis. In this example, *na* is not used to keep track of a prior NP as illustrated in (11), but to refer to the whole proposition expressed in line 06 and lines 08-10 succinctly. Alternatively, this *na* can also be interpreted as a non-referential use, as illustrate in example (14) below.

(14) Line 11 from Example (13)

11 T: → 那还蛮紧: 张的.

*na hai man jin:zhang de.*

NA INTE quite busy FP

‘NA (you’re) quite bu:sy.’

Mandarin Chinese is a pro-drop language, the inferable second person pronoun *ni* in line 11 can be omitted, resulting in a zero anaphoric structure. However, the null position still has referential properties, and it is very natural to retrieve the omitted pronouns back based on contextual support. Locating at the intersection of the two turns, *na* connects the proposition in which it is embedded and the one to which it references. It is crucially this type of bridging context that gives rise to non-referential use of *na* at turn-initial position because it establishes an overt link between the two adjacent turns<sup>13</sup>. With respect to functional classification, examples like this fall in the *discourse deictic* group of referential use. I categorize an instance as non-referential only when referential interpretations are completely impossible.

#### 4.1.1.4 Recognitional use

An exophoric demonstrative is co-referential with an entity in the situation surrounding the speakers. An anaphoric demonstrative is used with reference to a prior noun or NP whereas a discourse deictic demonstrative is used with reference to the proposition of the segment of the ongoing discourse. These uses have their referents either present in the physical setting or in the discourse. A recognitional demonstrative, however, does not have a referent in the preceding discourse or in the surrounding situation (Himmelmann, 1996). The identification of a

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<sup>13</sup> For similar analysis on discourse deictic functions and how discourse deictic demonstratives provide a common historical source for the development of conjunctions, see Grenoble (1994) and Diessel (1999).

recognitional use involves retrieval of specific shared knowledge between the speaker and the addressee(s). Recognitional demonstratives are *discourse new*, and *hearer old* (Prince 1992).

Example (15) shows a recognitional *na* at line 08:

(15) KA\_2M1F\_13:27-13:53

01 R: 我就在想读人文以后干啥.

*wo jiu zai xiang du renwen yihou gan sha.*  
1SG INTE PROG think study humanities afterwards do what  
'I'm wondering what (I could) do with a humanities degree.'

02 L: 对啊. [就-

*dui a. [jiu-*  
right FP INTE  
'Right. Just-'

03 M: [都可以干我觉得.=

*[dou keyi gan wo juede=*  
all can do 1SG think  
'(You) can do anything I think.='

04 R: =我也觉得.

*=wo ye juede.*  
1SG also think  
'=I also think (so).'

05 L: 是吗?

*shi ma?*  
COP Q  
'Can we?'

- 06 R: 都很- 都可以干.  
*dou hen- dou keyi gan.*  
 all very all can do  
 ‘All (are) very- (you) can do anything.’
- 07 L: 我就- 主要担心就业问题. 所以我[才-  
*wo jiu- zhuyao danxin jiuye wenti. suoyi wo cai-*  
 1SG INTE mainly worry employment issue so 1SG for.no.other.reason  
 ‘I- mainly worry about getting a job. So I-’
- 08 M: → [那天我们吃饭的时候. 嗯. (0.1)  
*na tian women chi fan de shihou. ng.(0.1)*  
 DEM day 1PL eat meal NMLZ time PRT  
 ‘That day when we were eating. Hm.(0.1).
- 09 当时那顿饭你没有在.  
*dangshi na dun fan ni mei you zai.*  
 that.time DEM CL meal 2SG NEG have be.at  
 ‘You were not there for that meal then.’
- 10 然后有一个大三的学姐.  
*ranhou you yi ge dasan de xuejie.*  
 then have one CL junior NMLZ senior  
 ‘And there was this junior student.’
- 11 然后也是学人文的.  
*ranhou ye shi xue renwen de,*  
 then also COP study humanities NMLZ  
 ‘(She) also studies humanities,’
- 12 然后她好像在实习.  
*ranhou ta hoaxiang zai shixi.*  
 then 3SG seem ASP intern  
 ‘And it seems that she was doing an internship.’

- 13        然后我就问她。  
*ranhou wo jiu wen ta.*  
 then    1SG just ask 3SG  
 ‘Then I asked her.’
- 14        我说那- (.) 人文学院的学生实习找什么呀?  
*wo shuo na- renwen    xueyuan de    xuesheng shixi zhao shenme ya?*  
 1SG say   NA   humanities division   ATTR   student   intern find   what   FP  
 ‘I said “NA- (.) What kind of internship can humanities students find?”’
- 15        她说就很多啊: 去:: 媒体。  
*ta shuo jiu    hen duo    a: qu:: meiti.*  
 3SG say   INTE   very many FP go   media  
 ‘She said “(There are) a lot: (we can) work in the media industry”’
- 16 L:     哦:: [对对。  
*o::    dui    dui.*  
 PRT   right right  
 ‘Oh:: right right.’
- 17 R:     很多[去媒体。  
*hendui qu meiti.*  
 many go media  
 ‘Many went to media industries.’

Instead of analyzing the recognitional use of *na* in this section, I only show the example here. I shall analyze this type of usage in detail in Section 4.2.1.3. On the one hand, recognitional *na* only appears once in turn-initial position. This instance (i.e. Example (15)) also exhibits great similarities with some of the instances found in turn-medial, utterance-medial recognitional position. On the other hand, as I will show in Section 4.2.1.3, turn-medial, utterance-medial position abounds with examples where various contexts motivates the employment of recognitional *na*. The examples there will provide data for in-depth analysis of this use.

#### 4.1.2 Non-referential *na* in turn-initial position

In the previous section, I have analyzed exophoric and endophoric usages of *na*, both of which are referential. In this section, I present non-referential usages of *na* in turn-initial position. As noted at the beginning of Section 4.1, non-referential *na* is the most common type in all turn-initial *na* tokens. It occurs 343 times, which represent 71% of all turn-initial *na* tokens in the database.

##### 4.1.2.1 Question initiator

Within the non-referential domain, 122 instances (25.3%) were found when *na* is used to open a question oriented toward the addressee. That is, speakers routinely use *na* to launch inquiries into the state of affairs evoked by the preceding turn(s) as illustrated in Example (16):

(16) GM\_1M2F\_09:55-09:58

01 T: 我们早上是:: 九点上班=

women zaoshang shi:: jiu dian shangban.=

1PL morning COP nine o'clock on.duty

‘We start work at 9 in the morning.’

02 F: → =那 你几点下[班.

=*na* ni ji dian xia[ban.

*NA* 2SG how.many o'clock off.duty

‘=*NA* what time will you finish [work.’

03 T:

[晚上是五点半下班.

[wanshang shi wu dian ban xiaban.

evening COP five o'clock half off.duty

‘(We) finish work at 5:30 in the evening.’

The two friends T and F in this excerpt are talking about T’s new job and her daily

schedule. After T says, “we start work at 9 in the morning” in line 01, F immediately takes up her turn and asks, “NA what time will you finish work.” (line 02). Note that the question is launched with a *na*. It is important to note that in contexts like this, *na* is completely non-referential because there is no traceable referent either in the physical environment, the ongoing discourse, or the mental spaces of the interlocutors. At first sight, *na* in this type of sentences behaves partially like a loose connective. However, all interrogatives are still perfectly understood as questions in relation to the preceding turn without being prefaced by *na*, particularly given the fact that *na* does not make any semantic contributions to the propositional content of the question. So, why does the speaker choose to preface the question with *na*?

A close inspection of this group of examples reveals that for many of these questions, there is an overt (or covert) thematic contrast between the proposition of the question and that of what has just been uttered in the previous turn. For instance, line 01 in (16) is about the time when T starts her work, whereas the *na*-prefaced question seeks information about the time when T is off duty. In this sense, the original semantic meaning of the distal demonstrative in indicating a spatial contrast is partially retained in this usage, which is not uncommon among grammaticalized/pragmaticalized linguistic items in relation to their primary meanings. It is also worth mentioning that in direct contrast to Biq’s (1990) argument, I found that almost all the *na*-prefaced questions tie closely into the preceding turn in terms of topic. This could also be demonstrated through the way that *na*-prefaced questions are produced; they tend to latch on to the preceding turn.

Example (16) above shows an overt semantic contrast between the constituent in the question and its counterpart in the preceding turn (i.e. on-duty time vs. off-duty time); the contrast however, is less immediately conspicuous in the following extract:

(17) ZX\_00:23-00:30

01 B: 然后上了初中开始喜欢尼坤.

*ranhou shang le chuzhong kaishi xihuan nikun.*

then attend PRF junior.high start like Nichkhun

‘Then (I was) fond of Nichkhun in junior high.’

02 W: 嗯.

*ng.*

PRT

‘Yeah.’

03 B: 然后喜欢:::

*ranhou xihuan:::*

then like

‘Then (I was) fond of:::’

04 W: → 那你喜欢宋茜吗?

*na ni xihuan songqian ma?*

NA 2SG like Song.Qian Q

‘NA were you fond of Song Qian?’

05 (0.2)

06 B: 不喜欢. 我只喜欢男明星.

*bu xihuan. wo zhi xihuan nan mingxing.*

NEG like 1SG only like male celebrity

‘No. (I) was not. I was only fond of male celebrities.’

07 W: 哦.

*oh.*

PRT

‘Oh.’

In Example (17), the speaker B is recalling pop music singers she liked when she was a teenager. After B expresses that she “(was) fond of Nichkhun in junior high” but before she

verbalizes another celebrity's name due next in line 03, W launches her inquiry, “NA were you fond of Song Qian?”. The question might appear random to anyone who is not familiar with Korean popular music; but the thematic contrast between B's turn in line 01 and W's question in line 04 becomes clear in the context of South Korean pop culture. In 2010, Song Qian and Nichkhun participated in the second season of the then hit South Korean reality television show, *We Got Married*, in which they were paired up and acted as a married couple. The two celebrities also became one of the fan-favorite on-screen couples during the time when the show was popular. This time frame corresponded to B's first year in junior high school. Perhaps this is the reason why W poses her question on Song Qian after hearing that B was fan of Nichkhun around the time when the show was aired on television. Now if we examine lines 01 and 04 again, we will see that B's utterance declares her fondness for this on-screen couple's 'husband' while W's question inquires whether B is also fond of the 'wife'.

In Examples (16) and (17), the constituents which embody the contrastive information are present in the discourse (*shangban* 'on-duty' versus *xiaban* 'off-duty' in (16) and Nichkhun versus Song Qian in (17)). The *na*-prefaced questions raise contrastive information, but partially preserve the structures of the utterances in which the contrasting counterparts are embedded and transform them into interrogatives (for analyses and discussions on structure-preserving transformation and co-operative action, see Goodwin & Goodwin, 1987, Goodwin, 2013; 2015; 2018). This turns out to be a characteristic shared by many of the *na*-prefaced questions identified in the database, another feature indicating that *na*-prefaced questions are closely linked to the preceding turn(s). Figure 4.1 below illustrates how *na*-prefaced questions are constructed by performing structure-preserving transformations on constituents used by the previous

speakers (similar *dialogic resonance* patterns were argued in Du Bois’s (2014) theory on dialogic syntax):

**Figure 4.1** Posing *na*-prefaced questions by performing structure-preserving transformations on constituents used by the previous speaker

Extracted from Example (16)

|                            |                             |                                  |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 九<br><i>jiu</i><br>nine    | 点<br><i>dian</i><br>o'clock | 上班<br><i>shangban</i><br>on.duty |
| 几<br><i>ji</i><br>how.many | 点<br><i>dian</i><br>o'clock | 下班<br><i>xiaban</i><br>off.duty  |

Extracted from Example (17)

|                                |                                    |                     |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------|
| 喜欢<br><i>xihuan</i><br>fond.of | 尼坤<br><i>dian</i><br>Nichkhun      |                     |
| 喜欢<br><i>xihuan</i><br>fond.of | 宋茜<br><i>songqian</i><br>Song.Qian | 吗<br><i>ma</i><br>Q |

In Example (18) below, I will show an instance where the contrastive elements are not overtly articulated, yet are retrievable based on the context.

(18) LD\_2F\_34:45-35:35

01 P: 十个就够了吧?

*shi ge jiu gou le ba.*

10 CL INTE enough PRT Q

‘10 should be enough (I think)?’

02 B: 十个? 你也太小看我了 huhhuhh.  
shi ge? ni ye tai xiaokan wo le. huhhuhh  
 10 CL 2SG INTE so underestimate 1SG PRT  
 ‘10? You really underestimated my (appetite). huhhuhh’

03 P: ↑你可以吃的更多吗?  
 ↑ni keyi ch(h)i de geng duo ma?  
 2SG can eat PRT more many Q  
 ‘↑You can eat more?’

04 B: 十个肯定不够的呀?  
shi ge kending bu gou deya.  
 10 CL definitely NEG enough FP  
 ‘Ten for sure is not gonna be enough.’

05 P: 啊. 我差不多十个就可以了.  
 a. wo chabuduo shi ge jiu keyi le.  
 PRT 1SG good.enough 10 CL INTE can PRT  
 ‘Ah. For me ten should be enough.’

((16 lines omitted, P emphasizes that ten dumplings is a lot for a meal.))

32 B: 十: 个太: 少:: 啦::!  
shi: ge tai: shao:: la::!  
 10 CL too few FP  
 ‘Ten: is far: from enough::!’

33 (0.9)

34 P: → ↑那你要吃多少?  
 ↑na ni yao chi duoshao?  
 NA 2SG need eat how.many  
 ‘↑NA how many do you need to eat?’

35 B: 我一般吃::  
wo yiban chi<sup>14</sup>::  
1SG normally eat  
'I normally eat::'

Prior to this segment, B tells a story about her good appetite. This excerpt begins with her emphatic comment that ten dumplings as a meal is far from enough for her. P then asks, “NA how many do you need to eat?” If line 34 was not built upon the preceding sequences of talk, particularly its immediately adjacent turn in line 32, then line 34 by itself could be a self-contained interrogative asking for the number of dumplings that B could eat. Since the question is built upon B’s turn in line 32, it constitutes information produced in line 32. Because of this relationship to the earlier talk, it is very easy to bring the omitted part back to the stage: NA how many do you need to eat so that it would be enough? The contrast here lies in “ten” having been claimed as far from enough at line 32 and a number that would be considered as enough at line 34.

Thus far, the *na*-prefaced questions I have analyzed are ordinary interrogatives with genuine inquiries and are expected to elicit answers from the addressees; however, the database also contains special cases. Structurally, they take an interrogative form, but the interrogatives serve to implement various kinds of actions such as disagreeing, challenging, and criticizing. Take as a case in point the following example, in which the *na*-prefaced interrogative is not produced by the speaker as a request for information.

---

<sup>14</sup> Speaker B’s turn is interrupted by an outsider and the two speakers change the trajectory of their talk after that.

(19). JT\_2F\_19:17-19:30

01 Y: 我老公老是建议我你去读个博吧.

*wo laogong laoshi jianyi wo ni qu du ge bo ba.*

1SG husband always suggest 1SG 2SG go study CL PhD FP

‘My husband always suggests “you should study for a PhD.”’

02 你读个教育学也行.

*ni du ge jiaoyuxue ye xing.*

2SG study CL education also fine

‘(A PhD) in Education will also do.’

03 教育学肯定比你这个简单吧.

*jiaoyuxue kending bi ni zhe ge jiandan ba.*

education for.sure compare 2SG DEM CL easy FP

‘Education for sure is easier than your major isn’t it?’

04 教育.=

*jiaoyu.=*

education

‘Education.=’

05 Z: 为(h)什(huh)么-你为(huh)什(huh)么这样huhh给 huh人家.

*=wei(h)shen(huh)me- n(h)i wei(huh)shen(huh) me zheyangzi hhh gei huh renjia.*

why 2SG why like.this give 3SG

‘Wh(huhh)y, wh(huhh)y did you give (a comment on Education) like this.’

06 Y: 因为你这个都是有- 有点理论化的嘛.

*yinwei ni zhe ge dou shi you- you dian lilunhua de ma.*

because 2SG DEM CL INTE COP have have a.little theoreticalize NMLZ FP

‘Because your major is a- a bit theoretical.’

07 而且好费[劲呐.

*erqie hao fei[jin na.*

also very difficult FP

‘and (it’s) so diffi[cult.’

08 Z: → [那人家教育学难道没有理论啊.  
 [na renjia jiaoyuxue nandao mei you lilun a  
 NA 3SG education nandao NEG have theory FP  
 ‘NA doesn’t Education have theories (Don’t tell me Education doesn’t have theories)’

09 Y: 有理论.  
 you lilun.  
 exist theory  
 ‘(It) has theories.’

10 但是>人家<教育学的理论比较实践- 实际嘛.  
 danshi >renjia< jiaoyuxue de lilun bijiao shijian- shiji ma.  
 but 3SG education ATTR theory relatively practical concrete FP  
 ‘But Education’s theories (are) relatively more practical- concrete.’

Line 08 in example (19) is not produced by the speaker as a request for information. Rather, it is a rhetorical device in response to Z’s assessment in lines 06 and 07, functioning as a strong assertion equivalent to *don’t tell me Education doesn’t have theories* because the answer to the rhetorical question is so obvious that it does not even require an answer: *Education also has theories*. Thus, the stance embedded in the rhetorical negative question in line 08 contrasts with that in line 06. The strong force of the rhetorical question even makes Y’s first assessment (lines 06 and 07) preposterous. Although rhetorical negative questions like this are not designed to elicit a “yes” or “no” answer, for categorization purposes, as long as they take an interrogative form and the addressees treat them as questions and provide answers, I include them in the *question initiator* group; yet functionally speaking, the rhetorical questions share parallel features with the *stance marker* instances I will be discussing in the next section.

#### 4.1.2.2 Stance marker

The second major type (118 tokens, 24.4%) of non-referential *na* at the turn-initial position is observed when the speaker indexes a stance that is distinct from the prior turn's stance and marks some component(s) of the preceding turn as problematic. The following example is characteristic in this use. The two speakers in Example (20) are talking about the Putonghua Proficiency Test (an official test of spoken proficiency in standard Mandarin Chinese for native speakers). P has just taken the test before she got the job as a Chinese teacher in the local elementary school.

(20). LD\_2F\_11:32-11:38

01 B: 你有这个问题吗?

*ni you zhe ge wenti ma?*

2SG have DEM CL issue Q

'Do you have this problem?'

02 根本没有这个问题好不好.

*genben mei you zhe ge wenti haobuhao.*

at.all NEG have DEM CL issue INTE

'(obviously) you don't have this problem at all.'

03 P: → 那我还是要注意一下的好吧.

*na wo hai shi yao zhuyi yixia de haoba.*

NA 1SG still COP need pay.attention a.little.bit PRT FP

'NA I still have to be a little bit careful you know.'

P has mentioned that she practiced her pronunciation of the alveolar sounds and the retroflex ones before the test because she wanted to make sure that she would not mispronounce them in the test. Line 01 is B's comment on P's pronunciation after she hears what P has just said. It starts off with a rhetorical question, "Do you have this problem?" and then a

straightforward and strong assessment saying that P does not have the problem (i.e. mispronouncing alveolar and retroflex sounds) at all. Note how P's response in line 03, she needs to be a little bit careful so that she would not mispronounce alveolar and retroflex sounds, indexes a stance that is distinct from B's, that is, P does not have the problem of mispronouncing alveolar and retroflex sounds at all in lines 01 and 02. In contexts like this, *na* has completely lost its referential features and functions as a marker to index a contrastive stance.

Example (20) illustrates a *na*-prefaced disaffiliative stance in which the speaker's disagreement is slighted attenuated with the diminutive expression *yixia* 'a little bit'; I will show a forthright disaffiliative move prefaced by *na* in Example (21).

(21) FD\_1M1F\_00:31-00:45

01 F: 嗯:: 颐和园一定要去一趟的.=  
*ng:: yiheyuan yiding yao qu yi tang de.=*  
 PRT Summer.Palace definitely have go one CL PRT  
 'Mm:: (You) definitely have to visit the Summer Palace.='

02 D: =呃. 颐和园. 对. 为啥?  
*=e. yiheyuan, dui. weisha?*  
 PRT Summer.Palace right why  
 '=Um. (the) Summer Palace. Yeah- Why?'

03 F: 故宫啊. 北京[跟-  
*gugong a. Beijing [gen-*  
 Forbidden.City PRT Beijing and  
 (the) Forbidden City. Beijing [and-

04 D: [为什么呢?  
*[weishenme ne?*  
 why Q  
 'Why?'

- 05 F: 故宫比较:  
*gugong bijiao:*  
 Palace.Museum quite  
 ‘(The) Forbidden City (is) quite.’
- 06 D: 嗯.  
*ng.*  
 PRT  
 ‘Mm.’
- 07 F: 因为世界文化遗产嘛. 是伐那边.=  
*yinwei shijie wenhua yichan ma. shi fa nabian.=*  
 because world culture heritage PRT. COP Q there  
 ‘Because (the Forbidden City) is a World Heritage Site. Isn’t it.=’
- 08 D: → =那你不能这么说.  
*=na ni bu neng zheme shuo.*  
 NA 2SG NEG can like.this say  
 ‘=NA you can’t say (it) like this.’
- 09 你↑这么说就是. (.) 没有什么重点.  
*ni zheme shuo jiu shi. (.)mei you shenme zhongdian.*  
 2SG like.this say INTE COP NEG exist what key.points  
 ‘Saying (it) ↑ like this is. (.) Lacks specific points.’

This excerpt is taken from a casual conversation between a father, F, and his daughter, D. In response to the daughter’s question on “must-see attractions in Beijing,” the father suggests the Summer Palace and the Forbidden City. Immediately after the father produces the first place in line 01, the daughter asks for justification and says, “(the) Summer Palace. yeah- why?”. However, this question might be heard as interruptive. Thus, in his turn in line 03, the father sequentially deletes D’s question and presses on with his recommendation list. This time, the daughter interrupts the progression of the father’s turn, pursuing her inquiry with another “why”

in line 04. Finally in line 05, the father provides a belated response, only attending to the second recommendation on his list: the Forbidden City. The reason highlighted by F, “(the Forbidden City) is a World Heritage Site” receives a candid comment from his daughter: “NA you can’t say (it) like this.” She then suggests that her father’s explanation is too general, missing specific information on why the Forbidden City is a must-see attraction in Beijing. Once again, the disaffiliative turn in line 08 is prefaced with *na*; such disaffiliative evaluation reproaches and challenges the previous speaker’s perspective and stance.

Unlike Examples (20) and (21), in which *na* is used to preface a new turn with an opposing stance to challenge and take issue with another co-participant’s stance, the following segment shows how the speaker can use *na* to initiate a stance-loaded turn that is discrepant with his/her own previously stated stance.

(22). LD\_2F\_11:32-11:38

01 X: 你暑假从什么时候开始放.

*ni shujia cong shenme shihou kaishi fang.*

2SG summer.holiday from when time start release

‘When does your summer holiday start.’

02 S: 嗯:::: 七月初(0.5)到八月底.

*ng::::qiyue chu (0.5) dao bayue di.*

PRT July beginning until August bottom

‘Hm::::, (from) early July (0.5) to late August.’

03 X: 哦:: 那你这个时间(0.5)嗯::

*o:: na ni zhe ge shijian (0.5) ng::*

PRT NA 2SG DEM CL time PRT

‘Oh:: then your time (0.5) hm::’



The two friends in (22) are trying to figure out an itinerary that would work for both of them. S's initial plan is to spend one month traveling abroad together with X (line 08). But this proposal does not get an immediate uptake from X. Instead, silence has elapsed for one second (line 09) and not surprisingly, at line 10, X expresses her astonishment and considers "one month" as way too long for traveling abroad during the summer holiday. Operating on line 08, X's turn at line 10 begins with a response cry that takes up an emotional stance, and then followed by her explicit statement—"one month is (a) very long: (time)::" Before X's turn reaches its completion, S interrupts, modifies her initial proposal by incorporating X's stance and shortens the time frame from "one month" (line 08) to "two weeks" (line 11).

In Section 4.1.1.3, I pointed out that the turn-initial *na* in Example (13), shown earlier, can either be interpreted as a referential use or a non-referential one. If we examine the sequential context of (13) more closely (lines 01 and 11 of (13) are represented below as (23)), it becomes clear that the *na*-prefaced turn (line 11) exhibits a stance contrast against that of the previous turn (line 01). At the beginning, T assumes, with fairly high certainty that her friend F usually should not be very busy at work (line 01). Quite opposite to what T has assumed however, F's normal schedule is in fact "quite busy" (line 11). Note how T's stance in line 11 contrasts with her own initial one first expressed in line 01.

(23). Lines 01 and 11 from Example (13)

01 T: 平时工作的话. 嗯. 应该也不会太忙吧?

*pingshi gongzuo dehua. ng. yinggai ye bu hui tai mang ba?*

ordinarily work DEHUA PRT should INTE NEG certainly very busy FP

'Usually (when you're at) work. Hm. (It) should not be very busy (I suppose)?'

((9 lines omitted))

11 T: → 那还蛮紧:张的.

*na hai man jin:zhang de.*

NA INTE quite busy FP

‘That (is) quite bu:sy.’/‘NA (you’re) quite bu:sy.’

Having analyzed two types of relatively more transparent cases where the *na*-prefaced turn contrasts with what has been produced in the previous turn with regard to stance, we now examine a more nuanced sequence when the speaker utilizes *na* to offer a suggestion or an alternative that is discrepant in some fashion compared with what has come before. See (24) below as an example, in which X and S share their most recent travel experiences overseas.

(24) LD\_2F\_05:51-06:29

01 X: 我就是很遗憾我没有-

*wo jiu shi hen yihan wo mei you-*

1SG just COP very regret 1SG NEG have

‘I was very regretful that I didn’t have-’

02 我没有机会去那个就是. (0.3)

*wo mei you jihui qu nage jiu shi. (0.3)*

1SG NEG have opportunity go DEM.CL INTE COP

‘I didn’t have the opportunity to go to. (0.3)’

03 就是人家所谓的那个:

*jiu shi renjia suowei de nage:*

INTE COP 3PL so.called PRT DEM.CL

‘The so called:’

04 呃: (0.2)乡- (0.1)乡村那种.

*e: (0.2) xiang- (0.1) xiangcun nazhong.*

PRT country countryside that.kind

‘Mm: (0.2) country- (0.1) That kind of countryside.’

- 05 我觉得那个比较有意思.  
*wo juede na ge bijiao you yisi.*  
 1SG think DEM CL fairly have interesting  
 ‘I think that’s quite interesting.’
- 06 因为市区-  
*yinwei shiqu-*  
 because urban.area  
 ‘Because the urban area-’
- 07 城市的中心你现在看发展- 起来之后.  
*chengshi de zhongxin ni xianzai kan fazhan- qilai zhihou.*  
 city ATTR center 2SG now look develop up after  
 ‘(If) you look at the city center after it has developed.’
- 08 嗯. 虽然建筑的风格也有不同.  
*ng. suiran jianzhu de fengge ye you butong.*  
 PRT although architecture ATTR style also exist difference  
 ‘Mm, although (different cities) may have different architecture styles.’
- 09 但是你就觉得城市都大同小异.  
*danshi ni jiu juede chengshi dou datongxiaoyi.*  
 but 2SG INTE think city all big.same.small.difference  
 ‘All the cites are pretty much the same.’
- 10 你- 你- 你明白我意思吗. 就是(没)-  
*ni- ni mingbai wo yisi ma? jiu shi (mei)*  
 2SG 2SG understand 1SG meaning Q INTE COP NEG  
 ‘You- you- do you understand what I mean. (It) is (not)-’
- 11 S: 你去乡村你想做什么呢?  
*ni qu xiangcun ni xiang zuo shenme ne?*  
 2SG go countryside 2SG want do what Q  
 ‘What do you wanna do in the countryside?’
- 12 (0.7)

- 13 X: 就是看看那种::  
*jiu shi kankan nazhong::*  
 just COP look.a.bit that.kind  
 ‘Just take a look at that kind of:.’
- 14 什么田园风光什么的.  
*shenme tianyuan feng[guang shenme de.*  
 what countryside scenery what NMLZ  
 ‘like [countryside scenery and things like that.’
- 15 S: → [那我我觉得其实你去乡村的话.  
*[na wo juede qishi ni qu xiangcun dehua.*  
 NA 1SG think actually 2SG go countryside DEHUA  
 ‘NA I think actually if you go to countryside.’
- 16 其实你还可以-  
*qishi ni hai keyi-*  
 actually 2SG also can  
 ‘Actually you can also-‘
- 17 就是- (0.4) 就是我看到那个- (0.2)  
*jiu shi- (0.4) jiu shi wo kan-dao nage- (0.2)*  
 INTE COP just COP 1SG see-RES DEM.CL  
 ‘Just like- (0.4) just like what I saw- (0.2) (It) has also been introduced on TV.’
- 18 电视上也有介绍.  
*dianshi shang ye you jieshao.*  
 television on also have introduce  
 ‘(It) has also been introduced on TV.’
- 19 你可以找那种乡村的民宿然后. (0.4)  
*ni keyi zhao nazhong xiangcun de minsu ranhou.*  
 2SG can search that.kind countryside ATTR bed.and.breakfast  
 ‘You can search for that kind of countryside B&B and then. (0.4)’

21 X: [对啊对啊.  
[*dui a dui a*.  
true FP true FP  
'Right right.'

23 X: 嗯.  
ng.  
PRT  
'Yeah.'

25      周围的 (0.2) 田野里去逛逛.  
          *zhouwei      de (0.2) tianye li      qu guangguang.*  
          surroundings ATTR    field    inside go stroll  
          ‘Stroll around (0.2) the fields in the vicinity.’

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S initiates a new turn and offers her suggestion, despite the fact that X has not finished her turn when S opens hers at line 15. Three reasons might contribute to the overlapping talk. First, the 0.7-second gap at line 12 may serve as an indication that X has not yet had a tangible countryside travel plan. Secondly, the diminutive word *kankan* ‘look a bit’ (line 13), the elongation of the final syllable of *nazhong* ‘that kind’ (line 13), and the filler *shenme* (line 14) all add to the impression that X only has a nebulous idea at this point. Finally, although X’s turn at lines 13 and 14 is not fully produced, but the information is fairly predictable, given that the main verb and the major part of the object have already been articulated. Marked explicitly with *na*, S seems to be aware of X lacking specific plans, she then takes a different position and suggests that X could stay at B&Bs in the countryside so as to keep closer to the everyday life of the local culture. Again, the *na*-prefaced suggestion takes into account of what the previous speaker has just said rather than proposing a plan abruptly. It revolves around the same topic as that in the preceding turn—things to do in the countryside, but offers an alternative. While X’s plan emphasizes the scenery, S’s suggestion contrasts with it and highlights cultural experience and rural lifestyle.

In the examples analyzed thus far, the turn-constructual units (TCU) that contain *na* have been brought to completion. In the next section, I will turn to instances where the constructional features of the *na*-initiated turn are less immediately apparent because the *na*-prefaced TCUs have been cut off before they reach a point for structural recognition.

#### 4.1.2.3 Question/Stance prelude

In this section, I analyze the final major non-referential use of turn-initial *na* based on the 61 (12.6%) *question/stance prelude* instances. In Example (25), N and R are college teachers

working in the same department. Up to the first line of the excerpt, N and R have been collaborating in response to B's question about what do teaching secretaries do in their department.

(25). LS\_0809 12:38-12:41

01 N: 一些. (0.5) 事务性的[这种- 这种. (0.2)工作.

*yixie. (0.5) shiwu xing de [zhezong- zhezong (0.2) gongzuo.*  
some administrative characteristic ATTR this.kind this.kind work  
'Some. (0.5) This kind of administrative- This kind of. (Administrative) (0.2) work.'

02 R: [嗯.  
[ng.  
PRT  
'Yeah.'

03 (0.2)

04 B: → 那[你-  
*na* [ni-  
**NA** 2SG  
'**NA** you-'

05 N: [一般年轻的时候都- 都会有.  
*[yiban nianqing de shihou dou- dou hui you.*  
in.general young NMLZ time all all likely have  
'In general, (you tend to do this type of work) when you are young.'

06 B: → 那你早晨就还是要按时来对不对?  
*na ni zaochen jiu hai shi yao anshi lai dui bu dui?*  
NA 2SG morning INTE still COP have.to on.time come right NEG right  
'NA you still have to come to school on time in the morning isn't it?'

07 R: 对.  
    *dui.*  
    right  
    ‘Right.’

In his turn in line 01, N seems to summarize their description by highlighting that teaching secretaries are mainly responsible for the department’s teaching related administrative work. At line 04, B self-selects and starts a new turn with *na* after the word *gongzuo* ‘work’ has been produced, at which point, N’s turn can be seen as reaching a possible completion. As the conversation unfolds, however, N continues on even after B obtains her turn, which results in overlapping talk. Orienting to the *one party speaking at a time* norm, B aborts her turn-in-progress (line 04), cutting off her utterance, and chooses to ask the question in line 06 by recycling the same words (i.e. *na ni*) after N’s turn (line 05) is brought to completion. If B had the opportunity to finish her turn in line 04, the constructional features of the turn would be very similar to, if not identical to those in line 06.

Example (25) illustrates a common practice when the speaker chooses to drop out in the interest of maintaining the normatively organized conversation—*one party speaking at a time*, the analysis also reveals another recurrent practice where the speaker abandons the turn constructional unit in progression that contains *na* and replaces it with an entirely new string of words or a different structure. This tends to appear in sequences where the speakers are engaging in expressing different viewpoints. The intriguing part is when their utterances are not yet fully planned at the moment when the speaker obtains the turn, the articulation of the initial *na* almost never been delayed or undecided. The following example shows one such instance. It is taken from a dinner table conversation between X and her friend, M. This segment was cut from a lengthened discussion triggered by a literature talk that X has attended that afternoon, which she

describes as “full of long and complex sentences”.

(26). MM\_2F\_27:42-28:14

01 X: 我就- 我就难以想象.

*wo jiu- wo jiu nanyixiangxiang.*

1SG just 1SG just unable.to.imagine

‘I just- I just can’t imagine.’

02 他们写东西的时(huh)候是什么样子.

*tamen xie dongxi de shi(huh)hou shi shenme yangzi.*

3PL write thing NMLZ time COP what appearance

‘What would it look like when they write.’

03 因为他们讲话都是这个样子.=

*yinwei tamen jianghua dou shi zhe ge yangzi.=*

becuase 3PL talk INTE COP DEM CL appearance

‘Because they talk like this.=’

04 M: → 那- huhh (3.8) 对啊. 就是- (0.2) 那- huhhuhh

=*na*-huhh (3.8) *dui a. jiu shi* (0.2) *na*- huhhuhh

*NA* right FP INTE COP NA

‘*NA*- huhh (3.8) right. It’s- (0.2) *NA*- huhhuhh’

05 我觉得文学啊. 艺术啊. 他们两个都- (0.3)

*wo juede wenxue a. yishu a. tamen liang ge dou-* (0.3)

1SG think literature FP art FP 3PL two CL all

‘I think literature. (And) art. Both of them- (0.3)’

06 就是. (0.2) 他们两个是: 相通的那种. (0.6)

*jiu shi.* (0.2) *tamen liang ge shi: xiangtong de nazhong.* (0.6)

INTE COP 3PL two CL COP same PRT that.kind

‘(They) are. (0.2) They are: of the same type. (0.6)’

- 07      相类似的. (2.4) 那如果人人都能懂.  
*xiang      leisi      de. (2.4) na ruguo renren      dou neng dong.*  
 each.other similar FP      NA if      everyone all can understand  
 ‘(They’re) similar. (2.4) If everyone can understand.’
- 08      人人都能- (0.3) 很轻易的理解的话. (0.2)  
*renren      dou neng. (0.3) hen qingyi de lijie      dehua. (0.2)*  
 everyone all can      very easily PRT understand DEHUA  
 ‘If everyone can- (0.3) easily understand (them). (0.2)’
- 09      那好像就不是他们了. (1.2)  
*na haoxiang jiu      bu shi tamen le. (1.2)*  
 NA seem      INTE NEG COP 3PL      PRT  
 ‘It seems that they’re not (literature and art) any more. (1.2)’
- 10      他们就是要. (0.9) 跟: (0.5) 就是. (0.3) 保持一定的距离.  
*tamen jiu      shi yao. (0.9) gen: (0.5) jiu shi. (0.3) baochi yiding de juli.*  
 3PL      INTE COP want.to      PREP      INTE COP      keep      some PRT distance  
 ‘They wanna. (0.9) (0.5) keep some distance from: (0.3) keep their distance.’

At the point where we enter the above sequence, the two speakers have already expressed their stances on academic language style. X holds a strong opinion that abstract and complex ideas do not necessarily require abstract language or obscure verbiage. So, oracular and long sentences should be avoided in academic communication, especially in oral presentation, regardless of subject field. Commenting in a more indulgent manner, M considers this as nothing more than disciplinary characteristic. Her turn at line 04, with laughter (for related discussion on responsive laughter in disaffiliative contexts, see Clift, 2016) and pauses incorporated into it, has been cut off and repaired twice by herself, projects a potential disparate stance. When M finally finds a way to formulate her opinion at line 05, she displays her understanding towards the presenting style, which contrasts with X’s criticism. The two *na*’s in line 04 do not simply

function as placeholders or hesitation markers in the sense that they neither fulfill the syntactic projection of the turn, nor merely delaying the next word (cf. Amiridze, Davis & MacLagan, 2010). Indeed, they are not generic fillers because they project specific types of next action due—in (26), a disagreement, in (25), a question. They act as a prelude and interpretative template for the talk that will immediately follow it and at the same time preserve the occupation and commitment of the turn.

#### **4.1.3 Interim summary**

Section 4.1 explored polyfunctional *na* in turn-initial position. Quantitative results showed that turn-initial *na* displayed a strong non-referential preference (71%), highlighting a grammaticalized/pragmaticalized nature of turn-initial *na*. Qualitative analysis of the non-referential instances showed that the speaker recurrently uses *na* to (i) launch a question that is closely bound up with the state of affairs under discussion in the preceding turn(s), but typically with a contrastive focus (122 tokens, 25.3%); (ii) initiate a turn that is at variance with a previous turn's stance (118 tokens, 24.4%); (iii) project a question or a disaffiliative turn (61 tokens, 12.6%). The referential turn-initial *na* tokens are mainly discourse deictic cases (92 tokens, 19.0%) and moderately anaphoric (45 tokens, 9.3%). Exophoric use (2 tokens, 0.4%) and recognitional use (1 token, 0.2%) are very rare.

#### **4.2 Turn-medial, utterance-medial *na***

In this section, I explore turn-medial, utterance-medial uses of *na*. Table 4.2 summarizes the identified functions of turn-medial, utterance-medial *na* in the database. In contrast to turn-initial *na*, which is predominantly non-referential (29% referential, 71% non-referential), turn-

medial, utterance-medial *na* is almost exclusively referential. Among the 164<sup>15</sup> turn-medial, utterance-medial *na* tokens, 99.4% are used endophorically, while 0.6% are used non-referentially. Table 4.2 also displays a more meticulous taxonomy of different referential uses. In the present database, all the turn-medial, utterance-medial referential *na* tokens fall within the endophoric category. No tokens were encountered for exophoric use. Noticeably, anaphoric *na* is the most frequent, covering 45.7% (75 tokens) of all instances in the referential domain. Discourse deictic use still constitutes 9.8% (16 tokens) of this group, though not as prominent as the results found in the turn-initial group (92 tokens, 19.9%). Finally, the previously less analyzed recognitional use accounts for 43.9% (72 tokens) of all endophoric cases, constituting the second largest group in turn-medial, utterance-medial position.

**Table 4.2 Frequency distribution of the functions of turn-medial, utterance-medial *na***

|          | Referential <i>na</i> |             |                   |               | Non-referential <i>na</i> |               |                          |               |
|----------|-----------------------|-------------|-------------------|---------------|---------------------------|---------------|--------------------------|---------------|
|          | Exophoric             | Endophoric  |                   |               | Question initiator        | Stance marker | Question /Stance prelude | Miscellaneous |
|          |                       | Anaphoric   | Discourse deictic | Recognitional |                           |               |                          |               |
| Tok. (%) | 0                     | 75 (45.7%)  | 16 (9.8%)         | 72 (43.9%)    | 1 (0.6%)                  | 0 (0%)        | 0 (0%)                   | 0 (0%)        |
| Sub. (%) | 0 (0%)                | 163 (99.4%) |                   |               | 1 (0.6%)                  |               |                          |               |
|          | 163 (99.4%)           |             |                   |               |                           |               |                          |               |
| Total    | 164 (100%)            |             |                   |               |                           |               |                          |               |

<sup>15</sup> There are 167 turn-medial, utterance-medial *na* tokens in total. Three tokens have been excluded from the analysis because they appear in proper nouns.

#### 4.2.1 Referential *na* in turn-medial, utterance-medial position

In this section, I present examples and analyses of each referential use in turn-medial, utterance-medial position. I also highlight characteristics of each use that distinguish turn-medial, utterance-medial *na* from turn-initial *na*.

##### 4.2.1.1 Anaphoric use

Of the 163 occurrences of referential *na* in turn-medial, utterance-medial position, anaphoric *na* is used the most commonly with 75 occurrences, which accounts for a substantial 45.7% of the total turn-medial, utterance-medial token count. As previously noted, anaphoric *na* is coreferential with a noun or a noun phrase in the previous discourse. Consider the following example:

(27) KA\_2M1F\_4:47-5:01

01 M: 哦对. 我们学校人文学院. (0.2)

*o dui. women xuexiao renewn xueyuan.* (0.2)

PRT right 1PL university humanities school

‘Oh, you know what. Our School of Humanities.’

02 有一个:

*you yi ge:*

exist one CL

‘Has an:’

03 拉丁美洲那边的教授开的人类学的课.

*ladingmeizhou nabian de jiaoshou kai de renleixue de ke.*

Latin.America there ATTR professor open NMLZ anthropology NMLZ course

‘Anthropology course offered by a professor from Latin America.’

- 04 R: 哦? [是吗?  
o? [shi ma?  
PRT COP Q  
'Oh? [Yeah?'
- 05 L: [(you) sure?
- 06 M: 对. (0.1) [对.  
dui. (0.1) [dui.  
right right  
'Yes. (0.1) [Yes.'
- 07 R: [哦? 是什么- 哪个- 什么课.  
o? shi shenme- nage- shenme ke  
PRT COP what which.one what class  
'[Oh? What is- which one- what is the class.'
- 08 M: 我- 我- 我忘了. 然后-  
wo- wo- wo wang-le. ranhou-,  
1SG 1SG 1SG forget-PRF then  
'I- I- I forgot. And-'
- 09 → 就刚才那同一个好朋友.  
jiu gangcai na tong yi ge hao pengyou.  
INTE just.now DEM same one CL good friend  
'That good friend I (mentioned) just now.'
- 10 他上学期就选的这门课.  
ta shang xueqi jiu xuan de zhe men ke.  
3SG last semester INTE select PRT DEM CL class  
'This was the course he enrolled in last semester.'
- 11 R: 哦.  
o.  
PRT  
'Oh.'

The utterance medial *na* in line 09 is used to mark speaker M's friend, the first mention of which appears a long way back in the conversation. Roughly about an hour prior to the start of the segment above, M shared a story about this friend when the three speakers were talking about challenging humanities courses at their university. The first mention of the friend as a new discourse participant makes use of a numeral expression, as shown in Example (28):

(28) KA(NS)<sup>16</sup>\_2M1F\_21:10-21:12

01 M: 我有特别好的一个哥们儿.

*wo you tebie hao de yi ge gemenr.*

1SG have very good PRT one CL buddy

'I have a very good buddy.'

Mandarin Chinese does not have articles. The use of an anaphoric *na* after a first mention is a common strategy to keep track of and to orient the addressee to a noun or an NP in discourse. Yet compared with turn-initial anaphoric *na*, it is possible to see a turn-medial, utterance-medial *na* reactivate a previously mentioned NP located further away in the preceding discourse, such case is not observed among the turn-initial anaphoric *na* instances. This difference might be due to the fact that turn-initial anaphoric *na* is either a pronominal demonstrative or an adnominal one. Without an adjacent referent, the demonstrative, or the demonstrative modified noun itself is the only word(s) available for the hearer to identify the referent, making it very difficult to conclude exactly what the demonstrative refers to; even if it is possible, it is very challenging cognitively. However, when *na* is used in turn-medial, utterance-medial position, at least it leaves open the possibility of more complex and flexible modification of the noun, which better

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<sup>16</sup> This part of the recording is not included in this dissertation's database. The segment is used to show the first mention of the referent in Example (28).

facilitates the referential identification task.

From a typological perspective, Himmelmann (1996) argues that marking a referent with anaphoric demonstratives after its first mention is very robust for languages that lack definite articles. But unlike many other languages, Mandarin pronominal *na* can co-occur with its referent<sup>17</sup>. Though this might slightly deviate from the rules of prescriptive grammar, it well conforms to descriptive rules. In spoken language, particularly in casual conversation, it is very natural and common to use a pronominal *na* immediately after its referent. This is exemplified in Example (29) below.

(29) SF\_1M1F\_21:26-21:41

01 F: 估计也不会有员工价我觉得.

*guji ye bu hui you yuangongjia wo jue de.*  
estimate INTE NEG FUT exist employee.discount 1SG think  
'(I) suppose (there) won't be any employee discount I think.'

02 M: 应该有.

*yinggai you.*  
should exist  
'(There) should be.'

03 F: 有吗?

*you ma?*  
exist Q  
'Is (there)?'

---

<sup>17</sup> Similar structures were coined as *double nominative construction* (Teng, 1974) or *topic-comment construction* (Li & Thompson, 1976; 1981)

- 04 M: 肯定会有.  
*kending hui you.*  
 definitely FUT exist  
 ‘Definitely will be.’
- 05 F: [那-  
*na-*  
 NA  
 ‘NA-’
- 06 M: [不. 没有员工价. 但应该会有协议价.  
*bu. mei you yuangongjia. dan yinggai hui you xieyijia.*  
 no NEG exist employee.discount but should FUT exist corporate.rate  
 ‘No. There’s no employee discount. But (we) will enjoy (a) corporate rate.’
- 07 (1.0)
- 08 F: °协议价?°  
 °xieyi[jia]?°  
 corporate.rate  
 ‘°(A) corporate rate?°’
- 09 M: [对. 我们公司的协议价.  
*dui. women gongsi de xieyijia.*  
 right 1PL company ATTR corporate.rate  
 ‘Right. Our company’s corporate rate.’
- 10 (0.5)
- 11 F: → 协议价那是: 你出差用的. (0.6)  
*xieyijia na shi: ni chuchai yong de*  
 corporate.rate DEM COP 2SG business.trip use PRT (0.6)  
 ‘(A) Corporate rate **that** is: for when you are on business trips.’

12       你比如说happy holiday你肯定不会用。  
           *ni    biru           shuo happy holiday ni   kending   bu   hui yong.*  
           2SG for.instance say   happy holiday 2SG definitely NEG FUT use  
           ‘You won’t use (it when you are on) for instance say happy holiday trips.’

13 M:    可以用啊: 为什么不可以用?  
           *keyi yong a:   weishenme bu   keyi yong*  
           can use   PRT why           NEG can use  
           ‘(Of course you) can: why can’t (you)?’

In this example, the noun *xieyijia* ‘corporate rate’ first appears in line 06. Then it reoccurs twice in lines 08 and 09 after the first mention. In principle, F could just use a pronominal *na* in line 11 to refer to the noun *xieyijia* ‘corporate rate’. The discourse environment also makes this choice plausible. First, the referent *xieyijia* ‘corporate rate’ is adjacent to the locus of the pronominal demonstrative, which requests minimal cognitive process for establishing the connection between the referent and the demonstrative. In Example (27), we saw that an anaphoric demonstrative could be used to reactivate a referent that occurs at long distance in the preceding discourse. Why would the speaker take on extra work replicating the referent before he deploys the demonstrative? Second, between the first mention and the pronominal demonstrative embedded line (i.e. line 11), there is a confirmation checking sequence. The referent appears twice in this two-line sequence and establishes itself as a topical NP before conversation unfolds to the onset of line 11. This also makes the referent easily inferable. However, if we examine this excerpt more closely, we will see the hindrance to a simple pronominal—the repair sequence.

Speaker F’s initial question in line 01 is about whether their company’s newly opened hotel will provide them with an employee discount. At first her colleague assures her that there definitely will be employee discount, but quickly realizes that he accidentally confuses

*yuangongjia* ‘employee discount’ with *xieyijia* ‘corporate rate’. So, he repairs his original answer and makes it clear in line 06 that “there’s no employee discount, but (we) will enjoy (a) corporate rate.” We then see a shift in topical NP. Prior to line 06, the focus of the discourse is on *yuangongjia* ‘employee discount’. The topic NP after line 06 is *xieyijia* ‘corporate rate’. This process might appear somewhat substantial on the transcript; it is worth mentioning that the real interaction takes place only within 2 seconds. Spontaneous natural conversation has traditionally been described as messy and disordered; examples like this, however, support that the speaker is very sensitive to structural design and linguistic choice.

Example (29) above illustrates a situation when the speaker duplicates the subject to lighten the addressee’s cognitive load for establishing the connection between the referent and the demonstrative. Compare, for instance, the following case from a multi-party conversation:

(30) BL\_2M1F\_23:51-23:58

01 M: 还有情感问题. 情感问题.

*hai you qinggan wenti. qinggan wenti*

also have affection issue affection issue

‘(And) also the issue of affection. The issue of affection.’

02 L: 还有人工智能教[学.

*hai you rengongzhineng jiao[xue.*

also have artificial.intelligence instruction

‘(And) also (the issue of) artificial intelligence instruction.’

03 R: →

[情感那就是完全是偏向老师了呀↑

[*qinggan na jiu shi wanquan shi pianxiang laoshi leya↑*

affection NA INTE COP completely COP favor teacher PRT

‘[(But) affection NA argues in favor of teachers↑’

04 M: 对[呀.  
*dui* [ya.  
right PRT  
'Right.'

05 L: [嗯.  
*ng*.  
PRT  
'Mm.'

06 M: 对呀对呀. 但- 所以说- 不说-  
*dui ya dui ya. dan- suoyi shuo- bu shuo-*  
right PRT right PRT but so say NEG say  
'Right right. but- so say- (I'm) not saying-''

07 不说正反的了. 就是大概几个点就是.  
*bu shuo zheng fan de le. jiu dagai ji ge dian jiu shi.*  
NEG say affirmative negative NMLZ PRT just roughly several CL point just COP  
'(I'm) not saying (specific propositions) for the affirmative or negative (side). Roughly just a couple of perspectives (for both sides).'

08 R: 啊:  
*a:*  
PRT  
'Aha:.'

Example (30) illustrates a different scenario where the pronominal anaphoric *na* co-occurs with its referent. The three college students here are in the midst of an intense discussion brainstorming perspectives and arguments for the debate competition in which they will be participating. Prior to the use of *na* in line 03, two NPs have been mentioned by two different speakers—*qinggan wenti* 'the issue of affection' and *rengongzhineng jiaoxue* 'artificial intelligence instruction'. If the third speaker R in line 03 does not partially recycle the word

*qinggan* ‘affection’ before her usage of *na*, the demonstrative can be interpreted as either referring to the NP *qinggan wenti* ‘the issue of affection’ in line 01 or the NP *rengongzhineng jiaoxue* ‘artificial intelligence instruction’ in line 02. In order to remove ambiguity, R reuses part of the referent NP to establish the connection between the demonstrative and the referent for her addressees. Unlike Example (29), where the speaker takes additional work to overtly connect the demonstrative and the referent for her addressee’s convenience, in this example, the speaker has to draw some connection to avoid referential ambiguity. Yet in both contexts, speakers deploy this double-subject strategy by juxtaposing the pronominal demonstrative *na* with its referent so that the two are in their ideal positions for referential interpretation.

#### 4.2.1.2 Discourse deictic use

Unlike anaphoric *na*, which is co-referential with a prior NP, discourse deixis is used to refer to elements of the surrounding discourse. It can either point to a previous proposition or a subsequent part. The 16 (9.8%) discourse deictic *na* tokens identified in the database are all used to refer to discourse entities that precede them. The referent discourse entities can range from a single constituent to a complex story. Example (31) shows a discourse deictic *na* (line 17) referring to a previous utterance. Example (32) is a demonstration of a discourse deictic *na* (line 33) being used to refer to a whole story just told.

(31) SF\_1M1F\_05:20-5:47

01 M: 而且那些. 庙也是新修的. 也不是说(0.2) [he:

*erqie naxie, miao ye shi xin xiu de, ye bu shi shuo* (0.2) [he:  
 moreover DEM temple also COP new build PRT INTE NEG COP say very  
 ‘In addition. Those temples are also newly renovated. (They’re) not, say (0.2) ve:’

- 02 F: [对.  
*dui.*  
 right  
 ‘Right.’
- 03 M: 很老[的古迹.  
*hen lao de guji.*  
 very old ATTR historical.site  
 ‘Very old historical sites.’
- 04 F: [可能(0.5)几年前吧?  
*keneng (0.5) ji nian qian ba?*  
 maybe several year ago PRT  
 ‘(It was renovated) probably (0.5) a couple years ago?’
- 05 M: 嗯. (0.4) 而- 而[且-  
*ng. (0.4) er- erqie-*  
 PRT and in.addition  
 ‘Yeah. (0.4) In- In addition-’
- 06 F: 1-[1::
- 07 M: 反正肯定是- 肯定是解放以后才-  
*fanzheng kending shi- kending shi jiefang yihou cai-*  
 anyway definitely COP definitely COP liberation after not.until  
 ‘Anyway, definitely (it) is- definitely (it) is after 1949-’
- 08 才又慢慢把它给修起来的.  
*cai you manman ba ta gei xiu qilai de.*  
 not.until again slow BA 3SG give build up PRT  
 ‘(It has been) gradually renovated.’
- 09 不像: 悬空寺. 相对来讲. 不管怎么[样.  
*bu xiang: xuankongsi. xiangdui lai jiang. buguanzenm[yang.*  
 NEG like Hanging.Temple relatively come speak no.matter.what  
 ‘(It’s) not like: the Hanging Temple. Relatively speaking. No matter what.’

- 10 F: [比较老旧.  
*bijiao laojiu.*  
 fairly old  
 ‘(It’s) fairly old.’
- 11 M: 比较老一点的. 至少是个古-老东西.=  
*bijiao lao yidian de. zhishao shi ge gu- lao dongxi.=*  
 fairly old little PRT at.least COP CL ancient old thing  
 ‘(It’s) fairly old. At least (it’s) an ancient- old thing.=’
- 12 F: =不是解放后了. 就是我是- (0.2)  
*bu shi jiefang hou le. jiu shi wo shi- (0.2)*  
 NEG COP liberation after PRT INTE COP 1SG COP  
 ‘Not after 1949. (It) was. I was- (0.2)’
- 13 可能二零年. 一一年那个时候就已经.  
*keneng yiling nian, yiyi nian na ge shihou jiu yijing,*  
 maybe 2010 year 2011 year DEM CL time INTE already  
 ‘Maybe 2010. (Or) 2011. (It) already.’
- 14 又新修了一次.  
*you xin xiu le yi ci.*  
 again new build PRF one CL  
 ‘(got) newly renovated again.’
- 15 M: 嗯. [对.  
*ng. [dui.*  
 PRT right  
 ‘Yeah. right.’
- 16 F: [嗯.  
*ng.*  
 PRT  
 ‘Yeah.’

17 M: → 就- 就觉得那<sub>DEM</sub>就意义不大了. 所以说我-

*jiu- jiu juede na jiu yiyi bu da le, suoyi shuo wo-*  
INTE INTE think DEM INTE meaning NEG big PRT so say 1SG  
“Just- (I) think *that*’s not very meaningful. So I-”

18 但是我觉得那个. (0.1) 呃:

*danshi wo juede nage. (0.1) e:*  
but 1SG think DEM.CL PRT  
‘But I think. (0.1) Hm:’

19 悬空寺还是- 还是- 还是挺有意思的.

*xuankongsi hai shi- hai shi- hai shi ting you yisi de.*  
Hanging.Temple INTE COP INTE COP INTE COP quite have interesting PRT  
‘The Hanging Temple is- is- is quite interesting.’

In Example (31), the two colleagues are sharing their travel stories during lunch break. M has told F that he is not interested in temples in general, particularly those that have been renovated. Despite its popularity, he did not visit the Huayan Temple when he was in Datong. In lines 13 and 14, F tells M that the Huayan Temple has most recently been renovated again in 2010 or 2011. After a minimal response, M adds *jiu juede na jiu yiyi bu da le* ‘(I) think that’s not very meaningful’ in line 17. The demonstrative refers to the propositional content expressed in F’s turn at lines 13-14, “Maybe 2010, (or) 2011, (it) already (got) newly renovated again.”

In theory, a discourse deictic demonstrative can reference to any non-NP segment of the preceding discourse, ranging from partial utterance to an entire story; in practice, none of the turn-initial discourse deictic *na* instances is used to refer to a prior complex story. Turn-medial, utterance-medial discourse deictic *na*, by contrast, is observed to make reference to complex idea or long story in the preceding section. Consider the following example where *na* (line 44) is used to refer to the entire story just been told.

(32) ZX\_2F\_27:15-28:18

01 W: 有一天:: 去学校的时候.

*you yi tian:: qu xuexiao de shihou,*  
exist one day go school ATTR time  
'One day:: at school.'

02 就是- 就- 就大家都神神秘秘的.

*jiu shi- jiu- jiu dajia dou shenshenmimi de*  
INTE COP INTE INTE everybody all weird PRT  
'(it) was- was- everybody was quite weird.'

03 我也不知道在干什么[huhhh

*wo ye bu zhidao zai gan shenm [huhhh*  
1SG INTE NEG know PROG do what  
'I had no idea what they were doing [huhhh'

04 B: [是想表白吗?

*shi xiang biaobai ma?*  
COP want confess.one's feelings Q  
'Was it that (he) wanted to confess his feelings?'

05 W: 对. 就是那种突然表白.

*dui. jiu shi nazhong turan biaobai.*  
right INTE COP that.kind sudden confess.one's feelings  
'Right. Exactly that kind of unexpected confession.'

06 然后他在学校.

*ranhou ta zai xuexiao.*  
then 3SG be.at school  
'He at (our) school was.'

((37 lines omitted, W tells the story about how her classmate confesses his feelings for her))

- 44 → 但他- 就是那之后就是可能会- (0.3)  
*dan ta- jiu shi na zhihou jiu shi keneng hui-* (0.3)  
 but 3SG INTE COP DEM after INTE COP maybe FUT  
 ‘But he- after that maybe would-’
- 45 嗯: 还是就是会就每天跟你一起.  
*ng: hai shi jiu shi hui jiu meitian gen ni yiqi.*  
 PRT still COP INTE COP FUT INTE everyday follow 2SG together  
 ‘Well: still would (walk) me (home) everyday.’

Example (32) begins with W’s story about her classmate confessing his feeling for her in front of the class back in high school. At line 44, W uses *na* to refer to the entire confessing process she has just uttered and then continues with what happens between them after her classmate publicly expresses that he has feelings for her.

Two reasons might explain why using a discourse deictic *na* to point to a long story is not present in the turn-initial group, but is relatively not uncommon in its turn-medial, utterance-medial counterpart. First, turn-taking in storytelling is distinct from that in ordinary conversation. Turn-taking protocol in ordinary conversation typically allocates one turn-constructional unit (TCU) to each speaker at a time. At the point of each TCU’s possible completion, another speaker may begin to talk (cf. Sacks, schegloff & Jefferson 1974). This turn-taking mechanism is one of the fundamental features that set conversations apart from narratives. However, a storytelling segment in conversation involves more than one TCU; storytelling, thus requires a suspension of this turn-taking protocol for the duration of the story (Goodwin & Heritage 1990). Once a story is launched and is recognized by the recipient(s) as a story before the end of the first TCU (e.g. line 01 in (32), “One day:: at school”), the teller receives an extended slot to tell the story. Perhaps this is one of reasons why a discourse deictic *na* summarizing a story only

occurs in turn-medial position<sup>18</sup> in the database. The second, and more practical reason, I think, is that for almost all conversation stories, it is the teller's task to complete a story and exit from the telling. As a consequence, it is not surprising that a demonstrative pointing to an entire story appears in turn-medial position rather than turn-initial position.

#### **4.2.1.3 Recognitional use**

In Section 4.1.1.4, I noted that recognitional demonstratives involve the retrieval of specific shared knowledge between the speaker and the addressee. Recognitional use of demonstratives had not been analyzed formally until Himmelmann (1996) published his work on demonstratives' universal uses in narrative discourse, though earlier studies have touched upon some of its properties (e.g. Lakoff, 1974; Goddard, 1985; Auer, 1984; Wilkins, 1989; Chen, 1990; Gundel, Hedberg & Zacharski, 1993). In his analysis, Himmelmann identified two distinctive characteristics of recognitional demonstratives. Syntactically, only adnominal demonstratives have been observed in recognitional use. Second, recognitional demonstratives are not co-referential with any NPs or strings of words in the preceding discourse, or physical entities that are present in the discourse situation. This means that the addressee has to rely on his/her own knowledge to work out what the demonstrative is referring to and by choosing to use a demonstrative without a pre-mentioned referent, the speaker assumes that the addressee(s) can identify the referent, either based on shared experience or specific knowledge. Three instances of this use can be seen in the following example:

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<sup>18</sup> I use "turn-medial" rather than "turn-medial, utterance-medial" here because this usage is also observed in turn-medial, utterance-initial position.

(33) BR\_1M1F\_43:45-43:54

01 H: 你像我们在那个P那个.

*ni xiang women zai na ge P<sup>19</sup> na ge.*

2SG like 1PL be.at DEM CL P DEM CL

‘Like (when) we (lived) in P.’

02 → 就靠近那停车场.

*jiu kaojin na tingchechang.*

INTE close.to DEM parking.lot

‘(Which) is close to that parking lot.’

03 每天两三点钟回来停车的.

*meitian liang san dianzhong huilai tingche de.*

everyday two three o'clock come.back park NMLZ

‘(The guy) who came back and parked around 2 or 3am everyday.’

04 → 我们那卧室那窗户不就正靠着那个-

*women na woshi na chuanguhu bu jiu zheng kao zhe na ge-.*

1PL DEM bedroom DEM window NEG INTE exactly lean AUX DEM CL

‘Isn’t it that window in that bedroom (of) our (house) is adjacent to that-’

05 对着那个停车场吗. (1.9) 就那种- 那[种.

*dui zhe na ge tingchechang ma.(1.9) jiu nazhong- na[zhong.*

opposite.to AUX DEM CL parking.lot Q INTE that.kind that.kind

‘(Is) facing that parking lot. (1.9) (It’s) that kind-that [kind.’

06 W:

[我记得.

*wo jide*

1SG remember

‘I remember (that).’

In Example (33), the *tingchechang* ‘parking lot’ (line 02), the *woshi* ‘bedroom’ (line 04), and the *chuanguhu* ‘window’ (line 04) are all first mentions. The husband compares the

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<sup>19</sup> Proper names with confidentiality concerns will be replaced with random letters.

community of their current residence with their previous residence. He refers to the specific parking lot, bedroom and window of their old house and presumes that his wife shares this knowledge and is able to reference the specific entities he talks about. To borrow Prince's (1992) terms, the three entities here are *discourse new* but *hearer old*. This has also been testified in line 06 when the wife explicitly acknowledges that she knows what her husband is referring to although the NPs of the demonstratives are not mentioned at all previously. The recognitional *na* instances in (33) also illustrate the difference between the shared knowledge pertaining to the recognitional use of demonstratives and the kind of familiarity associated with the familiar use of definite articles. Himmelmann (1996) stated that the knowledge involved in the familiar use of definite articles is generally shared by almost all the members of a given speech community (e.g. *the capital of Switzerland*, *the president of the United States of America*). In contrast, the knowledge required in identifying a recognitional referent, as shown in (33), is "personalized".

In addition to the two properties that distinguish recognitional use from all other uses, Himmelmann (1996: 230) also pointed out that in recognitional uses, the speaker tends to incorporate additional descriptive information to help the addressee locate the referent or make the referent more accessible for the addressee. Structurally speaking, the added utterance(s) often takes a form similar to the recognitional expression or involves a relative clause. A classic example of these features is the following:

(34) WY\_3M\_14:35-14:41

01 L: 去是去了. 然后-  
       *qu shi qu le. ranhou-*  
       go COP go PRF then  
       '(I) did go. Then-'

02 → 可是我被那小哥挡在外面了. 印度小哥.

*keshi wo bei na xiaoge dang zai waimian le. yindu xiaoge.*

but 1SG BEI DEM little.brother keep.off PREP outside PRT Indian little.brother

‘But I was stopped by that little brother. Indian little brother.’

03 然后我只能在外面的奢侈店: 看看手表啊.

*ranhou wo zhi neng zai waimian de shechi dian kankan shoubiao a.*

then 1SG only can PREP outside ATTR luxury store look watch FP

‘(At that time) I could only browse at watches in luxury goods stores outside (the casinos).’

04 M: hahha[h

05 R: [hahhah

06 L: [hahh

Prior to this excerpt, L’s friends R asks whether L has been to Macao before. L tells R and M that he has visited it once together with his father. R then invites L to share with them more about Macao’s gambling industry. Example (34) starts from L’s sharing on his experience with Macao’s casino gaming. In line 01, L makes use of *na xiaoge*, which literally means ‘that little brother’, without a referent in the preceding discourse. The topical focus of this sequence is the subject *wo* ‘I’. The recognitional *na* is a non-tracking mention of low topicality. The shared knowledge in this example is the meaning of the neologism expression *xiaoge*, a relatively new word created by young people to address young and male employees in service industries in order to build rapport. However, though the addressees might at this point understand that L is referring to a security staff working at the casino, based on the context, we know that L’s story is not shared in R and M’s knowledge stores. This is perhaps the reason why, after the first mention of *na xiaoge* ‘that little brother’, L chooses to add additional anchoring information *yindu xiaoge*

‘Indian little brother’ to make the referent more specific. The head noun of both of the NPs is *xiaoge* ‘little brother’. This head noun is first modified by the demonstrative adjective *na* in the recognitional NP, and then subsequently by the adjective *yindu* ‘Indian’. The second NP reuses the first NP’s structure, only replaces the demonstrative adjective with a more specific one. In Example (35) below, I show an instance where the additional description of the recognitional referent is expressed in a relative clause.

(35) ZX\_2F\_04:56-05:10

01W: 我真的还买了一件他们那种 (0.1)

*wo zhende hai mai le yi jian tamen nazhong* (0.1)

1SG actually also buy PRF one CL 3PL that.kind

‘I actually also bought one piece of their (0.1)’

02 粉丝的定制服嘛.

*fensi de dingzhi fu ma.*

fan ATTR customize clothes FP

‘that kind of fan clothes.’

03 那[种卫衣啊.

*nazhong weiyi a.*

that.kind hoodie FP

‘That kind of hoodie you know.’

04 B: [哦:::

*o:::*

PRT

‘Oh:::’

05 W: → 然后后面就是他的那卡通.

*ranhou hougian jiu shi ta de na katong.*

then back INTE COP 3SG ATTR DEM cartoon

‘On the back (of the hoodie) is that caricature of him.’

- 06        就跟我-  
           *jiu    gen   wo-*  
           INTE PREP 1SG  
           ‘(Which looks) like my-’
- 07        我的头像差不多的那种卡通的形象.  
           *wo   de   touxiang      chabuduo      de   nazhong   katong   de   xingxiang.*  
           1SG ATTR profile.picture about.the.same PRT that.kind cartoon PRT image  
           ‘very much like that kind of caricature (I use for) my profile picture.’
- 08 B:    嗯嗯嗯.  
           *ng   ng   ng.*  
           PRT PRT PRT  
           ‘Yeah yeah yeah.’
- 09 W:    然后就是(.)其实一般人没认出来.  
           *ranhou   jiu    shi   (.)   qishi    yibanren      mei   ren      chulai.*  
           then    INTE COP    actually average.person NEG recognize out  
           ‘Then (.) In fact normally people didn’t recognize (the caricature).’
- 10        就是觉得就卫衣嘛.  
           *jiu   shi   juede   jiu    weiyi   ma.*  
           INTE COP think   INTE hoodie FP  
           ‘(They) thought (it’s) just (a) hoodie.’
- 11        然后有人认出来就觉得很激动. (.) huhhuhh  
           *ranhou   you   ren    ren      chulai   jiu    juede   hen   jidong.   (.)   huhhuhh*  
           then    exist   person recognize out    INTE think very excited  
           ‘(I) was very excited (when) someone recognized (the caricature). (.) huhhuhh’
- 12        然后就疯狂安利.  
           *ranhou   jiu    fengkuang   anli.*  
           then    INTE crazy      recommend  
           ‘Then (I would) recommend (him) like crazy.’

In this excerpt, W is talking about B and her shared celebrity crush. In line 05. W introduces a brand-new discourse participant using the recognitional demonstrative: *ta de na katong* ‘that caricature of him’. She then adds a relative clause to modify the recognitional NP in lines 06 and 07: “(Which looks) like my- very much like that kind of caricature (I use for) my profile picture.”, after which, B responds with a series of affirmative particle *ng* ‘yeah’. In (33) and (34), the recognitional referents are non-topical. This holds true for most of the recognitional referents identified in the database. However, a recognitional referent can temporarily manifest itself in discourse as highly topical. In (35), *na katong* ‘that caricature’ persists over a span of turns from line 05 to line 11. The fact that this “caricature” is encoded by zero anaphora in lines 09 and 11 also suggests that the referent has a higher degree of topicality across the turns (cf. Givón 1983; Pu 2019).

Returning back to Examples (33) and (34), the responses (i.e. line 06 in (33), lines 04 and 05 in (34)) from the hearers after the recognitional referents have been introduced are similar to the affirmative response token at line 08 in (35). In (33), the hear explicitly states a successful referential identification. In (34), there is joint laughter (for an overview of laughter in interactional contexts, see Glenn 2003). In (35), we see duplicated affirmative response tokens. These responses all indicate that the hearers accept the recognitional referents and the referential identifications are successful. However, the hearers’ epistemic positions to the definiteness of the referents in the three examples are not the same. The hearer in (33) has direct experience with the referents and knows exactly what the *tingchechang* ‘parking lot’ (line 02), the *woshi* ‘bedroom’ (line 04), and the *chuanghu* ‘window’ (line 04) her husband is referring to. In contrast, the hearers in (34) only know that the referent is a young Indian male security staff working at the casinos the speaker visited. Likewise, in (35), the hearer does not seem to know the specific

caricature the speaker refers to. The information the hearer has with respect to the caricature is that it looks “very much like” the caricature the speaker uses for her profile picture.

Previous literature claimed that the central feature of the recognitional use is that the speaker assumes that the hearer knows the referent and tries to activate the referent in his/her mental space (Hummelmann, 1996; Auer, 1984; Goddard, 1985). This argument is valid in contexts like (33). For cases such as (34) and (35), the speakers know that the hearers do not have direct experience with the referents; the information they provide is designed to highlight certain aspects of the referents that they consider as necessary to the ongoing conversation rather than inviting the hearers to identify the specific entities referred to by the recognitional demonstrative. The hearers, on the other hand, also tend to accept this partial access to the referents in the sense that there is no call for referent clarification. This is exemplified more directly in the following example:

(36) GM\_1M2F\_23:02-23:44

01 H: 这个: 我父亲(0.1)他回农村种地还不一样.

*zhege: wo fuqin (0.1) ta hui nongcun zhong di hai bu yiyang.*

DEM.CL 1SG father 3SG return rural.area plant land INTE NEG same

‘Well: for my father (0.1) returning back to the countryside and becoming a farmer is different (from what you just described).’

02 因为他是属于再创业. 还是很辛苦的.

*yinwei ta shi shuyu zai chuangye. hai shi hen xinku de.*

because 3SG COP belong again start.an.undertaking INTE COP very hard PRT

‘Because he started a new career (there). (It) is pretty hard (work).’

03 不是那种[生活得很惬意.

*bu shi nazhong shenghuo de hen qieyi.*

NEG COP that.kind live PRT very comfortable

‘(It) is not that kind of laid-back carefree life.’

- 04 W: [一种盈利性的.  
*yi zhong yingli-xing de.*  
 one CL profit-character NMZL  
 ‘(It’s) for-profit.’
- 05 嗯. [经营性的.  
*ng. jingying-xing de.*  
 PRT business-character NMZL  
 ‘Mm. (It’s) profit-making.’
- 06 F: [是啊. 是啊.  
*shi a. shi a.*  
 COP FP COP PF  
 ‘Yes. Yes.’
- 07 就是有些人就是以-  
*jiu shi youxie ren jiu shi yi-*  
 INTE COP some people INTE COP by.means.of  
 ‘Some people by means of-’
- 08 以农村这种农庄为一种经营.  
*yi nongcun zhezong nongzhuang wei yi zhong jingying.*  
 by.means.of rural.area this.kind plantation act.as one CL operate  
 ‘(Some people) run a plantation in the countryside as a business.’
- 09 就是我那次看了好像是  
*jiu shi wo na ci kan le haoxiang shi*  
 INTE COP 1SG DEM CL watch PRF seem COP
- 10 《走遍台湾》的那个(0.3)节目.  
*zoubiantaiwan de na ge (0.3) jiemu.*  
 Across.Taiwan NMLZ DEM CL program  
 ‘I watched a (0.3) program (it) might be (called) Across Taiwan.’

- 11 就是很多人. 就在某一个年代的时候.  
*jiu shi henduo ren. iu zai mou yi ge niandai de shihou.*  
 INTE COP many people INTE be.at certain one CL decade ATTR time  
 ‘Many people. There was a time (when).’
- 12 就是很多人都回到了(0.1)乡村. (0.2)  
*jiu shi henduo ren dou hui-dao le (0.1) xiangcun. (0.2)*  
 INTE COP many people all return-RES PRF village  
 ‘Many people went back to (0.1) villages. (0.2)’
- 13 然后(0.1)就是开办一些 (.) 农场.  
*ranhou (0.1) jiu shi kaiban yixie (.) nongchang.*  
 then INTE COP open some ranch  
 ‘And then (0.1) started some (.) ranches.’
- 14 后来- 后来又- 又进行一些-  
*houlai- hulai you- you jinxing yixie-*  
 afterwards afterwards furthermore furthermore conduct some  
 ‘Later- and then later- subsequently (they) also conducted some-’
- 15 → 加入一些观光- 观光的<sup>那些</sup>[业务.  
*jiaru yixie guanguang- guanguang de <sup>naxie</sup> yewu.*  
 add some sightseeing sightseeing NMLZ <sup>DEM</sup> business  
 ‘(They) added some sightseeing- <sup>those</sup> sightseeing business (services).’
- 16 W: [^啊::: 哦: 对对. 类似于这种.  
 ^ah::: o: *dui dui. leisi yu zhezhong.*  
 PRT PRT right right similar.to toward this.kind  
 ‘^Ah::: oh: right right. Similar to this kind (of career).’
- 17 F: 嗯.  
*ng.*  
 PRT  
 ‘Mm.’

Example (36) is taken from a friend reunion between a couple, H and W, and their friend, F. The wife has told F that her father-in-law moved back to his hometown and decided to be a farmer. F initially thought that the father-in-law is living a self-reliant laid-back life in the countryside. Starting from line 01, the couple jointly tell the friend that the father started a new career in his hometown with profit-making large-scale farms. This triggers F's sharing of a television program she watched on rural entrepreneur stories in Taiwan. In line 15, F first uses an indefinite determiner *yixie* 'some', but before the head noun is produced, she cuts off to halt the progressivity of the TCU, reconstructs the phrase using a nominalized structure, then modifies the head noun *yewu* 'business' with a definite demonstrative determiner *naxie* 'those': *guanguang de naxie yewu* 'those sightseeing business (services)'. By repairing the reference in line 15, F is using a more presupposing determiner to replace an indefinite one. However, a business of sightseeing in the countryside can have a wide scope ranging from transportation to accommodation to food and beverage to guided tours. The access to the referents marked by the demonstrative requires that W and H have had watched the same program episode that F has watched. Yet there is no response from H after F's telling. The responsive particle *^ah::* in line 16 is produced with rising-falling pitch; it is followed by the change-of-state token *o* 'oh' (Heritage 1984), suggesting that what has just been said by F is new information for W. Although H and W do not seem to have watched the program, neither of them pursues referential clarification.

Thus far, I have analyzed two types of cases for the recognitional use. I showed a classical case in which the referents are identifiable based on the experience shared by the speaker and the addressee. I also examined three instances in which the hearers only have partial access to the intended referents. Nevertheless, in almost all these instances, the hearers simply

accept the recognitional referents. I will now turn to recognitional uses of *na* where the speakers seem to have no access to the intended referents at all, yet neither the speaker nor the addressee(s) makes any attempt to clarify or cares to do so in the slightest. I have presented an example of such use in Section 4.1.1.4; I will analyze it together with Example (37) below.

(37) AN\_2F\_18:12-18:29

01 N: 对. 所以[就是要小心(0.3)这个.

*dui. suoyi ji shi yao xiaoxin (0.3) zhe ge*

right so INTE COP need be.careful DEM CL

‘Right. So the axioms have to be carefully (treated).’

02 A: [嗯. 嗯.

*ng. ng.*

PRT PRT

‘Yes. yes.’

03 N: 别的倒没什[么.

*bie de dao mei shenme.*

other NMLZ contrariwise NEG what

‘The others are not (as crucial as axioms).’

04 A: 对对对.

*dui dui dui.*

right right right

‘Right right right.’

05 N: 嗯.

*ng.*

PRT

‘Yeah.’

06 A: → 我那天. 我是在网上- 呃::

wo na tian, wo shi zai wang shang- en::

1SG DEM day 1SG COP PREP internet PREP PRT

‘That day I. (It) was on the Internet (that) I- hm::’

07 A: 手机上买- 了° 本书.

shouji shang mai- °le° ben shu.

cellphone PREP buy PRF CL book

‘On (my) phone (I) bought- a book.’

08 哦. 不对. 应该是我实- 实-

o. bu dui. yinggai shi wo shi- shi-

PRT NEG right should COP 1SG physical physical

‘Oh. No. Actually I (believe I bought) the physi-physi-’

09 后来实物书应该有买来.

houlai shiwu shu yinggai you mai lai.

afterward physical book should have buy come

‘(I) bought (the) physical book afterward.’

10 N: 嗯.

ng

PRT

‘Mm.’

11 A: 它就是- 呃: 嗯- 讲的就是: 数学的历史.

ta jiu shi- en: ng- jiang de jiu shi: shuxue de lishi.

3SG INTE COP PRT PRT tell NMLZ INTE COP mathematics ATTR history

‘It’s- hm: mm- (It) tells the history of mathematics.’

12 N: 嗯.

ng

PRT

“Mm.”

This segment is taken from a casual conversation between a college student, N, and her aunt, A. Prior to this excerpt, the two speakers have been discussing why the niece decided to major in mathematics. The conversation then moved to the connections between mathematics and other disciplines and how axioms serve as a premise for further reasoning in science. The topic of mathematics seems to be concluding after N's wrap-up in line 03 and A's affiliative move in line 04. However, the aunt continues and shares with her niece a story she has read about the history of mathematics. The story is launched in line 06, with *wo na tian* 'That day I'. The referent assigned to the expression *na tian* 'that day' is marked as identifiable, though the day has never been mentioned previously in the talk and no additional information is provided in the subsequent discourse. It is clear that the purchasing action happens on a specific day in the past; nevertheless, when exactly this day is does not seem to be shared between the speaker and the addressee. This expression is by no means an individual speaker's personal idiosyncratic choice. In turn-medial, utterance-medial position, 19 *na tian* 'that day' instances were used by different speakers in the database. There are a couple of cases where the addressee might know the day that the speaker is referring to. The majority of *na tian* 'that day' instances were used with neither a previous mention nor shared knowledge between the speaker and the addressee(s). Yet in almost none of these cases does the addressee or the speaker attend to the definiteness of the referent. I shall address the only exception later in this section.

Turning back to Example (15) I showed in Section 4.1.1.4, reuse here as Example (38):

(38) KA\_2M1F\_13:27-13:53

01 R: 我就在想读人文以后干啥.

*wo jiu zai xiang du renwen yihou gan sha.*

1SG INTE PROG think study humanities afterwards do what

'I'm wondering what (I could) do with a humanities degree.'

- 02 L: 对啊. [就-  
*dui a. [jiu-*  
 right FP INTE  
 ‘Right. Just-’
- 03 M: [都可以干我觉得.=  
*[dou keyi gan wo juede=*  
 all can do 1SG think  
 ‘(You) can do anything I think.=’
- 04 R: =我也觉得.  
 =*wo ye juede.*  
 1SG also think  
 ‘=I also think (so).’
- 05 L: 是吗?  
*shi ma?*  
 COP Q  
 ‘Can we?’
- 06 R: 都很- 都可以干.  
*dou hen- dou keyi gan.*  
 all very all can do  
 ‘All (are) very- (you) can do anything.’
- 07 L: 我就- 主要担心就业问题. 所以我[才-  
*wo jiu- zhuyao danxin jiuye wenti. suoyi wo cai-*  
 1SG INTE mainly worry employment issue so 1SG for.no.other.reason  
 ‘I- mainly worry about getting a job. So I-’
- 08 M: → *[那天我们吃饭的时候. 嗯.(0.1)*  
*na tian women chi fan de shihou. ng.(0.1)*  
 DEM day 1PL eat meal NMLZ time PRT  
 ‘That day when we were eating. Hm.(0.1).

- 09        当时那顿饭你没有在。  
*dangshi na dun fan ni mei you zai.*  
 that.time DEM CL meal 2SG NEG have be.at  
 ‘You were not there for that meal then.’
- 10        然后有一个大三的学姐。  
*ranhou you yi ge dasan de xuejie.*  
 then have one CL junior NMLZ senior  
 ‘And there was this junior student.’
- 11        然后也是学人文的。  
*ranhou ye shi xue renwen de.*  
 then also COP study humanities NMLZ  
 ‘(She) also studies humanities.’
- 12        然后她好像在实习。  
*ranhou ta hoaxiang zai shixi.*  
 then 3SG seem ASP intern  
 ‘And it seems that she was doing an internship.’
- 13        然后我就问她。  
*ranhou wo jiu wen ta.*  
 then 1SG just ask 3SG  
 ‘Then I asked her.’
- 14        我说那- (.) 人文学院的学生实习找什么呀?  
*wo shuo na- renwen xueyuan de xuesheng shixi zhao shenme ya?*  
 1SG say NA humanities division ATTR student intern find what FP  
 ‘I said “NA- (.) What kind of internship can humanities students find?”’
- 15        她说就很多啊: 去::媒体。  
*ta shuo jiu hen duo a: qu:: meiti.*  
 3SG say INTE very many FP go media  
 ‘She said “(There are) a lot: (we can) work in the media industry.”’

16 L: 哦:: [对对.  
o:: *dui dui*.  
PRT right right  
'Oh:: right right.'

17 R: 很多[去媒体.  
*hendui qu meiti*.  
many go media  
'Many went to media industries.'

Contextual information shows that R and L do not know the junior student M mentions and that they did not attend the gathering M is taking about. R is M's new acquaintance. Though M knows L, M explicitly says in line 09 to L, "you were not there for the meal that time." Even though M is well aware of the fact that the gathering is not a shared experience, he still makes use of the recognitional *na tian* 'that day' in line 8. Once again, the hearers accept the referent with no uptake concerning the identification.

The most likely explanation is that identifying the referent contributes very minimally, if anything, to the ongoing activity the speakers are engaged in. This analysis also echoes Himmelmann's (1996: 230) argument that the recognitional use frequently involves referents of peripheral importance. In (37), the focus of the speaker's discourse is on sharing the content of the story that she has learned on the history of mathematics. The exact day on which she purchases the book could be of the least importance to the state of affairs they are talking about. In (38), the question that the speakers are dealing with is 'What can you do with a humanities major?'. The experience that the junior student shared with the speaker is most relevant to their talk, not the day on which the junior student shares the information with him. In these scenarios, *na tian* 'that day' is merely used to establish a reference point on the timeline and create a telling frame to introduce more important discourse participants. However, it is worth mentioning that

making a reference is a matter of *selection* (Frege, 1960[1892]) and there are alternative ways to refer to a past time. The speaker could use general expressions such as *zuijin* ‘recently’ or *qianzhenzi* ‘a while ago’; but these expressions are restricted to the past or a day that occurred close to the time when an utterance is made. I argue that the recognitional *na tian* ‘that day’ is a routinized formulaic expression for introducing a specific reference time that is past in relation to the speech time with a relatively flexible temporal reference. Its referent is of low topicality and what happens on the day is of high topicality. Spontaneous casual conversation progresses quickly and takes place in real time. This may have triggered this recognitional use as a fill-in economic temporal expression to simplify the speaker’s task in referring to a time.

With respect to the central interactional feature of the recognitional use of *na*, I propose a unified function in establishing a solidarity between the speaker and the addressee. The recognitional *na* is employed as an interpersonal device to help create an in-group perspective. This interpretive effect is inherited from the canonical usage of recognitional demonstrative: referring to an identifiable referent with no previous mention based on shared knowledge between the speaker and the addressee(s). Evolving from the canonical usage, recognitional *na* can be used in contexts where the speaker knows that the hearer might not share the common memory, or even when the speaker knows that the hearer does share the experience or knowledge. However, recognitional uses without a shared memory between the interlocutors has to involve one crucial prerequisite: full access to the exact referent is superfluous to the ongoing discourse and partial identification is considered as sufficient to the state of affairs the speakers are engaged in. In the following example, I will analyze a deviant case, in which the speaker violates this prerequisite norm.

(39) BL\_2M1F\_35:36-35:53

01 M: 我负责两个演讲.

*wo fuze liang ge yanjiang.*

1SG be.in.charge.of two CL presentation

‘I was responsible for two presentations.’

02 一个是:

*yi ge shi:*

one CL COP

‘One (of the presenters) was:’

03 加拿大工程院的院士. 英文演[讲.

*yi ge shi: jianadagongchengyuan de yuanshi. yingwen yan[jiang.*

one CL COP Canadian.Academy.of.Engineering ATTR fellow English presentation

‘(a) Fellow of the Canadian Academy of Engineering. (The) presentation (was) in English.’

04 R:

[嗯.

[ng.

PRT

‘Mm.’

05 M: 一个中文-

*yi ge zhongwen-*

one CL Chinese

‘The other (was in) Chinese-’

06 一个X大学的:

*yi ge X daxue de*

one CL X university ATTR

‘The other presentation was by a professor from X University:’

07 一个团队的教授负责人的演讲.

*yi ge tuandui de jiaoshou fuzeren de yanjiang.*

one CL team ATTR professor PI ATTR presentation

‘who was also a project PI.’

08           中文演讲.  
             *zhongwen yanjia**ng.*  
             Chinese presentation  
             ‘(The) presentation (was) in Chinese.’

09 R:       嗯.  
             *ng.*  
             PRT  
             ‘Mm.’

10 M: → 我是那天晚上  
            *wo shi na tian wanshang*  
            1SG COP DEM day evening  
            ‘It was the evening of that day’

11           拿到的那个中文的[演讲].  
             *na-dao de na ge zhongwen de yan[jiang.*  
             receive-RES PRT DEM CL Chinese ATTR presentation  
             ‘that I received (the slides) of the Chinese presentation.’

12 R:                                  [嗯.  
                                          *[ng.*  
                                          PRT  
                                          ‘Mm.’

13 M:       英文演讲没拿到.=  
             *yingwen yanjia**ng mei na-dao.=*  
             English presentation NEG receive-RES  
             ‘(I) didn’t get (the slides) of the English presentation.=’

14 R:       =头一天晚上吗?  
             =*touyitian wanshang ma?*  
             the.day.before evening Q  
             ‘=The evening before (the conference)?’

15 M: 就是前一天晚上.

*jiu shi qianyitian wanshang.*

INTE COP the.day.before evening

‘(It) was the evening before (the conference)’

16 第二天就要做.

*di er tian jiu yao zuo.*

DI two day INTE FUT do

‘(I) had to do (simultaneous interpretation) the next day.’

Example (39) begins after M has initiated a complaint about his experience as a conference simultaneous interpreter. Prior to this segment, M has told the addressees that he agreed to accept a project at a scientific conference on water as a favor for a friend at short notice and had to ‘urge’ the presenters to send him their slides so that he could prepare beforehand. This leads to the next part of the complaint in lines 10, 11, and 13: “It was the evening of that day that I received (the slides) of the Chinese presentation. (I) didn’t get (the slides) of the English presentation.” The predicate is lodged within the time frame of *na tian* ‘that day’ (line 10); nevertheless, this day has never been introduced in the preceding discourse. Unlike the *na tian* ‘that day’ examples I presented previously, we see an immediate request for referential clarification from one of the addressees in line 14: “The evening before (the conference)?”. This other-initiated repair directly addresses the specificity of the recognitional referent. In this context, the day on which the speaker received the presentation slides is highly relevant to his complaint, particularly after the speaker has stated that he had urged the presenters for their slides. On a more general level, familiarity with the subject matter and preparation is critical for simultaneous interpretation. In this case, the event is a technical and area-specific conference; when the speaker received preparation materials becomes even more crucial for his preparation and performance. This is the reason why, among all the recognitional *na tian* ‘that day’ instances

in the turn-medial, utterance medial position, Example (39) is the only case that involves a referential repair initiated by the addressee.

#### 4.2.2 Non-referential *na* in turn-medial, utterance-medial position

Unlike turn-initial position, which abounds with non-referential uses of *na*; of the 164 turn-medial, utterance-medial *na* tokens, only one instance is used non-referentially. In this section, I analyze the only non-referential *na* case identified in turn-medial, utterance-medial position.

##### 4.2.2.1 Question initiator

The turn-medial, utterance-medial *na* (line 07) in Example (40) below is used in direct reported speech, immediately following the reporting verb *shuo* ‘say’. M and F are colleagues on the same team. The whole team has been working extremely hard on a project.

(40) MG\_1M1F\_04:41-04:52

01 M: C 跟我说

*C gen wo shuo.*

C PREP 1SG say

‘C told me (that)’

02 他现在每天晚上工作到两三点.

*ta xianzai meitian wanshang gongzuo dao liang san dian.*

3SG nowadays everyday night work until two three o’clock

‘he works until 2 or 3 in the evening everyday these days.’

- 03 就是兴奋地脑子根本就睡不着。  
*jiu shi xingfen di naozi genben jiu shui bu zhao.*  
 INTE COP excited PRT brain at.all INTE sleep NEG succeed.in  
 ‘The brain is overactive (so he) can’t fall asleep.’
- 04 F: 都是这样. 我那天(0.1)在电梯里见- (0.1)X 了。  
*dou shi zheyang. wo na tian (0.1) zai dianti li jian- (0.1) X le.*  
 all COP like.this 1SG DEM day be.at elevator inside see X PRT  
 ‘(We) are all like this. I saw- (0.1) X that day in the elevator.’
- 05 我说(.)怎么样? 忙吗? 她说“嗯”。  
*wo suho (.) zenmeyang? mang ma? ta shuo °ng.°*  
 1SG say how.are.things busy Q 3SG say PRT  
 ‘I said (.) “How are (you) doing? (Are you) busy?” She said “°Yeah.°”
- 06 她就低着头. “嗯”。  
*ta jiu di-zhe tou. °ng.°*  
 3SG just droop-AUX head PRT  
 ‘With her head down. she (said) “°Yeah.°”
- 07 → 我说那你是那种上班忙上班. 下班忙上班?  
*wo shuo na ni shi nazhong shangban mang shangban, xiaban mang shangban?*  
 1SG say NA 2SG COP that.kind on.duty work on.duty off.duty work on.duty  
 ‘I said “NA you are like busy with work (when you are) on duty. (And) busy with work (even when are) off duty?”’
- 08 她说“对. 是”。  
*ta shuo °dui. shi.°*  
 3SG say right COP  
 ‘She said “°Right. Yes.°”’

In response to M’s indirect reported speech about a colleague’s complaint (lines 1-3), F shares another co-worker’s situation through direct reported speech in alignment with the complaint (lines 5-8). The reported speech at line 07—“NA you are like busy with work (when

you are) on duty. (And) busy with work (even when are) off duty?” is a hearsay question initiated by *na*. If we put this direct reported speech back to its original context, based on hearsay evidence provided by F, the conversation between the co-worker (coded as W) and F unfolds as the following:

(41) Direct reported speech extracted from (40)

01 F: 怎么样? 忙吗?

*zenmeyang? mang ma?*

how.are.things busy Q

‘How are (you) doing? (Are you) busy?’

02 W: °嗯°.

°ng.°

PRT

‘°Yeah.°’

03F → 那你是那种上班忙上班. 下班忙上班?

*na ni shi nazhong shangban mang shangban, xiaban mang shangban?*

NA 2SG COP that.kind on.duty work on.duty off.duty work on.duty

‘NA you are like busy with work (when you are) on duty. (And) busy with work (even when are) off duty?’

04 W: °对. 是°.

°dui. shi.°

right COP

‘°Right. Yes.°’

The above restored conversation shows that *na* is used non-referentially by F to launch a confirmation seeking question addressed to W. Although directed reported speech purports to give a ‘phonographic reproduction’ of the words of the original speaker (Bally 1914; Jespersen 1924; Mayes 1990), research has shown that authentic rendition is rarely the case in reality

(Volosinov 1971; Dubois 1989; Sternberg 1982). Psycholinguistic studies have also demonstrated that subjects tend to remember the meanings of the original utterances rather than the forms (e.g. Lehrer 1989; Mayes 1990). As noted in Section 4.1.2, non-referential *na* is syntactically independent of its host utterance: removing it from the utterance leaves the utterance structure intact. In addition, non-referential *na* does not alter the truth value of its host utterance. Thus, from a grammatical point of view, non-referential *na* is completely optional. By virtue of saving a structurally dispensable marker when a speaker recalls another person's words, the reported speech in (41) indicates that initiating a question in turn-initial position with a non-referential *na* is a highly pragmaticalized function of the demonstrative in conversation<sup>20</sup>.

#### 4.2.3 Interim summary

Section 4.2 explored the functions of turn-medial, utterance-medial *na*. In contrast with turn-initial *na*, turn-medial, utterance-medial *na* instances are almost exclusively referential (99.4%). First, I analyzed anaphoric use (75 tokens, 45.7%), focusing on the unique features of anaphoric *na* in turn-medial, utterance-medial position when it cooccurs with its referent. I then showed that discourse deictic *na* can point to a long discourse segment such as a complex story in turn-medial, utterance-medial position; a usage that is theoretically possible for turn-initial *na*, yet absent in practice. Finally, I examined recognitional *na* instances (72 tokens, 43.9%). I presented canonical instances when the referents are identifiable based on shared knowledge between the speaker and the hearer. I also contrasted them with cases where the speaker knows that the referent is *discourse new* and *hearer new* but purportedly 'assume' it is *hearer old* and

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<sup>20</sup> It is important to note that in real life, presenting conversation from a prior occasion in the ongoing discourse is selective. In the case of (41), it is most unlikely that the four turns are the exclusive exchange between F and W; thus, it is not possible to conduct more thorough analysis as shown in Section 4.1.

chooses to use a recognitional demonstrative. I highlighted how the speaker makes use of the recognitional *na tian* ‘that day’ in dealing rapidly with non-crucial temporal referent. Finally, I proposed a unified function of recognitional *na* in establishing a solidarity between the speaker and the addressee.

### 4.3 Turn-medial, utterance-initial *na*

In this section, I analyze how turn-medial, utterance-initial *na* is used in conversation. Table 4.3 below provides summary information about the functions of *na* identified in turn-medial, utterance initial position, including the frequency of each function type. Unlike the turn-initial instances and the turn-medial, utterance-medial instances, which exhibit significant statistical contrast between referential uses and non-referential uses, turn-initial *na* is predominantly non-referential (71%), while turn-medial, utterance-medial *na* is almost exclusively referential (99.4%). The 601 *na* tokens are quite evenly distributed between referential usages (49.8%) and non-referential usages (50.2%). With respect to each functional categories, it is evident that discourse deictic *na* ranks the highest: 34.4% (207 tokens) of the 601 turn-medial, utterance-medial *na* tokens. The total cases of the other two types of endophoric uses, anaphoric *na* and recognitional *na*, number 11.8 % (71 tokens) and 3.5% (21 tokens) respectively. Like turn-medial, utterance-medial *na*, there is no exophoric use in turn-medial, utterance-initial position. Of the 302 (50.2%) non-referential *na* instances, 63 (10.5%) are used to initiate a question, 61 (10.1%) are used to index a contrastive stance, 68 (11.3%) project either a question or a disaffiliative turn. In the following analysis, I will present data for each of these functions, focusing in particular on features that do not show in turn-initial or turn-medial, utterance-medial *na* instances. In addition, I will also touch upon

the miscellaneous cases and draw the connections between the miscellaneous cases and the major functions.

**Table 4.3 Frequency distribution of the functions of turn-medial, utterance-initial *na***

|             | Referential <i>na</i> |               |                   |               | Non-referential <i>na</i> |               |                          |                |
|-------------|-----------------------|---------------|-------------------|---------------|---------------------------|---------------|--------------------------|----------------|
|             | Exophoric             | Endophoric    |                   |               | Question initiator        | Stance marker | Question /Stance prelude | Miscellaneous  |
|             |                       | Anaphoric     | Discourse deictic | Recognitional |                           |               |                          |                |
| Tok.<br>(%) | 0<br>(0%)             | 71<br>(11.8%) | 207<br>(34.4%)    | 21<br>(3.5%)  | 63<br>(10.5%)             | 61<br>(10.1%) | 68<br>(11.3%)            | 110<br>(18.3%) |
| Sub.<br>(%) | 0<br>(0%)             | 299 (49.8%)   |                   |               | 302 (50.2%)               |               |                          |                |
|             | 299 (49.8%)           |               |                   |               |                           |               |                          |                |
| Tot.<br>(%) | 601 (100%)            |               |                   |               |                           |               |                          |                |

#### 4.3.1 Referential *na* in turn-medial, utterance-initial position

The referential uses of *na* in turn-medial, utterance-medial position display their unique functional distribution compared with their counterparts in turn-initial and turn-medial, utterance-medial positions. On the one hand, like turn-initial *na*, turn-medial, utterance-medial *na* locates at the right periphery of a discourse unit; both positions attract discourse deictic *na* as the dominant referential use (34.4%, 207 tokens for turn-medial, utterance-medial *na*, 19.0%, 92 tokens for turn-initial *na*), which contrasts with discourse deictic *na*'s low frequency (9.8%, 16 tokens) in turn-medial, utterance-medial position. On the other hand, though discourse deictic use is the most typical referential use in turn-medial, utterance-initial position and turn-initial

position, it has the highest frequency among all the identified uses (including non-referential uses) in turn-medial, utterance-initial position.

#### 4.3.1.1 Anaphoric use

Of the 299 turn-medial, utterance-initial *na* instances, 71 (11.8%) are used anaphorically. Example (42) illustrates an anaphoric use, in which *na* is used by B (line 05) to refer to the grade A- he mentions in the preceding discourse.

(42) FT\_2M2F\_17:28-17:35

01 B: 他嫌A- 都 (0.1) 太低了真的. [太低了.  
*ta xian A- dou (0.1) tai di le zhende.* [*tai di le.*  
3SG dislike even too low PRT really too low PRT  
'He felt even an A- (0.1) (was) way too low. Too low.'

02 C: [然后- 你别-  
[*ranhou- ni bie-*  
then 2SG don't  
'Then- don't (be)-'

03 W: 又重新修了一遍吗?  
*you chongxin xiu le yi bian ma?*  
again once.more study PRF one CL Q  
'(Did he) take (it) again?'

04 (0.2)

05 B: → 没- 没有. 他就觉得老师给他 A-. (0.1) 那太低了都.  
*mei- mei you. ta jiu jue de laoshi gei ta A-. (0.1) na tai di le dou.*  
NEG NEG have 3SG just think teacher give 3SG A- DEM too low PRT even  
'No- (he) didn't. He just thought (that the) professor gave him (an) A-. (0.1) That (was)  
too low even (though it was an A-).'

#### 4.3.1.2 Discourse deictic use

As noted earlier, discourse deictic *na* is the dominant type (34.4%) in turn-medial, utterance-medial position. It can be used to refer to the propositional content of a different speaker's prior turn, as shown in Example (43). In this segment, *na* produced by A in line 04 follows immediately after a turn-initial responsive token *wa::* 'wow::' and is coreferential with the meaning expressed by C in line 01.

(43) WY\_3M\_10:01-10:05

01 C: 哦. 你们毕业了同时拿两个学位?

*o. nimen biye le tongshi na liang ge xuewei?*

PRT 2PL graduate PRF same.time grasp two CL degree

'Oh. You will get a dual degree when you graduate?'

02 B: 对对.

*dui dui.*

right right

'Right right.'

03 C: [哇:::

*wa:::*

PRT

'Wow:::'

04 A: → [哇::: 那很棒诶!

*wa::: na hen bang ei!*

PRT DEM very great FP

'Wow::: that (is) awesome!'

*Na* in Example (43) is very similar to turn-initial discourse deictic *na* instances, except that it is not the first linguistic item in a new turn. Compared with turn-initial and turn-medial,

utterance-medial discourse deictic *na* instances, the most salient syntactic environment that is characteristic of turn-medial, utterance-initial discourse deictic *na* is conditionals:

(44) LD\_2F\_25:14-25:21

01 X: 我就要认真听.

*wo jiu yao renzhen ting.*

1SG INTE need careful listen

‘I need to listen (to it) carefully.’

02 我认真听我可以听得懂.

*wo renzhen ting wo keyi ting de dong.*

1SG conscientious listen 1SG can listen PRT understand

‘I can understand (it if) I listen (to it) carefully.’

03 S: 嗯.

*ng.*

PRT

‘Mm.’

04 X: 但是如果是我一边听一边比如说做点别的事.

*danshi ruguo wo yibian.ting.yibian biru shuo zuo dian biede shi.*

but if 1SG listen.while for.instance say do some other thing

‘But if I listen (to it) for instance say while (I was) doing something else.’

05 或者吃东西什么的.

*huozhe chi dongxi shenme de.*

or eat thing what NMLZ

‘Or (while I was) eating or something like that.’

06 → 那我就会有- (0.1) 有跑掉的部分. 就听不到.

*na wo jiu hui you- you pao-diao de bufen jiu ting-bu-dao.*

NA 1SG INTE FUT exist exist run-RES ATTR part INTE listen-NEG-RES

‘In **that** case I will- (0.1) miss some parts. Just (will)not (be able to) catch (some) parts (of it).’

07 : S    ^ 啊::  
           ^ah::  
           PRT  
           ‘^Ah::’

The speaker in example (44) is commenting on Northeastern Mandarin, which encompasses Mandarin varieties spoken in Northeast China. Though very similar to Standard Mandarin, some varieties can be slightly challenging for Standard Mandarin speakers. The antecedent, or the protasis of the conditional is marked by *ruguo* ‘if’ in lines 04 and 05, the main clause, or the apodosis, is introduced by *na* in line 06. Functioning as a linking device between the condition and the consequence in conditional relationships, *na* in ‘if clauses’ behaves very similar to the ambiguous case (i.e. Example (13)) I examined in Section 4.1.1.3. It can be interpreted as a discourse deixis pointing back to the antecedent. However, it can also be omitted, and the conditional will still be perfectly grammatical. Interpreted in this way, *na* is a connective; it creates an overt link between the antecedent and the main clause in a conditional, which can be roughly translated as ‘then’:

(45) Reanalyzed conditional from (44)

04 X:    但是如果是我一边听一边比如说做点别的事.  
           *danshi ruguo wo yibian.ting.yibian biru            shuo zuo dian biede shi.*  
           but    if        1SG listen.while            for.instance say    do    some other thing  
           ‘But if I listen (to it) for instance say while (I was) doing something else.’

05       或者吃东西什么的.  
           *huozhe chi dongxi shenme de.*  
           or        eat thing    what    NMLZ  
           ‘Or (while I was) eating or something like that.’

06 → 那我就会有- (0.1) 有跑掉的部分. 就听不到.

*na wo jiu hui you- you pao-diao de bufen jiu ting-bu-dao.*

NA 1SG INTE FUT exist exist run-RES ATTR part INTE listen-NEG-RES

‘Then I will- (0.1) miss some parts. Just not (be able to) catch (some) parts (of it).’

As noted previously, all the ambiguous cases are categorized as discourse deixis because referential interpretation is still available.

#### 4.3.1.3 Recognitional use

I explored recognitional use of *na* in turn-medial, utterance-medial position in Section 4.2.1.3, where I highlighted the recognitional temporal expression *na tian* ‘that day’. In turn-medial, utterance-initial position, the number of recognitional tokens (21, 3.5%) is significantly lower than that in utterance-medial position (72, 43.9%). However, of the 21 recognitional *na* tokens, 8 are found in *na tian* ‘that day’, suggesting that *na tian* is relatively a common recognitional temporal expression in natural conversation. It is also worth noting that among the 8 recognitional *na tian* instances, 7 are used in contexts where the speaker and the addressee do not share a common memory. This usage can also be extended to similar temporal expressions, as shown in the following example:

(46) EP\_2F\_10:01-10:12

01 L: 出虚汗.

*chu chuxuhan.*

out abnormal.sweat

‘(I) was seating abnormally.’

02 S: 嗯:.

*ng:*

PRT

‘Yeah:’

03 L: 急躁. 爱发脾气.

*jizao. ai fa piqi.*

impatient love lose temper

‘(I was) impatient. Short-tempered.’

04 S: 嗯:

*ng:*

PRT

‘Yeah:’

05 (0.3)

06 L: 呃:: 有一次- 那个:: 端午节.

*E:: you yi ci- nage:: duanwujie.*

PRT exist one CL DEM.CL Dragon.Boat.Festival

‘Em:: Once- Hm:: (It was) the Dragon Boat Festival.’

07 → 对. 那年端午节. (0.4) 嗯::

*dui. na nian duanwujie. (0.4) ng::*

dui DEM year Dragon.Boat.Festival PRT

‘Right. (It was) **that** year’s Dragon Boat Festival. (0.4) Mm::’

08 正好那个:: 开那个职代会.

*zhenghao nage:: kai na cl zhidaihui.*

happen.to DEM.CL hold DEM CL staff.and.worker.representative.meeting

‘(It) happened to be hm:: on the same day as the staff and worker representative’s meeting.’

09 S:  嗯.  
          *ng.*  
          PRT  
          ‘Mm.’

((L continues by telling a story about how she first noticed her symptoms and was diagnosed with hyperthyroidism))

L and S are in their 70s and have known each other for more than three years. S knows that L used to suffer from hyperthyroidism before she retired but she does not know the details. In this excerpt, L tells S how the symptoms drew her attention. In line 07, L makes a temporal reference to the Dragon Boat Festival of *na nian* ‘that year’. This ‘year’ remains unspecified until the end of L’s telling (omitted in the transcript). It seems that both the speaker and the hearer are more engaged with aspects related to L’s symptoms and how she was diagnosed with hyperthyroidism rather than pinpointing the ‘year’ in which these happened, which is very similar to the *na tian* ‘that day’ instances I analyzed in Section 4.2.1.3.

#### **4.3.2 Non-referential *na* in turn-medial, utterance-initial position**

As stated in Section 4.1.2, non-referential *na* has no traceable reference either in the speech situation or the speaker’s mental space. In the analysis that follows, I present non-referential *na* examples characteristic of the 302 (50.2%) turn-medial, utterance-initial instances identified in the database.

#### 4.3.2.1 Question initiator

There are 63 (10.5%) questions initiated with turn-medial, utterance-initial *na*. These include pure information seeking interrogatives such as Example (47):

(47) SF\_1M1F\_20:06-20:19

01 M: X的那个:: 大堂.

*X de na ge:: datang.*

X ATTR DEM CL lobby

‘X’s lobby.’

02 F: 嗯.

*ng.*

PRT

‘Mm.’

03 M: X的那个酒店大堂.

*X de na ge jiudian datang.*

X ATTR DEM CL hotel lobby

‘X’s hotel lobby.’

04 F: 嗯.

*ng.*

PRT

‘Mm.’

05 是在那个连廊上的.

*shi zai na ge lianlang shang de.*

COP be.at DEM CL bridge within PRT

‘(It)’s inside that bridge.’

- 06 F: [那-  
na-  
NA  
'[NA-'
- 07 M: [是在空中连啊.  
*shi zai kongzhong lian a.*  
COP be.at air connect FP  
'(It) [is a skybridge.'
- 08 F: → 哦. 那Y的在哪儿啊? (0.7)  
oh. *na Y de zai nar a?* (0.7)  
PRT *na* Y ATTR be.at where FP  
'Oh. *NA* where is Y's (lobby)? (0.7)'
- 09 Y没有是吗. hehheheh  
*Y mei you shi ma.* hehheheh  
Y NEG exist COP Q  
'Y doesn't (even) have a lobby huh. hehheheh'
- 10 M: Y::: (0.9) Y不知道在哪一层.  
*Y::: (0.9) Y bu zhidao zai na yi ceng.*  
Y Y NEG know be.at which one floor  
'Y::: (0.9) (I) don't know which floor Y('s lobby) is on.'
- 11 F: hahhahhh
- 12 反正肯定不在连廊上. huhhh  
*fanzheng kending bu zai lianlang shang.* huhhh  
in.any.case definitely NEG be.at bridge within  
'In any case definitely not inside a skybridge. huhhh'
- 13 F: huhh

In this example, the two colleagues, M and F, are comparing their company's hotel properties, X and Y. X is a newly constructed high-end resort and Y is a luxury apartment complex. Compared with F, M is more familiar with their hotels' locations, designs, and price ranges. In lines 01-07, M explains to F that he was quite amazed by the design of X's crystal skybridge, which houses X's residential lobby and clubhouse. At the end of line 05, immediately after M says X's hotel lobby is located inside the bridge, overlapping talk occurs: F's *na* (line 06) is produced simultaneously with M's further explanation of the bridge, "(It) is a skybridge" (line 07). F chooses to cut off *na* and terminate her turn at line 06, which makes this overlap *noncompetitive* (cf. Schegloff 2000). F's *na*-prefaced question in line 08, "NA where is Y's (lobby)" is most likely her second attempt at inquiring information about the location of Y's lobby. Once again, the *na*-prefaced question closely ties into the topic of the prior utterance(s) but makes a shift with respect to the subject. More specifically, M's turns are about the location of resort X's residential lobby while F's *na*-prefaced question seeks information on apartment complex Y's lobby.

Having analyzed an information seeking question, I now turn to rhetorical questions in this group. *Na*-prefaced rhetorical questions always implement actions such as challenging and criticizing rather than requesting information in the database. Nonetheless, as I pointed out in Section 4.1.2.1, I classify a rhetorical case as a question if the addressee treats it as an interrogative and provides an answer to it. The following scenario is a case in point:

(48) GF\_2M\_17:01-17:31

01 A: 或者说是. 啊. 你今天这个头发.

*huozhe shuo shi. a. ni jintian zhe ge toufa.*

or say COP PRT 2SG today DEM CL hair

'Or (you can say) like. Ah. Your hair today.'

- 02        发型啊什么的好漂亮.=  
*faxing a shenme de hao piaoliang.=*  
 hair.style PRT what NMLZ so beautiful  
 ‘(Something like your) hair style is so beautiful.=’
- 03 B:    =↑我: [操::!!  
          =↑ wo: [cao:!!  
          holy.shit  
          ‘=↑ Ho:ly [shi::t!!’
- 04 A:    [其实- 只是这么说而已. 哎呀.  
          [qishi- zhishi zheme shuo eryi. aiya.  
          actually only like.this say that’s.all PRT  
          ‘[Actually- just some of the things you can say (to her). Gee.’
- 05        (1.1)
- 06 B:    你- 这么会撩嘛?  
          ni- zheme hui liao ma?  
          2SG so can flirt FP  
          ‘You- (are) so good at flirting huh?’
- 07        (0.9)
- 08 A:    我::: 比较擅长:  
          wo::: *bijiao shanchang:*  
          1SG fairly be.good.at  
          ‘I::: am fairly good at:’
- 09 B:    5个人. 哎. 你确实有- 是- 是应该有一点经验.  
          wu ge ren. ai. ni queshi you- shi- shi yinggai you yidian jingyan.  
          5 CL person PRT 2SG truly exist COP COP should exist a.little experience  
          ‘Five exes. Well. You really have- (you) are- (you) should have some experience.’

- 10 A: 我比较擅长 (1.0) 嗯: 微信聊. huhh 我不擅长 (0.2)  
*wo bijiao shanchang (1.0) ng: weixin liao. huhh wo bu shanchang (0.2)*  
 1SG fairly be.good.at PRT Wechat chat 1SG NEG be.good.at  
 ‘I’m fairly good at (1.0) hm: chatting on Wechat. huhh I’m not good at (0.2)’
- 11 B: 当[面.  
*dangmian.*  
 in.person  
 ‘(chatting) in person.’
- 12 A: [面[对- 面对面 (0.1) 尬聊.  
*miandui- mianduimian (0.1) galiao.*  
 face.to.face-to-face embarrassing.chat  
 ‘(chatting) face [to- having an awkward conversation face to face.’
- 13 B: [↑面对面你会[心虚::  
 ↑*mianduimian ni hui xinxu::*  
 face.to.face 2SG FUT guilty.conscience  
 ‘↑Chatting face to face you’d be afraid of being seen through::’
- 14 A: [尬聊. huhhhuhhuhhuhh  
*[galiao huhhhuhhuhhuhh*  
 embarrassing.chat  
 ‘[have an awkward conversation.’
- 15 B: ↑不! ↑你会心虚!  
 ↑*bu! ↑ni hui xinxu!*  
 NEG 2SG FUT guilty.conscience  
 ‘↑No! ↑You’d be afraid of being seen through!’
- 16 A: → ↑你别那么- ↑那你不心虚吗?  
 ↑*ni bie name- na ni bu xinxu ma?*  
 2SG don’t so NA 2SG NEG guilty.conscience Q  
 ‘↑Don’t be so- NA won’t you be afraid of being seen through?’

- 17        你也心虚啊.  
           *ni ye xinxu a.*  
           2SG also guilty.conscience FP  
           ‘You’d also be afraid of being seen through.’
- 18 B:    ↑那我是真情实意的呀. 我为什么会心虚呢.  
           ↑*na wo shi zhenqingshiyi deya. wo weishenme hui xinxu ne.*  
           NA 1SG COP sincere.feeling FP    1SG why        FUT guilty.conscience FP  
           ‘↑NA mine are sincere feelings. Why would I be afraid of being seen through.’
- 19 A:    ↑我也是真情实意的.  
           ↑*wo ye shi zhenqingshiyi de.*  
           1SG also COP sincere.feeling PRT  
           ‘↑Mine were also sincere feelings.’
- 20 B:    hahhahhahh

Prior to the above segment, B told A about his ‘friendship’ quandary: he likes a female friend but does not know what a good way would be to show it to her without potentially ruining the friendship. A suggests that B could test the female friend’s reaction to compliments such as “your hair style is so beautiful” (line 02), which is considered by B later in the conversation as a little bit too ‘flirty’ and may not sound ‘sincere’. The advice leads to an inserted sequence on A’s dating communication, where A explains that he prefers online chat over face-to-face communication in the early stage of relationships (lines 10, 12, 14). The reason for this preference provided by A is in-person communication in a new relationship tends to end up with “an awkward conversation” (lines 12, 14). Rejecting this explanation, twice at line 13 and line 15 respectively, B points out that A fears that his insincere compliments would be seen through face-to-face. In response to B’s assertion in line 15, “You’d be afraid of being seen through!”, A first produces a negative imperative (i.e. Don’t be so-, line 16); he then abandons the imperative

and replaces it with a *na*-prefaced negative rhetorical question, “NA won’t you be afraid of being seen through?”. Similar to the pure information seeking question analyzed earlier, this negative rhetorical question redirects the focus on A in line 15 to that on B; thus, we see a contrast between the two thematic subjects. More importantly, this rhetorical question is not designed to elicit an affirmative or negative answer, but is deployed to criticize and counterattack the previous speaker’s stance.

#### 4.3.2.2 Stance marker

We saw in the previous example where a rhetorical question implements a confrontational criticism. In this section, I analyze how *na* is used in turn-medial, utterance-initial position to index a contrastive stance in declarative utterances. Among the 61 (10.1%) *na*-initiated turn-medial utterances, the typical context is straightforward disagreement, as shown in (49):

(49) HW\_1M1F\_23:03-23:31

01 W: 我打算就是在九月份的时候开始. (0.1)

*wo dasuan jiu shi zai jiuyuefen de shihou kaishi.* (0.1)

1SG plan INTE COP be.in September NMLZ time start

‘Starting in September I plan to. (0.1)’

02 真的就是好好地锻炼[起来.

*zhende jiu shi haohao di duanlian [qilai.*

real INTE COP thoroughly PRT exercise up

‘Seriously (I’ll) work out hard.’

- 03 M: [啊: 我觉得你这个打算很不好啊.  
*a: wo jue de ni zhe ge dasuan hen bu hao a.*  
 PRT 1SG think 2SG DEM CL plan very NEG good FP  
 ‘Well: I think this plan is real bad.’
- 04 这就- 这就跟-  
*zhe jiu- zhe jiu gen-*  
 DEM INTE DEM INTE as  
 ‘This- this (is like)-’
- 05 W: 嗯.  
*ng.*  
 PRT  
 ‘Mm.’
- 06 H: 我打算明huhuhh天开始运动[一个道理. huhuhuhhuhuh  
*wo daduan ming(huhuhh)xian huhuh kaishi yundong yi ge daoli. huhuhuhhuhuh*  
 1SG plan tomorrow start exercise one CL principle  
 ‘I plan to start exercising tomorrow. huhuhuhhuhuh’
- 07 W: [没有. 为什么呢. 为什么九月份呢.  
*mei you. weishenme ne. weishenme jiuyuefen ne.*  
 NEG exist why FP why September FP  
 ‘[Not (like that). (I’ll tell you) why, why (from)  
 September.’
- 08 H: 嗯. 嗯.  
*ng. ng.*  
 PRT PRT  
 ‘Mm. Mm.’
- 09 W: 因为呐. 九月份阳光啦又-  
*yinwei na. jiuyuefen yangguang la you-*  
 because FP September sunshine PRT INTE  
 ‘Because. Sunlight in September-’



17 → 那每天早上早点起床啊

*na meitian zaoshang zao dian qichuang a*

NA everyday morning early a.little get.up PRT

18 肯定有时间运动的.

*kending you shijian yundong de.*

definitely exist time exercise PRT

‘NA getting up a bit earlier every morning would for sure give (you) time for exercise.’

This conversation is recorded towards the end of July between a husband, M, and his wife, W. The excerpt starts with the wife’s resolution: “Starting in September I plan to. (0.1) Seriously (I’ll) work out hard.” The husband cuts in and teases her of being all talk and no action. The wife then justifies her choice of September, making the point that the weather will be less hot in September and the family will be visiting Xinjiang in August. In line 15, she adds, “Lots of nice food there (isn’t it). We don’t have time for exercise.” This reasoning receives a dissent from the husband at line 16, after which he elucidates further: “NA getting up a bit earlier every morning would for sure give (you) time for exercise.” (lines 17-18). This *na*-prefaced utterance is in opposition to the stance taken by the wife at line 15. Example (49) illustrates a case where the speaker marks a stance that disagrees with a prior speaker’s stance. In the following example, I show an instance where the speaker overwrites her own stance with an opposing one.

(50) FG\_2M1F\_07:12-07:25

01 A: 刚- 刚开始很卑微的时候. >就觉得我靠.<

*gang- gang kaishi hen beiwei de shihou. > jiu jue de wokao.<*

just just beginning very humble NMLZ time INTE think damn.it

‘At- at the beginning when I (felt) quite humble. > (I was like) damn it. <



- 08        北京理工我都想申申.  
*beijingligong*                      *wo dou xiang shenshen.*  
 Beijing.Institute.of.Technology 1SG INTE want apply  
 ‘I even applied for BIT.’
- 09 A:    嗯.  
*ng.*  
 PRT  
 ‘Mm.’
- 10 C:    看: 就[是-  
*kan: jiu shi-*  
 see just COP  
 ‘Just to see-’
- 11 A:        [北理也↑挺好的呀.  
*[beili*                                      *ye ↑ting hao deya.*  
 Beijing.Institute.of.Technology PRT quite good FP  
 ‘(But) BIT is↑pretty good.’
- 12 C:    北理英语好吗?  
*beili*                                      *yingyu hao ma?*  
 Beijing.Institute.of.Technology English good Q  
 ‘(Is) BIT’s English (program) good?’
- 13 A:    北理英语挺好的.  
*beili*                                      *yingyu ting hao de.*  
 Beijing.Institute.of.Technology English quite good PRT  
 ‘BIT’s English (program is) pretty good.’
- 14 C:    >啊真的吗.<  
*>a zhen de ma.<*  
 PRT true    PRT Q  
 ‘Ah is that so.’

- 15     那我收回收回. huhuhh 错了错了错了. huhhh  
          *na wo shouhui shouhui. hhh cuo le cuo le cuo le. huhhh*  
          NA 1SG retract retract                wrong PRT wrong PRT wrong PRT  
          ‘NA I take back (what I just said) (I) take back (what I just said). huhuhh (I was) wrong  
          (I was) wrong (I was) wrong. huhhh’

A and C met each other in an English summer camp. In this example, the two speakers are sharing their application processes for summer camps. A explains that at the beginning he was not sure how competitive the application was, so he thought it was fine if he could be accepted to a program at a university that he considered as “just OK”. C chimes in at line 07 with her parallel experience by providing a university that she deemed as less competitive: “Like B- I even applied for BIT. Just to see-” (Lines 07, 08, 10). This leads to A’s disaffiliative disruption in line 11, where we see a guarded disagreement attenuated by the particle *ye* and the final particle *deya*. After C elicits an affirmation answer from A about BIT’s English program via a confirmation checking sequence (lines 12-13), C explicitly discards her prior stance on BIT, “NA I take back (what I just said)” and acknowledges it as “wrong” (line 15).

#### 4.3.2.3 Question/Stance prelude

In this section, I focus on instances where speakers cut off *na*-prefaced utterances before the utterances reach a content predictable point. Once turn progression is restored, the speaker either produces a question or expresses a stance in conflict with a prior one. Consider the following example:

(51) BL\_2M1F\_05:16-05:35

((9 lines omitted, L states his argument against euthanasia.))

10 L: >所以说<我们不应该- 就是实行安乐死.

>suoyi shuo< women bu yinggai- jiu shi shixing anlesi.

so say 1PL NEG should INTE COP implement euthanasia

'>So< we should not- perform euthanasia.'

11 可能从这个方-

keneng neng cong zhe ge fang-

perhaps can PREP DEM CL

'Perhaps (we) can (approach it) from this perspe-(ctive)'

12 但这只是我个人想法.

dan zhe zhishi wo geren xiangfa.

but DEM only 1SG personal opinion

'But this is just my personal opinion.'

13 可能从这个[方面.

keneng neng cong zhe ge [fangmian.

perhaps can PREP DEM CL perspective

'Perhaps (we) can (approach it) from this [perspective.'

14 R: [你觉得呢?

ni juede ne?

2SG think Q

'What do you think?'

15 L: → 来. [那- (.) >那你觉得呢<?

lai. [na- (.) >na ni juede ne<?

come NA NA 2SG think Q

'You are up. [NA- (.) >NA what do you think<?'

16 M: [让我拒绝的话我- (0.2)

rang wo jujue dehua wo- (0.2)

let 1SG reject DEHUA 1SG

'If I were arguing against (it) I- (0.2)'

- 17      我其实觉得也挺难想的。  
          *wo   qishi   juede   ye   ting   nan   xiang   de.*  
          1SG actually think also quite difficult think PRT  
          ‘I actually also think (it’s) quite difficult.’

At line 15, L briefly suspends the turn progression after he utters *na* partially because his *na* overlaps with M’s answer to R’s question. It is also possible that L aborts the utterance-in-progress because the question that would have followed the first *na* is identical to the question R initiates in line 14, which makes L’s question slightly superfluous. However, L does not yield his turn; instead, he chooses to speed up and rush his question into the conversation. Linking L’s question to the context, it is evident that the question is tightly connected with the topic of the preceding discourse. L invites M to present his argument against euthanasia after L states his own. Structurally, the *na* projected question recycles the grammatically optional *na*, even though it has already been uttered once immediately prior to the question. The preservation of *na* indicates that non-referential *na* has already become an integral part of this type of question—questions that contain a focal contrast to the content of the prior turn(s).

As noted earlier, a cutoff *na* can also foreshadow a disaffiliative stance, which typically appears in contexts where speakers are engaged in composing relatively sophisticated disagreeing positions. I have analyzed the following scenario in Section 4.1.2.3 on the turn-initial *na* (the first *na* in line 04). The second *na* in the same line shares the same function: foreshadowing a disaffiliative stance. Line 01 occurs after an extended discussion on the presentation style of a literature talk, during which X takes a strong negative stance towards scripted speech while M perceives it more as a disciplinary convention. Essentially at line 04, the speaker twice cuts off *na*, giving up on each of the *na*-prefaced utterances in response to X’s

evaluation, and finally addresses the same undertaking starting from line 05 from an opposing perspective.

(52). MM\_2F\_27:42-28:14

01 X: 我就- 我就难以想象.

*wo jiu- wo jiu nanyixiangxiang.*

1SG just 1SG just unable.to.imagine

‘I just- I just can’t imagine.’

02 他们写东西的时(huh)候是什么样子.

*tamen xie dongxi de shi(huh)hou shi shenme yangzi.*

3PL write thing NMLZ time COP what appearance

‘What would it look like when they write.’

03 因为他们讲话都是这个样子.=

*yinwei tamen jianghua dou shi zhe ge yangzi.=*

becuase 3PL talk INTE COP DEM CL appearance

‘Because they talk like this.=’

04 M: → 那- huhh (3.8) 对啊. 就是- (0.2) 那- huhhuhh

=na-huhh (3.8) *dui a. jiu shi* (0.2) *na-* huhhuhh

NA right FP INTE COP NA

‘NA- huhh (3.8) right. It’s- (0.2) NA- huhhuhh’

05 我觉得文学啊. 艺术啊. 他们两个都- (0.3)

*wo juede wenxue a. yishu a. tamen liang ge dou-* (0.3)

1SG think literature FP art FP 3PL two CL all

‘I think literature. (And) art. Both of them- (0.3)’

06 就是. (0.2) 他们两个是: 相通的那种. (0.6)

*jiu shi.* (0.2) *tamen liang ge shi: xiangtong de nazhong.* (0.6)

INTE COP 3PL two CL COP same PRT that.kind

‘(They) are. (0.2) They are: of the same type. (0.6)’

- 07      相类似的. (2.4) 那如果人人都能懂.  
*xiang      leisi      de. (2.4) na ruguo renren      dou neng dong.*  
 each.other similar FP      NA if      everyone all can understand  
 ‘(They’re) similar. (2.4) If everyone can understand.’
- 08      人人都能- (0.3) 很轻易的理解的话. (0.2)  
*renren      dou neng. (0.3) hen qingyi de lijie      dehua. (0.2)*  
 everyone all can      very easily PRT understand DEHUA  
 ‘If everyone can- (0.3) easily understand (them). (0.2)’
- 09      那好像就不是他们了. (1.2)  
*na haoxiang jiu      bu shi tamen le. (1.2)*  
 NA seem      INTE NEG COP 3PL      PRT  
 ‘It seems that they’re not (literature and art) any more. (1.2)’
- 10      他们就是要. (0.9) 跟: (0.5) 就是. (0.3) 保持一定的距离.  
*tamen jiu      shi yao. (0.9) gen: (0.5) jiu shi. (0.3) baochi yiding de juli.*  
 3PL      INTE COP want.to      PREP      INTE COP      keep      some PRT distance  
 ‘They wanna. (0.9) (0.5) keep some distance from: (0.3) keep their distance.’

### 4.3.3 Miscellaneous

In this section, I provide an example from the miscellaneous group that represents the major usage within this category. The seemingly high proportion of the miscellaneous cases 110 (18.3%) in the turn-medial, utterance-initial position is not as a consequence of intractable contexts or thorny functional taxonomy, but mainly a result of speakers can simply abandoning an utterance-in-progress, as in (53):

(53) GF\_2F\_16:45-17:01

01 B: 表明有好感是指. (0.1)

*biaoming you haogan shi zhi* (0.1)

make.known exist good.feelings COP refer.to

‘Letting (her) know (you) have feelings (for her) means. (0.1)’

02 你行为上还是直接 (0.1) 说.

*ni xingwei shang haishi zhijie* (0.1) *shuo*.

2SG behavior in or directly say

‘(Letting her know through) your behavior or directly (through) (0.1) words.’

03 A: 行为上的.

*xingwei shang de*.

behavior in NMLZ

‘Behavior.’

04 为什么你会直接说我对你好感?

*weishenme ni hui zhijie shuo wo dui ni you haogan?*

why 2SG FUT directly say 1SG towards 2SG exist good.feelings

‘Why would you directly say “I have feelings for you”?’

05 B: [就-

[*jiu*-

just

‘[Just-’

06 A: [我喜欢你. 这不就是表白嘛.

[*wo xihuan ni. zhe bu jiu shi biaobai* *ma*.

1SG like 2SG DEM NEG INTE COP confess.one’s.feelings PRT

‘[“I like you.” Isn’t this confession.’

07 B: → 那- 哦. *那*-

*na*- o. *na*-

NA PRT *NA*

‘NA- Oh. *NA*-’

08 A: 跟她说 (0.2) 是吧.

*gen ta shuo (0.2) shi ba.*

PREP 3SG say COP Q

‘Tell her (0.2) for instance.’

09 能不能下次一起出来干什么呀? (0.2) 对嘛?

*neng bu neng xiaci yiqi chulai gan shenme ya? (0.2) dui ma?*

can NEG can next.time together come.out do what FP right Q

‘‘Can (we) hang out next time?’’ (0.2) right?’

10 B: 哦:

*oh:*

PRT

‘Oh:’

This segment is taken from the same ‘friendship’ quandary dialogue we have seen in (48), where B seeks advice from A on how to let his female friend know that he likes her. Line 07 contains two cutoff *na* tokens, but the two halted utterances have never been restored and the response is ceased at the end of turn 07, leaving no evidence for context-sensitive analysis. Of the 110 miscellaneous *na* tokens, 54 are produced in the same fashion as in (53), which make up almost half of the miscellaneous instances. Turning back to turn-initial *na*, there are also cases of this type, as exemplified by the first *na* in (53) (line 07); yet the percentage of such tokens (4, 0.8%) is simply too scant to be statistically significant.

#### 4.3.4 Interim summary

Section 4.3 focused on turn-medial, utterance-initial *na*, the tokens of which are almost equally distributed between the referential uses and the non-referential uses. The dominant usage across all the turn-medial, utterance-initial *na* tokens is discourse deixis (207, 34.4%), largely

because turn-medial, utterance-initial position is the ideal locus for the main clause of a conditional. Indeed, occupying the initial position of a conditional's main clause to refer back to the antecedent, *na* is recurrently used by the speaker to create an overt link between the conditional antecedent and the main clause. In contrast, the percentages of the other two types of endophoric uses are significantly lower: 11.8% (71 tokens) for anaphoric use and 3.5% (21 tokens) for recognitional use. Within the non-referential domain, *na* tokens split quite evenly into the three major functional categories: (i) initiating a question inquiring into the state of affairs evoked by the prior turn(s), but with a contrast or shift in focus (63 tokens, 10.5%); (ii) marking a contrastive stance (61 tokens, 10.1%); (iii) projecting a question or a disaffiliative turn (68 tokens, 11.3%).

#### **4.4 Turn-medial, utterance-final *na***

In this section, I focus on turn-medial, utterance-final *na*. As noted in Chapter 3, the criteria I used for identifying an utterance are very similar to those proposed by Chafe (1987), Du Bois (1991), Du Bois, Schuetze-Coburn, Cumming & Paolino, (1993), and Tao (1996) for intonation units. If a speaker resets the baseline pitch level, or pauses, or cuts off his/her talk, or accelerates syllables at the beginning of a stretch of talk, or lengthens the syllable(s) at the end of a stretch of talk (Du Bois, Schuetze-Coburn, Cumming & Paolino, 1993:47), I code the stretch of talk as an utterance. Turn-medial, utterance-final *na* means *na* appears at the end of a stretch of speech produced under a single coherent intonation contour.

I should at this point note that grammatically speaking, under normal circumstances, *na* cannot appear at the end of a sentence. However, in natural conversation, speakers encounter various kinds of 'trouble' in speaking. These include "misarticulations, malapropisms, use of a

‘wrong’ word, unavailability of a word when needed” (Schegloff, 1987: 210). All the turn-medial, utterance-final *na* instances are found in repair practices, resulting from cutoffs on *na* or interpolated pauses. As shown in Table 4.4 below, turn-medial, utterance-final *na* is highly infrequent. There are 4 (30.8%) recognitional tokens within the referential domain and 1 (7.7%) question/stance prelude instance among the non-referential tokens. In the analysis that follows, I will present examples of each type. In addition, I will also show a miscellaneous case.

**Table 4.4 Frequency distribution of the functions of turn-medial, utterance-final *na***

|             | Referential <i>na</i> |            |                   |               | Non-referential <i>na</i> |               |                             |               |
|-------------|-----------------------|------------|-------------------|---------------|---------------------------|---------------|-----------------------------|---------------|
|             | Exophoric             | Endophoric |                   |               | Question initiator        | Stance marker | Question/<br>Stance prelude | Miscellaneous |
|             |                       | Anaphoric  | Discourse deictic | Recognitional |                           |               |                             |               |
| Tok.<br>(%) | 0                     | 0<br>(0%)  | 0<br>(0%)         | 4<br>(30.8%%) | 0 (0%)                    | 0 (0%)        | 1<br>(7.7%)                 | 8<br>(61.5%)  |
| Sub.<br>(%) | 0<br>(0%)             | 4 (30.8%)  |                   |               | 9 (69.2%)                 |               |                             |               |
|             | 4 (30.8%)             |            |                   |               |                           |               |                             |               |
| Total       | 13 (100%)             |            |                   |               |                           |               |                             |               |

#### 4.4.1 Referential *na* in turn-medial, utterance-final position

As noted earlier, recognitional use is the only identified referential use in turn-medial, utterance-final position. Although the number is small (4 tokens), recognitional *na* instances in the utterance-final position share interesting characteristics, particularly when compared with recognitional instances identified in other positions.

#### 4.4.1.1 Recognitional use

The 4 recognitional *na* tokens make up approximately one-third of all turn-medial, utterance-final *na* instances. Within the present database, the plural form of the demonstrative rarely occurs; when it does, it tends to be a recognitional use. We have seen such a case (Example (36)) in Section 4.2.1.3 on turn-medial, utterance-medial recognitional use. The 4 recognitional instances in turn-medial, utterance-final position are all in the plural form followed by a pause, as shown in (54):

(54) DY\_2M\_37:06-37:14

01 W: → 我看那些. (0.4) 去那个OR的.

*wo kan naxie* (0.4) *qu na ge OR de.*

1SG see DEM go DEM CL OR NMLZ

‘I noticed those (students). (04) (Who) went (to study) OR.’

02 就哥大OR硕士. MS OR.

*jiu geda OR shoushi. MS OR.*

INTE Columbia.University OR master MS OR

‘Columbia’s Master’s in OR. MS in OR.’

03 好多. (0.2) 各种. (0.2)

*haoduo. (0.2) gezhong. (0.2)*

many various

‘(They had) many. (0.2) Various kinds of. (0.2)’

04 什么券商投行实习的. (0.1) 那种经历.

*shenme quanshangtouhang shixi de (0.1) nazhong jingli.*

what investment.bank intern NMLZ that.kind experience

‘Intern experiences with investment banks.’

Unlike the examples I presented in Section 4.2.1.3 (Examples (33)-(39)), whether the

addressees have prior knowledge of the referents is available in context, such information is not empirically grounded in (54). The speaker in this excerpt is explaining his concern about his graduate school application to his friend because he lacks internship experience. Although W provides supplementary information to help the addressee anchor the referent (line 02), the specificity of the intended referent of *naxie* ‘these’ is contingent upon shared knowledge between W and the addressee. I am in no position to argue that there is no such common ground between the speaker and the addressee, yet the context does not contain any evidence to support that the opposite is the case either. What is evident is that the *naxie* ‘these’ modified NP is a first mention in the conversation. If the speaker and the addressee do have shared information of the referent, *naxie* ‘these’ in line 01 will be a canonical recognitional use to activate a referent in the addressee’s mental space. If there is no shared common memory between the interlocutors, the recognitional use of *naxie* is employed by the speaker to establish a solidarity between the speaker and the hearer.

#### **4.4.2 Non-referential *na* in turn-medial, utterance-final position**

Within the non-referential domain, there is 1 (7.7%) question/stance prelude use and 8 (61.5%) miscellaneous cases.

##### **4.4.2.1 Question/Stance prelude**

We have seen the example below in Section 4.2.1.3 on recognitional use of *na tian* ‘that day’ (line 08). In this section, I focus on question/stance prelude use of *na* in line 14.

(55) KA\_2M1F\_13:27-13:53

01 R: 我就在想读人文以后干啥.

*wo jiu zai xiang du renwen yihou gan sha.*  
1SG INTE PROG think study humanities afterwards do what  
'I'm wondering what (I could) do with a humanities degree.'

02 L: 对啊.[就-

*dui a. [jiu-*  
right FP INTE  
'Right. Just-'

03 M: [都可以干我觉得.=

*[dou keyi gan wo juede=*  
all can do 1SG think  
'(You) can do anything I think.='

04 R: =我也觉得.

*=wo ye juede.*  
1SG also think  
'=I also think (so).'

05 L: 是吗?

*shi ma?*  
COP Q  
'Can we?'

06 R: 都很- 都可以干.

*dou hen- dou keyi gan.*  
all very all can do  
'All (are) very- (you) can do anything.'

07 L: 我就- 主要担心就业问题. 所以我[才-

*wo jiu- zhuyao danxin jiuye wenti. suoyi wo cai-*  
1SG INTE mainly worry employment issue so 1SG for.no.other.reason  
'I- mainly worry about getting a job. So I-'

- 08 M: [那天我们吃饭的时候. 嗯.(0.1)  
 [na tian women chi fan de shihou. ng.(0.1)  
 DEM day 1PL eat meal NMLZ time PRT  
 ‘That day when we were eating. hm.(0.1).
- 09 当时那顿饭你没有在.  
 dangshi na dun fan ni mei you zai.  
 that.time DEM CL meal 2SG NEG have be.at  
 ‘You were not there for that meal then.’
- 10 然后有一个大三的学姐.  
 ranhou you yi ge dasan de xuejie.  
 then have one CL junior NMLZ senior  
 ‘And there was this junior student.’
- 11 然后也是学人文的.  
 ranhou ye shi xue renxue de,  
 then also COP study humanities NMLZ  
 ‘(She) also studies humanities,’
- 12 然后她好像在实习.  
 ranhou ta hoaxiang zai shixi.  
 then 3SG seem ASP intern  
 ‘And it seems that she was doing an internship.’
- 13 然后我就问她.  
 ranhou wo jiu wen ta.  
 then 1SG just ask 3SG  
 ‘Then I asked her.’
- 14 → 我说那- (.) 人文学院的学生实习找什么呀?  
 wo shuo na- (.) renwen xueyuan de xuesheng shixi zhao shenme ya?  
 1SG say NA humanities division ATTR student intern find what FP  
 ‘I said “NA-(.) What kind of internship can humanities students find?”’

- 15       她说就很多啊: 去:: 媒体.  
           *ta shuo jiu hen duo a: qu:: meiti.*  
           3SG say INTE very many FP go media  
           ‘She said “(There are) a lot: (we can) work in the media industry.”’
- 16 L:     哦:: [对对.  
           *o:: dui dui.*  
           PRT right right  
           ‘Oh:: right right.’
- 17 R:     很多[去媒体.  
           *hendui qu meiti.*  
           many go media  
           ‘Many went to media industries.’

The turn-medial, utterance-final *na* in line 14, though cut off, is the first audible linguistic item in the direct reported speech and it projects a question: “NA-(.) What kind of internship can humanities students find?” Similar to Example (41), a dialogue sequence retrieved from reported speech normally tends to be short and incomplete. In (55), the speaker only reproduces a single question-answer sequence from his dialogue with the junior student (coded as J), as shown in (56):

(56) Direct reported speech extracted from (55)

((The junior student is coded as J))

01 M: → 那- (.) 人文学院的学生实习找什么呀?

*na- (.) renwen xueyuan de xuesheng shixi zhao shenme ya?*

NA humanities division ATTR student intern find what FP

‘NA-(.) What kind of internship can humanities students find?’

02 J: 就很多啊: 去::媒体.  
*jiu hen duo a: qu:: meiti.*  
 INTE very many FP go media  
 ‘(There are) a lot: (we can) work in the media industry.’

The limited directed reported speech does not provide us with the preceding discourse for analyzing how the question emerges from turn-by-turn conversation. However, as argued in Section 4.2.2.1, preserving a syntactically optional *na* when the speaker reproduces an utterance independent of its larger sequential context shows that projecting or initiating a question with a non-referential *na* is a routinized practice.

#### 4.4.3 Miscellaneous

In this section, I attend to the miscellaneous cases in turn-medial, utterance-final position by presenting an example typical to this group. The following excerpt begins with a father’s turn after his daughter describes Northern European people as a bit reserved:

(57) FD\_1M1F\_23:10-23:38

01 F: 美国人可能豪爽一点.  
*meiguoren keneng haoshuang yidian.*  
 American maybe forthright a.little  
 ‘Americans perhaps are a little bit forthright.’

02 有一种牛仔的性格. °哦°=?  
*you yi zhong niuzai de xingge. °o°=?*  
 exist one CL cowboy ATTR disposition Q  
 ‘(They) have a cowboy disposition. °Isn’t it°?’

- 03 D: =啊? 什么? 什- 什么东西?  
 =a? *shenme? shen- shenme dongxi?*  
 Q what what what thing  
 ‘=Huh? What? Wh- what (did you say)?’
- 04 F: 牛仔: 的性格.  
*niuzai: de xingge.*  
 cowboy ATTR nature  
 ‘(A) cowboy: disposition.’
- 05 D: 牛 hahhhahhhahhh 仔 hahhhahhhh  
*niu(hahhhahhhahhh)zai hahhhahhhh*  
 cowboy  
 ‘Cow(hahhhahhhahhh)boy hahhhahhhh
- 06 F: 欸.  
*ai.*  
 PRT  
 ‘Right.’
- 07 D: Cowboy. 是吧.  
*cowboy. shi ba.*  
 cowboy COP Q  
 ‘Cowboy. Isn’t it.’
- 08 F: °欸°.  
 °ai°.  
 PRT  
 ‘°Right°.’
- 09 D: 牛仔. 好的. (0.4) 懂了. (0.2) 没有错.  
*cowboy. shi wa. niuzai. hao de (0.4) dong le (0.2) mei you cuo.*  
 cowboy COP Q cowboy good PRT understand PRF NEG exisit wrong  
 ‘Cowboy. Alright. (0.4) Got it. (0.2) (That’s) right.’

- 10 诶? 但是- 诶? 对哦. 西部牛仔 huhuhuhhh  
*ei? danshi- ei? dui o. xibu niuzai huhuhuhhh*  
 Q but Q right FP western cowboy  
 ‘But? But- But? Oh right. West cowboy huhuhuhhh’
- 11 好的. 好的. 懂了. 懂了.  
*hao de. hao de. dong le. dong le.*  
 good PRT good PRT understand PRF understand PRF  
 ‘Alright. Alright. Got it. Got it.’
- 12 → 然后. 诶? 我那- (.) 呃对.  
*ranhou. ei? wo na- (.) e dui.*  
 then PRT 1SG NA PRT right  
 ‘Then. But? I NA- (.) Uh right.’
- 13 我说一下我这次去那个: (0.1) 旧金山.  
*wo shuo yixia o zhe ci qu nage: (0.1) jiu jinshan.*  
 1SG say a.bit PRT DEM CL go DEM.CL San.Francisco  
 ‘Let me tell (you my trip) to mhm: (0.1) San Francisco this time.’
- 14 你们上次旧金山去了没有去?  
*nimen shangci jiu jinshan qu le mei you qu?*  
 2PL last.time San.Francisco go PRF NEG have go  
 ‘Did you go to San Francisco last time?’
- 15 F: 旧金山没去.  
*jiu jinshan mei qu*  
 San.Francisco NEG go  
 ‘(We) didn’t go to San Francisco.’

The sequence on the ‘cowboy disposition’ of Americans closes at line 11. Starting from line 13, the topic changes to the daughter’s recent trip to San Francisco. Between the two sections of the conversation is line 12, where something seems to suddenly occur to the daughter. The cutoff on *na* leaves the utterance (i.e. *wona-* I NA-) completely unrecognizable. What

follows is a disjunctive utterance: *edui* ‘Uh right’, making it impossible to classify the function of the *na*; hence, cases like this are grouped in the miscellaneous category.

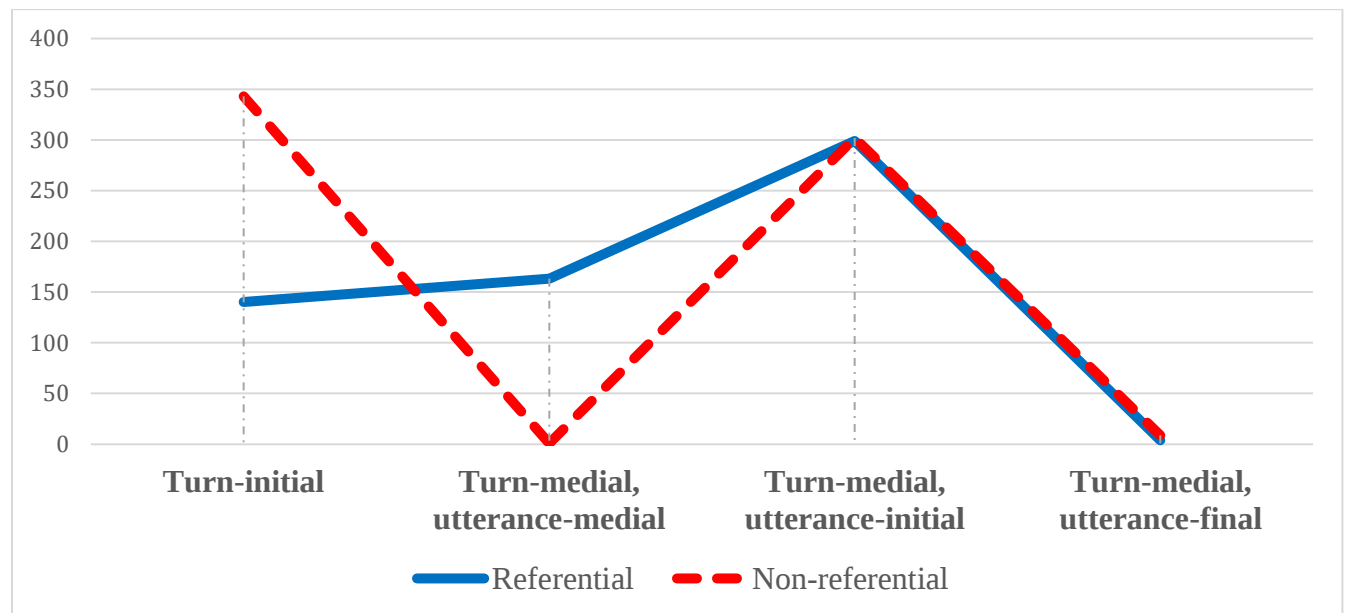
#### 4.4.4 Interim summary

Section 4.4 showed that turn-medial, utterance-final *na* is highly infrequent in conversation. Based on the scarce instances, I analyzed how *na* is used in repair practice to refer to a referent without a prior mention or nonreferentially to project a question. I also presented an instance from the miscellaneous group where the speaker discards the utterance-in-progress before it reaches a structurally/functionally intelligible point.

#### 4.5 Summary and discussion

In this chapter, I showed how the distal demonstrative *na* can shift from marking an entity remote from the speaker in the speech situation to indexing a speaker’s stance in contrast to the stance of a prior turn. I categorized and analyzed exophoric and endophoric uses of referential *na*. Within the endophoric category, I explored anaphoric use, discourse deictic use, and previously less studied recognitional use. The analysis demonstrated that recognitional *na* can be used in contexts where the speaker knows that the addressee does not have the specific knowledge required in identifying the referent. I proposed a unified function of recognitional *na* in establishing a solidarity between the speaker and the addressee. More importantly, I classified and proposed three major interactional functions of non-referential *na*: *question initiator*, *stance marker*, and *question/stance prelude*. The results also demonstrated that the positions of *na* within a turn closely interact with its function. Figure 4.5 below displays considerable functional variation across the positions of *na* within a turn:

**Figure 4.5 Macro-function of *na* across the positions within a turn**



As shown in the above figure, there is a huge difference in referential use and non-referential use across positions within a turn, with turn-initial position having a preference for non-referential use (343 non-referential tokens, 140 referential tokens), while turn-medial, utterance-medial position displays a strong referential preference (163 referential tokens, 1 non-referential tokens). Interestingly, no preference is observed for referential use or non-referential use in turn-medial, utterance initial position: the frequencies are nearly the same (302 non-referential tokens, 299 referential tokens). Turn-medial, utterance-final *na* instances are special cases that result from cutoffs. They also exhibit a non-referential preference (9 non-referential, 4 referential).

The asymmetrical distribution of the functions of *na* across the positions in a turn indicate that *na* tends to serve to register a turn that embodies contrastive information or disaffiliative stance in response to a prior turn in initial position of a turn. In medial position within an utterance, *na* functions to keep track of and orient the addressee's attention to an element of the

ongoing discourse. In medial position inside a turn, an utterance-initial *na* does not seem to have a functional preference; it either is used to track a referent or to signal contrastive information/disaffiliative stance<sup>22</sup>.

A related question is, *are these two macro functions interrelated?* Although the dissertation dealt with synchronic functions of *na*, the analysis hinted at possible diachrony of the demonstrative in Mandarin Chinese, particularly its development from referential uses into non-referential uses. The ambiguous discourse deictic cases I analyzed in Section 4.1.1.3 and Section 4.3.1.2 show that *na* in those contexts can either be interpreted as a discourse deixis referring back to the proposition in the preceding discourse or a covert boundary link between two discourse units. Bridging instances of such use pave the way for non-referential uses of *na*. It is also important to note that these ambiguous cases always have *na* appearing at initial position of a discourse unit (a turn or an utterance), which corresponds with the result that non-referential *na* only occurs at the left periphery of a discourse unit<sup>23</sup>. More crucially, the three major non-referential functions of *na* also seem to be closely linked to the distal demonstrative's deictic meanings. The non-referential *na* prefaced discourse unit indexes that the current unit is built from a prior one but displays either a shift in focus or a contrastive/disaffiliative stance, which can be seen as an abstract extension of the distal demonstrative in marking a spatial contrast.

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<sup>22</sup> I exclude turn-medial, utterance-final position here partly because scarce instances do not provide reliable generalization. In addition, from a grammatical perspective, *na* cannot occur at the end of an utterance.

<sup>23</sup> There is one non-referential token in turn-medial, utterance-medial position. However, as analyzed in Section 4.2.2.1, this token is the first word in a direct reported speech; thus, an inherent turn-initial *na*.

## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I begin with a summary of the major findings of the dissertation. I then address the significance and implications of this study.

#### 5.1 Summary of findings

Based on a 257,000-character conversational database, this dissertation examines how the distal demonstrative *na* ‘that’ can shift from marking spatial deixis to signaling the speaker’s stance in Mandarin Chinese conversation by linking discourse-pragmatic analysis with interactional actions. More specifically, it identifies 1) functions of *na* and the relative frequencies of its different usages; 2) contexts in which *na* typically appears and reasons speakers use *na* in those contexts; 3) interrelations among different usages; and 4) functional preference of *na* across positions within a turn.

The results show that the exophoric tracking use in locating a physical entity in the conversation situation is very much marginalized in natural conversation (2 tokens out of 1261 tokens, 0.2%). The predominant referential *na* is used as a discourse deictic demonstrative to point to a prior proposition in the ongoing discourse (315 tokens out of 1261 tokens, 25.0%). Anaphoric *na* coreferential with a NP in the preceding discourse is relatively frequent (191 tokens out of 1261 tokens, 15.1%), with its most salient occurrence appearing in medial position of an utterance (75 tokens). The previous understudied recognitional use is by no means sparse (98 tokens out of 1261 tokens, 7.8%). The analysis of recognitional *na* demonstrates that this function can be employed not only in typical contexts where the speaker and the hearer share a common memory or specific

personal knowledge, but also in contexts where such common ground is not available. In the latter case, the speaker marks the referent ostensibly as *hearer old* and the hearer accepts the referent with no clarification request. I argue that in contexts like this, the speaker utilizes recognitional *na* as an interpersonal strategy to establish a solidarity between himself/herself and the addressee and create an in-group perspective to better engage the addressee in the conversation. It should be noted, however, such usage is contingent upon referents of low topicality.

The non-referential *na* (655 tokens out of 1261 tokens, 51.9%) on the other hand, is routinely used by speakers to express contrastive meaning, encode attitudinal stances that are often disaffiliative, taking the form of disagreements, challenges, or criticisms. More specifically, I propose three functional categories of non-referential *na*: i) initiating a question (186 tokens out of 1261 tokens, 14.8%); ii) indexing a disaffiliative stance (179 tokens out of 1261 tokens, 14.2%); and iii) projecting a question or a disaffiliative stance (130 tokens out of 1261 tokens, 10.3%). The analysis also demonstrates how Mandarin *na* at the left periphery of a discourse unit is ideally situated to acknowledge information expressed in a prior turn/utterance and at the same time also project forward to new information in the current turn/utterance. Although non-referential *na* has no traceable referent either in the physical world, in the ongoing discourse, or in the speakers' mental spaces, it still preserves the core meaning of a distal demonstrative—marking a contrast.

Non-referential *na* specifically registers that the current turn is built from a prior turn; nevertheless, there is a contrast or shift in stance or focus. For the question initiator *na*, this is exemplified in the sense that the question is an operation on what has been said prior so that we see a contiguous status of affairs being discussed. The shift, however, is exhibited through what has been made as known in the previous talk and what is inquired as unknown in the question. This shift is illuminated more perspicuously when *na* is used as an initial indication to project that the stance to be taken by the current speaker will not agree with or be fully affiliative with

what came before. Perhaps because *na* has developed such interactional features, speakers thus can recruit it in initial position even before they work out how to verbalize their opposing stance.

With respect to functional preference of *na* across positions within a turn, the results demonstrate that *na* tends to serve to register a turn that embodies contrastive information in response to a prior turn in turn-initial position. In medial position within an utterance, *na* functions to keep track of and orient the addressee's attention to an element of the ongoing discourse. In medial position inside a turn, an utterance-initial *na* does not show a functional preference; it either is used to track a referent or to signal contrastive information.

## 5.2 Significance and implications

The goal of this dissertation is to explore how Mandarin Chinese distal demonstrative *na* and its derived discourse marker are used in natural spontaneous face-to-face conversation. The results of the dissertation contribute to a better understanding of demonstratives not only in Mandarin, but also in other languages.

Despite extensive linguistic research on demonstratives, we know surprisingly little about how demonstratives and demonstratives-derived markers are used in everyday natural interaction. In addition, studies on Mandarin Chinese demonstratives and demonstrative-derived markers are still limited. To my knowledge, no research has systematically analyzed *na* based on a large natural conversational database. This dissertation unravels a broad spectrum of functions that *na* can fulfill in spontaneous natural conversation. In addition to the well-documented deictic and tracking functions, I highlight previously less studied recognitional use. I show that recognitional *na* is not restricted to contexts where a referent is identifiable based on specific knowledge or shared common ground between the speaker and the addressee. The speaker routinely makes use of recognitional *na* even when he/she knows that the addressee cannot identify the referent. I argue that in contexts like this,

the speaker employs recognitional *na* as an interpersonal strategy to establish a solidarity between himself/herself and the addressee and create an in-group perspective to better engage the addressee in the conversation. More importantly, I propose a new taxonomy of interactional functions of non-referential *na*: i) launch a question inquiring into the state of affairs evoked by the prior turn(s); ii) register a contrastive stance; and iii) project a question or a disaffiliative turn. The analysis further suggests that these interactional functions of non-referential *na*, though highly pragmaticalized, are linked to the deictic meanings of the distal demonstrative in the sense that the *na*-prefaced turn indexes that the current turn is built from a prior turn but displays a shift in focus and often a contrastive or disaffiliative stance.

Cross-linguistically, previous studies have pointed out that pronominal demonstratives frequently develop into sentence connectives, which are typically used to express a causal link between two propositions (e.g. Diessel, 1999; Chao, 1968; Huang, 1999; Derbyshire, 1985; Harms, 1994; Nagaraja 1985). However, none of these studies have delved into the unique properties of such demonstrative-derived ‘connectives’. Taking into account broad sequential contexts and structures for the organization of action-in-interaction, this dissertation uncovers unique features peculiar to the distal demonstrative-derived ‘connective’ *na*. Findings of the dissertation may motivate studies on systematic analysis of demonstrative-derived ‘connectives’ in other languages, particularly on how they are used in natural spontaneous face-to-face conversation. If similar patterns are observed in other languages, it will contribute to a cross-linguistic typology of demonstratives.

Moreover, the results on frequency distributions of each use across different positions within a turn can also help us elucidate the processing and development of linguistic structure. In addition, this dissertation also contributes to a deeper understanding of a common human language phenomenon with fresh data and from an interactional point of view. Starting from the uses of demonstratives, we can better understand and characterize its relationship to other varieties of indexicality. The results of the dissertation may also contribute to further research on the attitudinal

drifts of indexicals in other languages. In addition, this dissertation will help us move a step forward in understanding typological similarities and differences of demonstratives cross-linguistically and cross-culturally, as well as demonstratives in light of language change.

Methodologically speaking, this dissertation suggests advantages of using a mixed methods approach. It combines fine-grained qualitative analysis based on empirical data in the turn-by-turn unfolding form with quantitative results generated from a corpus. Findings achieved via this approach can help us gain a more comprehensive picture of the linguistic item than a standalone qualitative or quantitative study, as it integrates advantages of both methods. In addition, the dissertation also indicates merits of incorporating conversation structural notions such as turn taking and sequence organization in linguistic description. More crucially, if we acknowledge that face-to-face conversation is the primordial form of human language, then how words, phrases, and sentences are used for communicating ideas cannot be fully documented until we interrogate them in their most authentic context—spontaneous natural conversation.

Finally, this empirical study also has implications for L2 classroom. Mandarin Chinese *na* is a high frequency lexical item. Identifying and classifying its different uses can help develop effective materials for teaching Mandarin Chinese as a foreign/second/heritage language.

## APPENDIX: Transcription notation

|             |                                                                       |
|-------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| [           | overlapping utterance                                                 |
| =           | continuous utterance with no noticeable break or pause                |
| (.)         | noticeable pause                                                      |
| (0.0)       | timed pause in tenths of a second                                     |
| <u>Word</u> | underlining indicates stress or emphasis                              |
| WORD        | upper case indicates especially loud talk                             |
| ° °         | quiet or soft talk                                                    |
| ↑           | marked shift in higher pitch in utterance immediately following arrow |
| !           | Animated and emphatic tone                                            |
| ?           | Rising intonation                                                     |
| ^           | Rising-falling pitch                                                  |
| ::          | the more colons the longer the sound is drawn out                     |
| -           | Cut off of prior word or sound                                        |
| .           | Stopping fall in tone                                                 |
| >word<      | Increased speaking rate                                               |
| huh         | laughter                                                              |
| ( )         | uncertain utterances                                                  |
| (( ))       | transcriber's description of events                                   |

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