Not just Postposed Topics.
An integrated pragmatic account of the sentence-final slot in Mandarin Chinese

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Introduction

The apparently simple and yet daunting task of combining linguistic and cognitive insights in the inquiry of linguistic phenomena is brilliantly described in a short passage from one of Wallace Chafe's papers:

> There are many ways in which language sheds light on the nature of the mind, and conversely ways in which an understanding of mental phenomena can further our understanding of language.
>
> (Chafe, 1995: 349)

It is this fundamental assumption that inspired and guided the conception and elaboration of this work, which addresses sentence-final expressions in naturally-occurring, oral conversations of Mandarin Chinese from the perspective of their pragmatic functions. The term "sentence-final" refers to the (extra)sentential slot at the right periphery of the utterance, while the generic term "expressions" is taken to encompass an array of topical elements including right dislocations, pragmatic markers and other related elements in between the two that are unique to oral language. Under the term "pragmatic functions" are subsumed a set of functions ranging from the area of information structure to that of interpersonal relationships and discourse organization.

The object under inquiry has been tackled by previous accounts belonging to distinct fields of research, the most important being the body of studies revolving around right dislocations viewed from both the syntactical and the pragmatic angles, and the more recent inquiries into right-peripheral pragmatic markers analysed from the conversation-analytical and the diachronic perspectives. The term "integrated" contained in the thesis title wishes to designate a holistic type of approach to the utterance right periphery, one which is not limited to a single construction or expression, nor to a single theoretical framework. As can easily be imagined, models and argumentations in this work are brought together from different traditions of studies with the intent of filling a number of gaps in the current state of the art on Mandarin Chinese right-peripheral expressions, including the relationship between information-structural categories and the expression of interpersonal meanings, contextual conditions of use and pragmatic effects achieved.

Starting from a (chiefly) functionalist view of information structure underpinning different models and frameworks (mainly Lambrecht, 1994, and Lombardi Vallauri 2009), this work attempts to combine research on right-hand topics with investigations into right-peripheral pragmatic markers (Traugott, 2015; Yap et al., 2010 and following works) by adopting and adapting recent frameworks and quantitative methodologies employed in cognitive and usage-based linguistics (e.g. Tantucci & Wang, 2018 and following works). The results demonstrate that the distinction between information-structural, interpersonal and discourse-organizing elements is often blurred and that the right

periphery of Mandarin Chinese utterances is highly biased towards the expression of (inter)subjective meanings, whose aim is to manage the relationship between two communicating parties, as correctly predicted by studies on the right periphery of Indo-European languages (e.g. Beeching & Detges, 2014; Detges & Waltereit, 2014).

The dissertation is organized as follows. The first chapter provides an overview of the main theoretical contributions in the area of information structure, starting from the earliest literature of the Prague School, passing through later elaborations of the notions therein introduced, and landing on the functionalist approaches adopted in this work. More specifically, the latter include Lambrecht (1994)'s model, wherein information structure is analysed at the intersection between linguistic form and function, and Lombardi Vallauri (2009)'s approach, hinging on an illocutionary-oriented definition of the categories of Topic and Focus. After duly presenting the differentiations introduced by the above authors between distinct information structure categories, their specific interaction in natural language is laid out and exemplified before moving to Section 2, which is devoted to the discussion of markedness phenomena – including right dislocations and other sentence-final topics – with reference to English and Italian, both from the syntactic stance and from the point of view of prosodic realization. The second half of the chapter replicates the same structure in the specific context of Mandarin Chinese. Section 3 introduces the main theoretical literature concerning the information structure of Chinese, starting from the everlasting debate on the relationship between syntactic and pragmatic marking that uniquely characterizes this language and moving to an outline of the interaction between information structure categories that are universal but can have different language-specific realizations. Mirroring the discussion on English and Italian, a number of contributions are gathered to describe the linguistic realizations in Chinese of the categories subsumed under referent identifiability and activation, presupposition and assertion, topic and focus, as well as their intersection. The last part of the chapter describes the syntactic and prosodic strategies that speakers of this language may avail themselves of in order to express pragmatically marked meanings.

Chapter 2 focuses on the two main elements occurring at the utterance right periphery discussed in the literature, right dislocations and pragmatic markers. First, the theoretical literature on right dislocations is presented with reference to English and Italian languages, encompassing the earliest accounts in terms of afterthoughts, those specifically looking into their cognitive and syntactic features, as well as those inclined towards interpersonal-oriented interpretations. The second part gathers the contributions on Chinese right dislocations, also encompassing the earliest accounts in terms of word order inversions, those focusing on their syntactic and cognitive features and those looking at their function from a broad conversation-analytical perspective, as well as the few writings pointing at their interpersonal uses. Latching onto the latter aspect of Chinese right dislocations, the

second half of the chapter addresses the issue of pragmatic markers, both in the context of Indo-European languages and Mandarin Chinese, pointing out the functional convergence of different types of linguistic devices at the right periphery of the utterance (sentence-final particles, right-dislocations and pragmatic markers) in the management of the relationship between the interlocutors in naturally occurring and online conversations. Section 3 first describes the most influential theoretical approaches to pragmatic markers from the pragmatic perspective, the relevance-theoretical angle and the diachronic stance, as well as the relevant notions therein introduced, subsequently tackles the formal features of pragmatic markers from a broad perspective, and lastly focuses on the studies specifically addressing those occurring at the utterance right periphery. The last part of the chapter presents the most recent investigations on Chinese pragmatic markers and addresses the issue of their relationship with the set of sentence-final particles specialized in the expression of (inter)subjective meanings. Lastly, an outline of the models addressing (a)symmetries between the left and the right periphery of the utterance are discussed in conclusion of the chapter.

Chapter 3 represents the original contribution of this dissertation and consists of a corpus-driven analysis of the Mandarin utterance right periphery which was carried out to assess the validity of the hypotheses emerging in the above-mentioned literature. The introductive section sets up the research questions and clarifies the aim of the study: 1) provide a corpus-driven outline of the expressions naturally occurring at the right periphery; 2) identify and describe their pragmatic functions in terms of information structure, discourse organization and interpersonal relationship management; 3) explore their intersection and interaction with other overtly marked dimensions of (inter)subjectivity. Section 2 gives a detailed description of the methodology adopted for the analysis, which avails itself of 12 dyadic naturalistic telephonic conversations between Chinese native speakers contained in the Callfriend Corpus (https://ca.talkbank.org/access/CallFriend/zho-m.html), for a total of 6 hours of audio recordings. Moreover, drawing on Tantucci & Wang (2018)'s model of *illocutional concurrences* and a number of other works revolving around intersubjectivity, this study employs exploratory data analysis techniques such as conditional inference trees (Tagliamonte & Baayen, 2012) to identify context-dependent patterns of correlation between sentence-final expressions and a number of linguistic dimensions encompassing illocutivity, intersubjectivity, information structure, speaker and interlocutor gender, etc. Subsequently, the annotation process relying on corpus-driven criteria created *ad-hoc* or adapted from the relevant literature is meticulously described for each of the variables considered in the study. Section 3 presents the results of the quantitative analyses, both the ones focusing on single aspects of the sentence-final expressions and those putting together different contextual dimensions. Section 4 discusses and provides a qualitative interpretation of the aforementioned statistical results, focusing on three pragmatic aspects of the SFEs: interpersonal-

oriented, discourse-organizing and information-structural functions. Lastly, Section 5 discusses the results and summarizes the answers to the research questions. Overall, it is found that Mandarin utterance right periphery is biased toward the expression of interpersonal meanings, not so much in terms of the inherent semantics of the sentence-final expressions but rather in terms of the functions performed, and is characterized by a gendered usage in terms of both speaker and hearer gender. What is more, oral Mandarin Chinese appears characterized by the frequent interplay between different elements of evaluation converging in the same utterance, including sentence-final expressions and sentence-final particles, lexically-encoded elements of evaluation and syntactically specific evaluative structures. As far as information structure is concerned, distinct coreferential profiles and activation states of referential topics were mapped onto the emphatic, referential integration, and discourse-contingent functions.

Conventions

UPPERCASE	focus
<u>Underlined</u>	strong topical intonation (e.g. topic shift or contrastive topic)
^	focus intonation for characters
-	self-interruption/reformulation
:	prosodic lengthening
()	unclear word or fragment
""	for quotations in the body of the text or figurative use of a term
Italics	for highly relevant terms
''	for examples inserted directly in the body of the text
#	non appropriate use
*	non grammatical use
?	low degree of acceptability

Whenever not explicitly provided by the authors from which the examples are extracted, all the glosses of the non-English examples are mine

Abbreviations

1	1° person pronoun
2	2° person pronoun
3	3° person pronoun
ATTR	attributive particle
ASP	verbal aspect
CL	clitic
CLF	classifier
COND	conditional marker
DO	direct object
DE	structural particle de 得
EMP	emphatic element
F	female
HON	honorific (pronoun)
INF	infinite
INTJ	interjection
IO	indirect object
M	male
NMLZ	nominalizer
NEG	negation
PL	plural
PERF	perfective
PM	pragmatic marker
POSS	possessive marker
PRS	present
PRT	particle
PST	past
REFL	reflexive
REL	relative marker

The remaining abbreviations used in the glosses try to follow as much as possible the Leipzig Glossing Rules (https://www.eva.mpg.de, 2015).

CHAPTER 1. INFORMATION STRUCTURE

1. Information Structure: An introduction

Very few topics in the history of linguistics can be said to have received the same focus of attention as information structure (IS). Over the past century, the increasing acknowledgement of the centrality of a pragmatic organization shaping the linguistic structure of discourse generated an extremely rich amount of scholarly literature analysing the topic of IS from multiple perspectives and using different approaches (Firbas, 1992).

In Lambrecht (1994)'s seminal volume, IS is seen as the component of language and grammar "concerned with the relationship between linguistic form and the mental states of speakers and hearers" (Lambrecht, 1994: 1). Before looking at the way in which form and function intersect in the expression of IS, I shall briefly sketch the history of its establishment as a field of study.

2. Theme and Rheme from the Prague School onwards

Unlike many aspects related to IS, there is a broad consensus among scholars in attributing the genesis of this field of research to the contributions of the scholars belonging to the Prague School, a group of linguists active in many areas of language study during the 1920s and the 1930s.
Already at the end of the XIX Century, the idea was emerging that the way the contents of a sentence are presented cannot merely be explained in terms of its syntactic structure, but some other kind of description involving an underlying psychological structure was necessary, *viz.* sentences were conceived of as operations on ideas underlying the words of the sentences (Heusinger, 1999: 113-115).[1]

A clear echo of the psychological foundation of sentence structure circulating in that period can be identified in von der Gabelentz (1869)'s distinction between grammatical and psychological types of subjects and predicates (Heusinger, 1999). Drawing on these intuitions, the Prague School linguists gradually developed a functionalist description of sentence structure. In particular, Mathesius (1929)

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[1] According to the *Gestalt theory* in psychology, perception includes two different parts, *Figure* and *Ground*, and the former – an object – can only be perceived against the latter – a background (Heusinger, 1999: 113). The opposition between the two was adopted and re-elaborated in many theoretical frameworks, including the Prague School notions of Foreground and Background/Theme and Rheme. In terms of information structure, it was argued that "the figure represents the prominent or highlighted part, while the ground represents the given or less informative material of the sentence" (Heusinger, 1999: 116), or also the figure can be said to represent the foreground information and the ground to convey the background information (Hu, 1995: 49).

initiated the paradigm of the Sentence Functional Perspective (FSP), which he considers in opposition to its formal structure:

> Whereas the formal structure concerns the way in which a sentence is composed of grammatical elements, the information-bearing structure concerns the way in which a sentence is integrated into the factual situation during which it was produced. The basic elements of the formal structure of the sentence are the grammatical subject and the grammatical predicate, the basic elements of the information-bearing structure are the foundation of the utterance – whatever in the given situation is known or at least obvious and thus forms a point of departure for the speaker – and the core of the utterance, that is, whatever the speaker affirms about the foundation of the utterance or in terms of it.
>
> (Translation from Garvin, 1963: 503)

In the above citation it is already possible to discern the germs of the notions of *theme* and *rheme*, the two basic categories of IS that apply to an utterance.[2] The theme is the *foundation*, the starting point of the utterance already known to the interlocutors, while the rheme coincides with the remainder of the utterance asserting something about the former. The two notions are further developed by Danes in his Thematic Progression, a theory that extends from the clause to the text. According to Danes, as texts unfold, there is a coherent progression of themes and rhemes, and the pattern they follow can be of three types: i) linear, with each rheme becoming the theme of the following utterance; ii) constant, when the same theme appears in a series of sentences; iii) derived, when themes derive from another hyper-theme (Danes, 1974).

A further important contribution comes from Sgall (1974), who conceptualised a gradient notion of contextual boundedness of the information-bearing segments. Themes are contextually-bound elements, i.e. information already known to the hearer thanks to the linguistic and extra-linguistic context, and rhemes are non-bound elements introducing novel information, but as discourse unfolds, previously foregrounded elements give way to newly foregrounded ones.

Finally, to conclude the brief overview on the pillar notions that most modern theories of IS inherited from the Prague School, we cannot but mention Firbas, who introduces the notion of Communicative Dynamism, "a phenomenon constantly displayed by linguistic elements in the act of communication" and defined as "the relative extent to which a linguistic element contributes towards the further development of the communication" (Firbas, 1992: 7-8). In Firbas' view, the degree of

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[2] In this volume, unless differently stated, I follow Lombardi Vallauri (2009) and use the term *clause* whenever strictly referring to a "simple sentence" including the verbs with its arguments and eventual adjunct complements. The term *sentence* is used when referring to a complex sentence made up by more than one clause or as a "neutral" term whenever the distinction between clause and sentence is not relevant. Finally, following Andorno (2005), the term *utterance* will be used to refer to a clause or sentence occurring in a specific discourse context.

communicative dynamism of a linguistic element increases on a continuum going from the theme to the non-theme, further divided into *transition*, composed of elements of mediation between theme and rheme, and rheme proper, the element completing the development of the communication (Firbas, 1992: 70-72).

2.1. Later elaborations of the Praguian notions

The first author to use the term *information structure* – as an alternative to *thematic structure* – and to bring the Praguian concepts to the attention of the Western scholars was the English linguist Halliday (Brown & Yule, 1983; Lambrecht, 1994; Féry & Ishihara, 2016), who drew on the notions of theme and rheme to build his functionalist model of the clause intended as a communicative event.

In his view, "of the various structures which, when mapped on to each other, make up a clause, […] the one which gives the clause its character as a message […] is known as THEMATIC structure" (Halliday, 1985: 38). As can be implied from the terminology used in this quotation, he centred his theorization around the theme, which he believed to be "the element which serves as the point of departure of the message; […] that with which the clause is concerned" (Halliday, 1985: 38), while the rheme is described in an earlier work in the following way:

> Information focus is one kind of emphasis, that whereby the speaker marks out a part (which may be whole) of a message block as that which he wishes to be interpreted as informative. What is focal is 'new' information; not in the sense that it cannot have been previously mentioned, although it is often the case that it has not been, but in the sense that the speaker presents it as not being recoverable form the preceding discourse.
>
> (Halliday, 1967: 204)

Halliday, therefore, also adopted a dyadic view of IS: "given" information already known to the addressee typically corresponds to the theme, whereas "new" information (supposedly) not known to the addressee typically falls outside in the rheme (Halliday, 1967: 205). Furthermore, in Halliday (1985) and following works it is argued that the theme is realised in English through its positioning at the very beginning of the clause, though acknowledging the possibility for other languages such as Japanese to express theme through different means.[3] While the unmarked type of theme coincides with the subject of the clause (1), and very frequently with the 1st person pronoun *I* (2), the theme

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[3] The theme being tied exclusively to the first position in the clause is the most criticized point of Halliday's speculation in later accounts of IS (e.g. Downing, 1991: 122).

need not necessarily be a nominal group,[4] but it can also coincide with an adverbial group (3) or prepositional phrase (4), or even a complement (5), which is the most marked type of theme.

1. [Mary]T had a little lamb.
2. [I]T had a little nut-tree.
3. [Merrily]T we roll along.
4. [On Saturday night]T I lost my wife.
5. [A bag-pudding]T the King did make. (Halliday, 1985)

Halliday's use of the terms *marked* and *unmarked* follows the predominant view in the Prague School tradition, set forth by Jakobson (1932 and following works), according to which *markedness* is a binary and privative notion (Battistella, 1990: 15): the member of the pair that remains neutral or unspecified for a given linguistic feature and can serve more than one function is unmarked, while the marked member is positively specified for that same feature and only serves one linguistic function..[5]

In addition to the just described type of theme which applies at the *experiential* or *ideational* level of the clause as *representation* – what Halliday also calls *topical* theme – he also identifies two further types of themes, which can eventually co-occur with the former: the *interpersonal* theme – applying at the level of clause as *exchange* – and the *textual* theme – applying at the level of the clause as *message*. While the first type can be represented by a participant, circumstance, or process, the second can be any combination of vocative, modal and mood-marking elements, and the third can be any combination of continuative, conjunctive and structural elements operating at the textual level (Halliday, 1994: 36, 53-54). Following is an example where the three types of theme are all represented by different elements: *on the other hand* is the textual theme of the clause, *maybe* is the interpersonal theme, and *on a week day* is the ideational theme (Halliday, 1994: 56):

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[4] The term *group* is used in Halliday's systemic functional grammar to refer to the intermediate syntactic unit between clause and word, elsewhere referred to as *phrase* (Crystal 2008): 222).
[5] Prototypically, the unmarked member has greater distributional frequency than the marked one (Lambrecht, 1994: 17), but also a minor structural complexity and structural complexity, according to Givón (1991; 2001). Givón's notion of *substantive complexity* can be determined on cognitive, communicative, socio-cultural, neurobiological, developmental or evolutionary grounds. According to Givón, the general tendency in languages for the three criteria to coincide is "the most general reflection of iconicity in grammar" (Givón, 1991: 337) That is, when compared to the unmarked member of a category, a construction that is marked generally presents a higher degree of complexity both at the structural and substantive levels, in addition to a lower frequency of use. However, markedness has been addressed from a number of perspectives and applied to several domains of inquiry (for linguistics, Jakobson to phonetics, Lyons to semantics, Chomsky to syntax, Greenberg and Croft for typology, i.a.) and different criteria have been conjectured and applied to different fields in order to identify both universal and language-particular markedness, often coming to different conclusions (Battistella, 1990; Croft, 1992).

6. [On the other hand]conj-text [maybe]mod-int [on a week day]top-id [it would be less crowded]rheme.   (Halliday, 1995: 56)

The fact that referents marked as subjects tend to have a higher degree of topicality and unmarkedness is also argued by Givón (1983). According to Givón, natural languages tend to maintain referential continuity across information processing units – i.e. clauses – and within higher-rank discourse units – i.e. thematic paragraphs. Therefore, the different grammatical devices coding sentence topics are not in free distribution, but each corresponds to a different degree of what he calls *referential predictability*, i.e. accessibility. Thus, whether a speaker chooses to code a referent as a definite NP or as a zero form has to do with different factors accounting for what is known as the *Iconicity Principle* and according to which there is a correspondence between the degree of accessibility and continuity of topics:[6]

(I).   Iconicity Principle

The more disruptive, surprising, discontinuous or hard to process a topic is, the more coding material must be assigned to it.   (Givón, 1983: 18)

The most common grammatical devices coding topics in the languages of the world are ranked by Givón along the following scale with a decline from most continuous and accessible to most discontinuous and inaccessible Topics: [7]

(II).   Scale of topic continuity/accessibility

Most continuous/accessible topic

Zero anaphora

Unstressed/bound pronouns or grammatical agreement

Stressed/independent pronouns

R-dislocated DEF-NPs

L-dislocated DEF-NPs

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[6] According to a rather intuitive cognitive principle, "the proximity of elements in a clause follows some natural (iconic) principle whose result is that elements that go together semantically tend to occur close together in the clause" (Bybee, 1985: 11). A far as discourse is concerned, "information ideally is placed as close as possible to the part of discourse to which it relates" (Herring, 1990: 194). In this particular case, the iconicity intended by Givón is a mapping between referentiality strength and linguistic coding material (Masia, 2016: 66).

[7] Note, however, that Givón (1983) attributes continuity not only to thematic referents but also to other participants/referents in the sentence. When commenting on the sentence 'John gave Mary the book', he argues than both *John* and *Mary* are topics, albeit the latter being a secondary one (Givón, 1983: 6).

Y-moved NPs ('contrastive topicalization')

Cleft/focus constructions

Referential indefinite NPs

Most discontinuous/inaccessible topic

Table 1: Givón's scale of topic continuity/accessibility (Adapted from Givón, 1983: 17)

Among the factors impinging on the continuity of the coding material, as one can notice from the principle in (I), is difficulty of processing, a notion referring to the following psychological and motor-behaviour principle:

> Expend only as much energy on a task as is required for its performance. (Givón, 1983: 18)

However, it was with Chafe (1976, 1987) that research on IS started to address the different cognitive statutes that referents may have in speaker and hearer minds. Chafe's influential work focuses on the cognitive constraints applying to *information flow* – a term he introduces hinging on the idea of information being continuously transformed and manipulated by the speaker's mind as discourse unfolds.[8] For Chafe, the relevant unit to which IS applies is the intonation unit, which he defines as "a sequence of words combined under a single, coherent intonation contour, usually preceded by a pause" (Chafe, 1987: 22) and within which concepts (object, events or properties) have different states of *activation*: from a cognitive point of view, given information corresponds to an *active* concept, "one that is currently lit up, a concept in a person's focus of consciousness" (Chafe, 1987: 25); conversely, a new or *inactive* concept, "what the speaker assumes he is introducing into the addressee's consciousness by what he says" (Chafe, 1976: 30), is "one that is currently in a person's long-term memory, neither focally nor peripherally active" (Chafe, 1987: 25). In between the two poles, however, there are *semi-active* or *accessible* concepts which are "in a person's peripheral consciousness, […] of which a person has a background awareness, but which is not being directly focused on" (Chafe, 1987: 25). The ways in which a concept may become semi-active include its deactivation from a prior status of activation or its inference based on a *schema*, a *semantic frame* or "cluster of interrelated expectations" (Chafe, 1987: 29). The degree of activation of a concept is thus

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[8] Albeit the almost standardised use of "information structure" in contemporary works, various other terms circulated in previous literature on the topic, including Chafe's *information flow* and *information packaging*, which refers to sentence content being "wrapped up" by the speaker in order to be received by the hearer. Other terms are Vallduví (1990: v)'s *informatics* – more precisely intended as "the articulation of sentences *qua* information, where information is defined as that part of propositional content which constitutes a contribution of knowledge to the hearer's knowledge-store" – and *discourse pragmatics*, "the general domain of inquiry into the relationship between grammar and discourse" (Lambrecht, 1994: 2).

to be considered as gradient rather than discrete, and it directly influences the way speakers wrap up information inasmuch as the human short-term cognitive capacities are severely limited and can only contain a certain amount of information being processed at one time.[9] Drawing on Givón (1975)'s *one [new] unit per proposition* constraint, Chafe argues for the existence of the *one new concept at a time constraint*:

(III).   Principle of one New concept at a time constraint

     This constraint results naturally from what I take to be the cognitive basis of an intonation unit: the expression of a single focus of consciousness. Such a focus can evidently contain no more than one previously inactive concept.   (Chafe, 1987: 32)

2.2. Functionalist approaches to information structure

The theories introduced up to now, although not intended as an exhaustive account of the works on IS, are sufficient to enhance a deeper understanding of the two main models on which this thesis draws. These models, which I believe can better account for the linguistic phenomena that the present volume intends to investigate – both from a local and a global perspective – are both classifiable as functional approaches to IS, while duly taking into account the linguistic form of sentences and sentence components. In the following section I will thus provide a detailed account of the general theoretical framework proposed by Lambrecht (1994) and Lombardi Vallauri (2000, 2009a, 2014), who draws on the work of Emanuela Cresti and her illocutionary-oriented model of IS (i.a. Cresti, 2000, 2009, 2018; Cresti & Moneglia, 2005). However, whenever needed, I shall recur to other theories or single aspects of other's theories for aspects they have not touched upon.

2.2.1. The form-function approach

One of the best-known and most cited volumes on IS is proposed by Lambrecht (1994), who inherits different theoretical models and approaches, and systematizes them in a coherent and holistic model

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[9] According to the modal model of memory outlined by (Atkinson & Shiffrin (1968), *short-term memory* refers to a temporary storage system where information transferred from the *sensory memory* begins to be processed before being transferred to *long-term memory*, where information is stored for a longer period of time. As demonstrated by extensive research, our short-time memory is limited both in terms of *capacity* (number of items that can be stored in STM) and *duration* (time span in which information is held in our "focus of attention"). The term short-term memory is sometimes conflated with *working memory*. However, according to different cognitive models, including Baddeley (1992 and following works), the working memory is the system that controls the processing and activation of the information held in short-term memory (McBride & Cutting, 2018: 112-113) .

of IS conceived at the intersection between linguistic form and function, as Lambrecht himself states in the introductive chapter:

> I see my own research as located somewhere in between the "formal" and the "functional" approaches to syntax. I do not believe that linguistic form can be exhaustively accounted for in terms of its communicative function in discourse. Nor do I believe that syntax is autonomous in the sense that it does not directly reflect communicative needs.
>
> (Lambrecht, 1994: 11).

As he repeatedly highlights throughout the volume, a primary theoretical importance is given to the function of *allosentences*, structures with the same propositional content but different IS articulation, and therefore different pragmatic functions. Disregarding the situational context, sentences like those in (7-8) could be considered as having the same semantic or propositional content. Nevertheless, they fulfil different communicative purposes in actual discourse: (7) belongs to the sentence-focus type or event-reporting type of sentence, with new information extending over the whole sentence, and would be appropriately uttered out of the blue to explain why the speaker is delaying the departure of a crammed bus by boarding very slowly with several shopping bags; in addition, (7) could also be interpreted as an argument-focus type of sentence – typically applying to identificational sentences in which one of the arguments of the verb is identified as the focus – that could be appropriately uttered as a corrective reply to a question like 'I hear your motorcycle broke down'; finally, (8) is a predicate-focus structure displaying a topic-comment articulation that would only be appropriate as an answer to the question 'What happened to your car?' (Lambrecht, 1994: 13-19).

7. My CAR broke down.[10]   (sentence-focus/argument-focus)
8. My car broke DOWN.   (predicate-focus)   (Lambrecht, 1994: 14, 19)

Although formally identical, these sentences are characterized by different IS articulations motivated on functional grounds and marked by prosodic factors. However, the IS articulation can also be marked through other means such as morphosyntax or word order variation.[11]

In a language like Italian – where word order is contended to be more flexible than in English – even though still displaying the same propositional content, the sentence-focus and the argument-

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[10] The two IS articulations applying to the sentence in (11) coincide in the case of English sentences comprising only minimal constituents, i.e. subject and predicate. The articulation would be different in the case of an argument-focus sentence with some argument other than the subject being focalized. An example is 'John gave MARY a book', where the focus only extends over the object (Lambrecht & Michaelis, 1998: 489).

[11] This shall be discussed in detail in § 2.

focus articulations would also imply a different formal realization, and so would the predicate-focus structure (Lambrecht, 1994: 223):

9. Mi si è rotta (ROTTA) la MACCHINA.   (sentence-focus)
10. Si è rotta la mia MACCHINA./ È la mia macchina che si è rotta. (argument-focus)
11. (La mia macchina) si è ROTTA.   (predicate-focus)

(Lambrecht, 1994: 223)

In Lambrecht's view, there are different categories pertaining to the domain of IS, the first being that of the opposition between *presupposition* and *assertion*, which have to do with "the structuring of propositions into portions which a speaker assumes the addressee already knows or does not know yet" (Lambrecht, 1994: 6). Specifically, a pragmatic presupposition is described as:[12]

> The set of propositions lexicogrammatically evoked in a sentence which the speaker assumes the hearer already knows or is ready to take for granted at the time the sentence is uttered.
>
> (Lambrecht, 1994: 52)

Conversely, a pragmatic assertion is conceived as:

> The proposition expressed by a sentence which the hearer is expected to know or to take for granted as a result of hearing the sentence uttered.   (Lambrecht, 1994: 52)

By using the term *lexicogrammatically evoked* presupposition, Lambrecht intends to draw a line between those presuppositions that are inferred based on the conversational situation without explicitly being mentioned in the clause, and those which are activated by the use of specific semantic or syntactic presuppositional devices. One type of presupposition included in Lambrecht's model is the presupposition of *knowledge* on the part of the addressee of specific states of affairs, situations or events, which derives from the use of specific lexical element or grammatical constructions. This is the case of the presupposition triggered by the use of a definite article – which implies that the speaker is able to identify the individual denoted by the definite NP – generally referred to in the literature as the "presupposition of existence" (Frege, 1892; Russell, 1905; Strawson, 1964). An example offered by Lambrecht is provided in (12), where the definite NP *the woman* is further specified by the restrictive relative clause *who moved in downstairs*:

12. I finally met the woman who moved in downstairs.   (Lambrecht, 1994: 51)

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[12] As pointed out by Lambrecht himself, his notion of pragmatic presupposition is detached from the semantic understanding of the term and from the truth or falsity of the proposition (Lambrecht, 1994: 52). A strictly semantic notion of presupposition is what ties two sentences in such a way that "the latter must be true in order that the former have a truth value at all" (Stalnaker, 1973: 447).

Here not only the hearer is assumed to be aware of the existence and gender of the speaker's neighbour, but also to already know that someone moved in downstairs. This specific state of affairs is presented as presupposed through the use of a grammatical morpheme (definite article) and a grammatical construction (relative clause), while the asserted part of the utterance – what the speaker wants to communicate to the addressee – is that (s)he finally met her/his new neighbour. A third presupposition of knowledge evoked in this utterance is triggered, according to Lambrecht, by the use of the adverb *finally*, which presupposes that one would have expected the speaker to have met the new neighbour earlier (Lambrecht, 1994: 55,56).

A second type of presupposition is connected with the speaker's assumptions on the *awareness* of the addressee with respect to referent activation, which can be evoked by the differences between lexical, pronominal or zero coding of referents.[13] In (15), the use of the personal pronoun *I* and the relative pronoun *who* presupposes that the addressee is aware of the two referents at the time of utterance (Lambrecht, 1994: 56), while the use of the full lexical NP *the woman* presupposes that (she) is not currently thinking about that referent at that specific point in time (Lambrecht, 1994: 52, 53).

The last type of presupposition regards the *contextual relevance* or *topicality* of referents in discourse, i.e. the possibility of identifying the proposition expressed by the sentence as information about a specific referent. Looking again at (15), two relevance presuppositions are evoked via the use of two unaccented pronouns, namely the fact that "the proposition expressed by the sentence is construable as relevant information about the referent of *I* [and the fact that] the proposition expressed by the relative clause is construable as relevant information about the referent of *who*" (Lambrecht, 1994: 56).[14]

An important cognitive principle relying on the inherent property of linguistic expressions to generate pragmatic presuppositions is that of *pragmatic accommodation*, which allows us to "accommodate" the use of presupposing expressions even when the hearer does not have a mental representation of its *denotatum*,[15] by creating such presupposition at the very moment of its

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[13] See § 1.2 on Chafe (1987)'s notion of *activation* and the following part of this section for details on Lambrecht's use of the term.

[14] For a slightly different and more detailed account of presuppositions, see also § 1.4.2.

[15] Lambrecht sketches a model of what he calls *universe of discourse* which is divided into *text-external* and *text-internal* worlds. The former includes speech participants and speech settings (place, time, circumstances of utterance), while the latter refers to the linguistic expressions and their meanings. With the term meaning, Lambrecht covers the lexical meaning inherently expressed in lexical items, the relational meaning arising from the relations established between words (e.g. the relation between arguments and predicates), as well as the things denoted by linguistic expressions in particular utterances, i.e. *referents* (entities or states of affairs) or *denotata* (attributes or relations) (Lambrecht, 1994: 37).

introduction into discourse. The rule of accommodation for presuppositions was formulated by Lewis (1979) by developing Stalnaker's view of presuppositions:

(IV).   Rule of Accommodation for Presuppositions

If at a time t something is said that requires presupposition P to be acceptable, and if P is not presupposed just before t, then – ceteris paribus and within certain limits – presupposition P comes into existence at t.   (Lewis, 1979: 340)

The two notions of pragmatic presupposition and assertion thus involve different degrees of knowledge being attributed to the hearer, and are reminiscent of Strawson (1964)'s Principle of the Presumption of Knowledge.[16] Nevertheless, they cannot be conflated with the notions of topic and focus, which refer to the "speaker's assessment of the relative predictability vs. unpredictability of the relations between propositions and their elements in given discourse situations" (Lambrecht, 1994: 6). Explicitly taking the distance from discourse organization and cohesion (cf. Reinhart, 1981; Givón, 1983), Lambrecht limits his treatise to sentence or clause topics, resorting to the notion of 'aboutness' – as did other linguists before him (e.g. Kuno, 1972; Dik, 1978; Reinhart, 1981) –[17] and drawing on Strawson's Principle of Relevance (see § 1.2):[18] "topic is seen as the matter of current interest which a statement is about and with respect to which a proposition is to be interpreted as relevant" (Lambrecht, 1994: 119). Moreover, a distinction is made between topic referents, understood as the entities which the propositions are about, and topic expressions, that is the linguistic expressions designating topic referents. Lambrecht claims that a distinction must be made in order to account for cases as (13)-(14) in which Pat is the topic referent of both sentences, but only the pronouns *her* and *she* in (13) are topical expressions, whereas *SHE* and *HER* in (14) are focal expressions (Lambrecht, 1994: 127):

13. a). Pat said they called *her* TWICE.

b). Pat said *she* was called TWICE.

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[16] Strawson (1964)'s original formulation of the Principle of Presumption of Knowledge is as follows: "Statements, in respect of their informativeness, are not generally self-sufficient units, free of any reliance upon what the audience is assumed to know or to assume already, but commonly depend for their effect upon knowledge assumed to be already in the audience's possession" (Strawson 1964:97).

[17] Reinhart (1981)'s definition of topic is in terms of *aboutness*, a concept already put forward by Kuno (1972) and Dik (1978) in a very intuitive-based fashion. However, in Reinhart's work, *aboutness* is matched with the attribute pragmatic to differentiate it from the semantic understanding of the term (cf. Putnam, 1958; Goodman, 1972). The concept of pragmatic aboutness is adapted from (Strawson 1964) and is based on two principles: the first refers to topics being made of content that the speaker presumes to be already part of the hearer's knowledge, while the second is concerned with topics being relevant to the purpose of the utterance, i.e. with the utterance being intended as adding some kind of information about a specific topic (Reinhart, 1981: 59).

[18] Strawson (1964)'s original formulation of the Principle of Relevance is as follows: "We do not, except in social desperation, direct isolated and unconnected pieces of information at each other, but on the contrary intend in general to give or add information about what is a matter of standing current interest or concern." (Strawson 1964:97).

14. a). Pat said SHE was called.

b). Pat said they called HER.   (Lambrecht, 1994: 127)

As regards focus, Lambrecht's definition draws on the notions proposed by Halliday (1967) and Jackendoff (1972):[19] the Focus of a sentence is "the element of information whereby presupposition and assertion differ from each other […], the unpredictable or pragmatically non-recoverable element in an utterance"; it is considered part of the assertion, but not entirely coincidental with it (Lambrecht, 1994: 206-207). The focus of a sentence can be marked via prosody, morphology, syntax or by a combination of prosodic and morphosyntactic means.

The last two categories relevant to IS are *identifiability* and *activation*. They specifically apply to discourse referents – entities or propositions that have acquired the status of referents once they have been added to the set of pragmatic presuppositions – and their mental representation in the *discourse register*, i.e. "the set of representations which a speaker and a hearer may be assumed to share in a given discourse" (Lambrecht, 1994: 74). The notion of *identifiability* – a term employed by Chafe (1976) – refers to entities for which a *referential file* has already been established in the discourse register so that the hearer is able to pick out the designated referent among all those designable by a particular linguistic expression and identify it as the one the speaker has in mind. At the time of the utterance, both the speaker and the addressee have a representation of an identifiable referent, but only the speaker has a representation of an unidentifiable referent.[20] This cognitive category is generally associated with the grammatical category of definiteness, but the relation between the two is not always biunivocal. For example, an indefinite article can be used to code both specific referents, which are identifiable for the speaker only, and generic referents that are unidentifiable for both the speaker and the hearer (15):[21]

15. I am looking for *a* book.   (Lambrecht, 1994:80)

The second notion related to discourse referents is *activation* and is derived mainly from Chafe (1976, 1987), but some differences can be identified in Lambrecht's treatise with respect to the former author:

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[19] Halliday (1967)'s definition of Focus was already introduced in § 1.2, while Jackendoff uses the term "'focus of a sentence' to denote the information in the sentence that is assumed by the speaker not to be shared by him and the hearer" (Jackendoff, 1972: 230).

[20] The ways in which a referent can become identifiable to both hearer and speaker are connected to the possibility of identifying it within a cognitive frame (Fillmore, 1982; Chafe, 1987) that can be broad enough to include: i) the interlocutors' natural or social universe, ii) the physical environment of the speech and iii) the text-internal discourse (Lambrecht, 1994: 90).

[21] Lambrecht also notes that the generic or specific interpretation of an indefinite may also be influenced by factors such as mood – modality of the predicate, in his words – with the indicative mood favouring the specific interpretation (a) and the subjective mood boosting the non-specific reading (b) (Lambrecht, 1994: 81):
  a.   Je cherche un livre qui *est* rouge. "I'm looking for a book that's red."
  b.   Je cherche un livre qui *soit* rouge. "I'm looking for a book that's red."

while Chafe focuses on the statuses that information has in the interlocutors' minds at the moment of the utterance, Lambrecht emphasises the relation between these cognitive states and their formal correlates in language, in particular prosody and morphosyntax: according to Lambrecht, the *active* status of a referent is expressed through pronominal coding and lack of accentuation (unmarked), while *inactive* status is usually marked via prosodic accentuation and full lexical coding; lastly, *accessibility* is seen as a "potential for activation", i.e. the potential for the hearer to identify a referent by drawing inferences (inferentially accessible referents) or by retrieving them from the text-internal (textually accessible referents) or text-external world (situationally accessible referents) (Lambrecht, 1994: 100, 104). Because this cognitive category has no direct morphological or phonological correlates, accessible referents may be coded either as active or inactive ones (Lambrecht, 1994: 107).[22] In (16) the speaker exploits the accessible status of the referent *his lover* and places the NP in preverbal position as the subject of the clause, topical and salient, while in (17) the same NP occurs in postverbal position as if it were pragmatically unavailable for the hearer (Lambrecht, 1994: 113-114):

16. I heard something TERRIBLE last night. (Ø) remember MARK, the guy we went HIKING with (Ø), who's GAY? His LOVER just died of AIDS. (Lambrecht, 1994: 110)

17. I just heard something TERRIBLE. Remember MARK, the guy we went HIKING with, who's GAY? I ran into his LOVER yesterday, and he told me he had AIDS.

(Lambrecht, 1994: 113)

Unlike Chafe, Lambrecht argues that it is not the "objective" status of a referent in a hearer's mind that is important for the coding of IS, but "whether a speaker assumes that a hearer is willing and able, on the basis of grammatical forms with particular presuppositional structures, to draw certain inferences which are necessary to arrive at the correct interpretation of a referent" (Lambrecht, 1994: 105). Consequently, we may deduce that the different coding of the accessible referent in (16) and (17) corresponds to a different assumption on the speaker's part regarding the addressee: in the first case the hearer is requested to act as if the referent of the NP were pragmatically available, while in

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[22] Accessibility is importantly addressed also by Ariel (1991, 2001), who emphasized the complexity involved in assessing the accessibility of referents. According to her accessibility theory, referring expressions can be seen as "marking varying degrees of mental accessibility", for they "instruct the addressee to retrieve a certain piece of Given information from his memory by indicating to him how accessible this piece of information is to him at the current stage of the discourse" (Ariel, 2001: 29). However, unlike Chafe (1976, 1987), Lambrecht (1994), and even Givón (1992), Ariel points out that accessibility cannot be reduced to a binary or ternary distinction (active, accessible, and inactive), for cognitive states are not at all categorical and cannot be determined automatically: "degree of accessibility depends on factors related to the inherent salience of the entity and on the unity between the antecedent and the anaphor. In addition, the conventional degree of accessibility coded by referring expressions is motivated by their relative informativity, rigidity and attenuation." (Ariel, 2001: 34).

the latter case no such request is made and the syntactic organization of the utterance suggests that the referent is previously inactive in the hearer's consciousness.

Directly related to the notion of referent activation is that of (partial) *iconicity*, according to which the prosodic prominence in a sentence is correlated to the communicative importance of the element being highlighted therein. In Lambrecht's view, however, prosodic prominence or sentence accent cannot be assigned the function of focus marking, since both topic and focus are feasible of receiving accentuation;[23] its function is that of marking a non-recoverable pragmatic relation between a denotatum and a proposition, i.e. "a relation which an addressee cannot be expected to take for granted, in one sense or another, at the time a proposition is verbalized" (Lambrecht, 1994: 325). As a general rule, whenever a constituent does not fall under the following condition, it will carry an accent by *default*:

> A referential constituent is unaccented if and only if the speaker assumes: (i) that a mental representation of the referent is active in the addressee's mind (or can be accommodated by the addressee as such); and (ii) that the addressee expects the referent to be a topic in the proposition at the time of the utterance. (Lambrecht, 1994: 324)

Accentuation, it should be noted, only marks "the right boundary of a syntactic domain expressing a pragmatically construed portion of a proposition", while the left boundary marking is expressed through non-prosodic means, viz. phrase structure (Lambrecht, 1994: 247). The position of sentence accent is thus determined by three factors: pragmatic function, grammatical rule and default.

2.2.2. The illocution-oriented approach

The second model of IS that is highly relevant for the purposes of this thesis can be included among the illocutionary-oriented approaches to IS.[24] The discussion of this model will be chiefly based on the works by Lombardi Vallauri (2000, 2009a, 2014), who endorses some of the theoretical notions developed in Italy by Emanuela Cresti and her research team (i.a. Cresti, 2000, 2009, 2018; Cresti & Moneglia 2005; Moneglia, 2011), but also cogently tackles additional issues concerning the definition and overlapping of different categories of IS.

The first and foremost difference between this model and the one proposed by Lambrecht (1994) is the identification of the utterance carrying an illocutionary force as the basic unit to which IS

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[23] More specifically, a topic accent must always co-occur with a focus accent in a sentence, while the implication does not hold for the latter (Lambrecht, 1994: 325).

[24] For the limited purposes of this chapter, illocution will be addressed only inasmuch as it is connected to the definition of information structure-related notions. The speech acts and illocutionary types identified by Cresti and her school shall be tackled in chapter 3.

applies. Unlike the previous models introduced above, this model is driven by the specific communicative goal that the utterance produced by a speaker in a given context is intended to achieve. According to this view, syntactic structuring is largely due to the informative function that the different parts of the utterance perform in a given context. In fact, the definitions of Topic and Focus, following Cresti (2000 and previous works), are both illocutionary-oriented:

> Focus is the part of an utterance which carries illocutionary force and realizes the informational purpose of the utterance itself. The Topic, on the contrary, is the part of an utterance that has no illocutionary force, whose function is to allow the comprehension of the Focus with respect to the ongoing discourse. (Lombardi Vallauri, 2014: 220)

One important factor stemming from the above definition is that although in most cases the notions of topic and the focus – topic and comment in the terminology employed by Cresti (2009) and theme and rheme in Vallauri (2009a) – are very close to those proposed by previous models, as Lombardi Vallauri (2009a: 88) points out, they are not entirely coincident, especially when non-assertive utterances are taken into consideration. The distinction between topic and focus is essentially functional, in this view, and has two main correlates at the structural-formal level: i) word order, with topic mostly preceding focus, and ii) intonation, with focus carrying the prosodic prominence. The following two examples from Italian illustrate the difference between an utterance whose illocutionary purpose is to assert that the reason why the omitted subject of the utterance runs is to save himself (18), and one whose informational purpose is to assert that what the subject does in order to save himself is to run (19). Though both utterances express the same proposition in semantic terms and both have assertive intonation with the main pitch falling on the tonic syllable of the last word, the order of the constituents is reversed:

18. Corre   per SALVARSI.
    Run.PRS.3SG to   save.REFL
    'He runs to save himself.'
19. Per   salvarsi   CORRE.
    To   save.REFL   run.PRS.3SG
    'He runs to save himself.'   (Lombardi Vallauri, 2009a: 88)

As can be clearly understood from these two examples, there is no *a priori* definition of what constitutes topical information in terms of the aboutness concept adopted in many other works. On the contrary, as Lombardi Vallauri points out, the terminological pair topic-focus refers to the degree of informative importance that the speaker implicitly attributes to – and the hearer implicitly recognizes of – the different parts of an utterance, and it is thus only interpretable as such in the

specific context of utterance. This, however, does not exclude the possibility that certain structures and types of discourse entities frequently correlate with either topic or focus status, but only that this specific status must be ascertained each time based on structural, prosodic and contextual cues.[25]

However, there are additional dimensions to be taken into consideration in order to fully understand and explain the articulation of utterance IS. First and foremost, Lombardi Vallauri argues for a distinction between different degrees of knowledge that the speaker implicitly attributes to the hearer. The terminological pair for this category is *presupposed-asserted* and intuitively relates to Strawson (1964)'s Principle of Presumption of Knowledge – as does that of Lambrecht (1994). Asserted information refers to information overtly and lexically introduced in the utterance and over which the speaker takes full responsibility. On the contrary, a presupposition is "ogni contenuto che sia connesso con un enunciato linguistico non perché l'enunciato lo asserisca ma perché la produzione dell'enunciato informa che l'emittente dà per scontato tale contenuto" [any content connected with a linguistic utterance not because it is asserted by the utterance but because the realisation of the utterance informs that the producer takes this content for granted] (Lombardi Vallauri, 2009a: 13).

There are different ways in which the truth or the existence of part of an utterance may be presented as presupposed. First, presuppositions can be triggered by the use of certain lexical expressions such as verbs (20),[26] adverbs (21) and nouns (22) which are able to convey what are called by Grice (1975) *conventional implicatures* – i.e. information which is implied based on the conventional meaning of certain words or expressions – and *scalar implicatures* – i.e. a subset of generalized conversational implicatures hinging on the felicity conditions of speech acts that are generated in most of the contexts, independently from the specific illocution of the utterance (Lombardi Vallauri, 2009a: 52; Bianchi, 2013: 117).[27] In (20) the verb *chiudere* 'to close' presupposes that the door was previously open without the speaker explicitly asserting it, in (21) the adverb *ancora* 'still', implicitly conveys that the virtual readers of the advert have been competitive, while in (22) the speaker using the noun

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[25] One way of disambiguating between the topic and the focus of an utterance is what Lombardi Vallauri (2009a) calls *illocution change test*. By turning an assertive sentence into a negative or interrogative one, only the truth value of the focal part will be affected by the change. Conversely, the truth value of both topics and presuppositions will remain unaltered. Another relevant instrument is the *wh-question test* described in Sgall et al. (1973) (Lombardi Vallauri, 2009a: 87).

[26] Among the many verbs that are able to convey presupposed information are included the verbs of judging analysed by Fillmore (1971) for English – such as *accuse*, *blame*, *criticize*, *credit*, *praise*, *scold*, *confess*, *apologize*, *forgive*, *justify* and *excuse* (Fillmore, 1971: 100) – and the implicative verbs listed by Karttunen (1971) – such as *manage* and *forget* – as well as the change of state verbs mentioned by Sellars (1954) and Karttunen (1973) – such as *stop*, *begin*, *continue*, *start*, *finish*, *carry on*, *take (x) from (y)*, *leave*, *enter*, *come*, *go* and *arrive* (Levinson, 1983: 181).

[27] More specifically, unlike conventional implicatures, *scalar implicatures* are not triggered by the meaning conventionally associated to a specific lexeme, but are triggered by the fact that producing a certain utterance would be infelicitous or inappropriate if the utterance content were not true. For example, the utterance "Gianni ha tre figli [Gianni has three children]" would not be false if Gianni had more than three children, but it would not be cooperative in terms of Grice (1975)'s Maxim of Quantity (Lombardi Vallauri, 2009a: 61).

scapolo 'bachelor', not only asserts that Gianni is single but also presupposes that he is a male; finally, the use of a partial value of a potentially wider scale such as the indefinite adjective *alcuni* 'some', in (23) implies that not all lawyers are honest:

20. Carlo ha chiuso la porta.
    Carlo has closed.PST.3SG the door
    'Carlo closed the door.'

21. Siete ancora competitivi?
    Be.PRES.2PL still competitive
    'Are you still competitive?'

22. Gianni è uno scapolo.
    Gianni BE.PRES.3SG a bachelor
    'Gianni is a bachelor.'

23. Alcuni avvocati sono onesti.
    Some lawyers be.3PL honest
    'Some lawyers are honest.'   (Lombardi Vallauri, 2009a: 17, 23, 62)

Second, presuppositions can be triggered by specific syntactic structures. Lombardi Vallauri includes in this category both the *presupposition of existence* and the *presupposition of truth*. The former has been the focus of interest of philosophers, logicians and linguists over the past century, starting with Frege (1892)'s observations on definite expressions, passing through Russell (1905)'s well-known considerations on non-referring definite expressions and landing on Strawson (1964)'s concept of *identifying knowledge*. The presupposition of existence can be said to follow from the use of a specific syntactic construct, i.e. definite descriptions with identifiable referents (see Lambrecht, 1994). By employing these constructs, there is an "assumption on the speaker's part of the possession by the addressee of a knowledge enabling her/him to identity as existing the referent of a linguistic expression" (Lombardi Vallauri, 2009a: 30). The example in (24) presupposes the existence of a present King of France because the definite expression allows for its interpretation as "shared knowledge holding between the participants to the communicative act" (Masia et al., 2017: 32), independently from its actual truth or falsity:[28]

24. The present King of France is bald.

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[28] Despite the imperfect one-to-one correspondence, definite expressions are generally employed to code identifiable referents. Definiteness can be expressed across languages via different means, including; i) the opposition of definite and indefinite articles, ii) proper names, iii) pronouns, iv) determiners, v) word-order, vi) case-marking particles, etc. (Lambrecht, 1994: 82; Lombardi Vallauri, 2009a: 30-31).

In a rather similar way, the presupposition of truth, although concerned with the truth value of an entire clause, can be defined as "the assumption on the producer's part of the possession by the receiver of a knowledge enabling her/him to identity as existing the event/state expressed by the clause, i.e. to judge as true the clause itself" (Lombardi Vallauri, 2009a: 32). Presuppositions of this type are those generated by the use of restrictive relative clauses, as in (25), where the existence of the girl who speaks Basque is presupposed, and some adverbial clauses as the temporal in (26) and the comparative in (27), in which the fact that I go to work and that Maria is intelligent are respectively presented as presupposed:

25. Ho incontrato   la   ragazza che parla   basco.

    I   meet.PST.1SG the   girl   who speak.PRS.3SG   Basque

    'I met the girl who speaks Basque.'

26. Quando vado   al lavoro passo   sempre   per   quella strada.

    When go.PRS.1SG to work   pass.PRS.1SG always   through   that   road

    'When I go to work I always take that road.'

27. Gianni   è   intelligente quanto   Maria.

    Gianni   be.PRS.3SG intelligent   as.much.as Maria

    'Gianni is as intelligent as Maria.'   (Lombardi Vallauri, 2009a: 35-36)

In between lexical and syntactic presuppositions are those triggered by *factive* verbs, adjectives and noun, i.e. predicates that are able to project clauses whose content is assumed to be either true or false.[29] Although generated by the use specific lexical items, these presuppositions are bound to specific morphosyntactic conditions, as are those triggered by adverbial clauses. Among these factors are included verb tense and mood, definiteness of noun phrases, linguistic reduction, semantic context, thematic structure and intonation, all factors that can contribute to the generation of different degrees of presupposition intensity (Lombardi Vallauri, 2009a: 37, 41).

Needless to say, the mechanism of pragmatic accommodation (Lewis, 1979; Lambrecht, 1994) can be exploited by the speakers, more or less unwittingly, to gain the tacit consent of the addressee on newly introduced content (Lombardi Vallauri, 2009a: 32-43).

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[29] The (non-exhaustive) list provided in Lombardi Vallauri (2009b) includes both the factive analysed by Kiparsky & Kiparsky (1971) – such as the verbs *make sense*, *suffices*, *amuses*, *bothers*, *regret*, *ignore*, *make clear*, *be aware of*, *bear in mind*, *mind*, *deplore*, *grasp*, and the adjectives *significant*, *odd*, *tragic*, *exciting*, *relevant* – and the implicative verbs discussed in Karttunen (1971) such as *manage* and *forget*. Some items can be *counterfactual*, i.e. presuppose the falsity of the clause in specific contexts, for example the Italian verb *credere* 'believe' is not factive when used in the present but it presupposes the falsity of the embedded clause when used in the past tense (Lombardi Vallauri, 2009b: 26-27).

Still another terminological pair in the domain of IS is *given-new*, one that has been often directly mapped onto the pair topic-focus, especially in the earlier literature (cfr. Halliday, 1985). However, as Lombardi Vallauri points out, while the latter is a linguistic category, the former is a cognitive or psychological category that refers to the activation degree of information in the speaker's short-term memory. Pretty much in the sense of Chafe (1987), the status of information can be *active*, *semiactive* or *inactive*, and therefore more or less given. In fact, despite the dyadic terminology, givenness can be conceived as a continuum rather than a black or white concept (Lombardi Vallauri, 2009a: 67-69):[30]

> In ogni momento del discorso è nuovo ciò che psicologicamente non è attivo nella mente del ricevente, mentre è (più o meno) dato ciò che è (più o meno) attivo nella mente del ricevente [In each moment of discourse what is new corresponds to what is psychologically not active in the addressee's mind, while what is (more or less) given corresponds to what is (more or less) active in the addressee's mind].
>
> (Lombardi Vallauri, 2009a: 69).

As also pointed out by Lambrecht (1994), activation status tends to be coded via linguistic strategies such as syntagmatic completeness, prosodic prominence, constituent order and special constructs. New referents tend to be coded through fully-fledged phrases, prosodic prominence and sentence-final position, while active ones tend to be expressed via continuous linguistic material and in sentence-initial position, as happens in (28) and (29) with *la ragazza di Piero* and *he* (your father-in-law) respectively (Lombardi Vallauri, 2009: 71-73):[31]

28. (Perché sei così agitato?) Una macchina stava per investire la ragazza di Piero.

    '(Why are you so shaken?) A car was about to run over Piero's girlfriend.'

29. Ieri ho incontrato tuo suocero con tua cognata. (Lui) è proprio un bell'uomo.

    'Yesterday I met your father- and sister-in-law. (He) is a really handsome man.'

    (Lombardi Vallauri, 2009: 68,71)

However, psychological status and linguistic coding can be mapped differently onto each other and the speaker can choose to adopt linguistic constructions dedicated to new information in order to express given information and vice versa. For example, an already active referent can be expressed

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[30] As argued in Lambrecht (1994), identifiability and activation are separate categories on a theoretical level, the former referring to the speaker's estimate about the presence of a referent representation in the hearer's mind and the latter concerning the presence of identifiable referents in the speaker's short-term memory or consciousness. However, in many languages of the world, the coding devices available to the speakers represent a combination of the two categories (Andorno, 2005: 33).

[31] A more detailed account of the relationship between activation, givenness and linguistic correlates will be provided in § 1.5).

through a fully-fledged noun because of an excessive distance from its last mention or the interference of other referents, as in (30):

30. Ieri ho incontrato tua cognata con tua suocera. La madre/tua suocera è proprio una bella donna.
    'Yesterday I met your sister- and mother-in-law. The mother/your mother-in-law is a really beautiful woman.'   (Lombardi Vallauri, 2009: 68)

In conclusion of this section, although many differences can be identified between the two functionalist models described above, I believe, nonetheless, that they are not in principle incompatible. In fact, a combination of the two allows us to better account for the IS of an utterance: while the illocution-oriented model enables a more accurate interpretation of the utterance structure against the broader context of discourse in naturally occurring spoken language, Lambrecht zooms in on the correspondences between form and function of the elements within the utterance, explaining how the mental states of the interlocutors are paired onto verbally encoded information.

2.3. (A)symmetries in information structure

As emerges from the previous discussion, the interest in the pragmatic organization of the utterance increased along with the number of labels, terms and definitions employed by different scholars. While some variants might just be a matter of terminology – as in the case of different works employing the terms topic and focus or topic and comment to refer to the Praguian notions of theme and rheme – others hinge on a different linguistic dimension or cognitive structure. In fact, although the multiple layers involved in the domain of IS were initially conceived as synonymous, there is striking evidence that the labels "given", "active", "identifiable", "topical" and "presupposed" can refer to different things. Their conflation in literature, nevertheless, reflects their intersection in natural language. One of the main reasons why this happens has much to do with what Givón (1983) and Haiman (1983) call *iconicity* (see § 1.2), i.e. the principle according to which the way we structure linguistic information directly reflects the way we process information, which is in turn determined by the specific cognitive structure of human minds.[32]

First, let us take into account the connection between identifiability and activation of referents: once a referent is introduced into the discourse, it is active in the interlocutors' consciousnesses/short-term memories for a certain amount of time and speakers can use continuous expressions to recall it,

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[32] Several principles or motivations have been argued to play a role in the pragmatic ordering of information. In addition to i) *discourse iconicity* (Hetzron, 1975), Herring, (1990) also discusses: ii) given before new information (Gundel, 1988), iii) first things first (Mithun, 1987; Gundel 1988), and iv) word order type (Creider & Creider, 1983; Herring (1989) principles.

complying with the language economy principle.[33] Such an active and highly given referent is always one of which both the speaker and the hearer have a mental representation (they are both able to uniquely identify it, even when that referent is no longer active in the participants' short-term memories). However, there is not a two-way relation between activation and identifiability, since not all the referents that are identifiable are active in the ongoing discourse. After informing my friend that yesterday I met *a Chinese student*, I can refer to her using a personal pronoun or a zero anaphora for a certain amount of time. The day after, when meeting my friend again, although we will both still be able to uniquely identify *the Chinese student* we talked about yesterday, her reference will not be active anymore in our short-term memories and we will probably choose to re-introduce the referent via a discontinuous expression before being able to designate it using more continuous linguistic material, in order to avoid the risk of an unsuccessful recall of the referent (Masia, 2016: 66).[34] Moreover, it has been suggested that since the social function of language is broadly accepted in the literature (Grice, 1975), the tendency to use expressions with greater or lesser identifying power according to the predictability or accesibility of the referents (Givón, 1983) could also be seen as the result of speakers adhering to a social norm – the Maxim of Quantity – in order to achieve a successful communication (Arnold et al., 2013: 9).

Second, it is logical and intuitive to expect that active or accessible information – thus (more or less) given – should be topical, both in the sense of Lambrecht's aboutness topic and Lombardi Vallauri's ancillary information, rather than focal, i.e. the illocutionary purpose of the utterance itself. The speaker will structure the utterance according to his/her communicative needs, which in the majority of the cases will be to inform the interlocutor about something he/she doesn't know yet. Although focal information can be entirely active and given, it is highly infrequent from a statistical point of view (Lombardi Vallauri, 2009a: 74). A few studies have also suggested that speakers' choices of syntactic packaging are correlated to the capacity these have to allow speakers to place accessible information earlier in the utterance and to postpone the one that requires more processing effort or planning time (Arnold et al., 2013: 12). These correlations between identifiability-activation-topicality have been captured by Lambrecht (1994)'s Topic Acceptability Scale. Following Chafe (1987)'s suggestions that the operation of retrieving a referent from the short-term memory is

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[33] The language economy principle – also referred to as the principle of *least effort* – can be roughly described as the tendency towards the minimum amount of effort to achieve the maximum result (Vicentini, 2003).

[34] However, recent experimental studies suggest that the speakers' choices of referring expression cannot be described only in terms of what is predictable to the listener and that other intervening factors such as attributive uses of expressions are worth investigating (Arnold et al. 2013; Grosz & Ziv, 1998).

cognitively less costly when compared to its retrieval from the long-term memory, the scale connects the activation degree of referents and their pragmatic acceptability as topics:

(V).   Topic Acceptability Scale

Active   most acceptable

Accessible

Unused

Brand-new anchored

Brand-new unanchored   least acceptable

(Lambrecht, 1994: 165)[35]

A third layer of correspondences is that between activation (and givenness) and presupposition: any piece of information that has been already activated can be successively presented as presupposed, i.e. as a content whose truth-value the speaker assumes to be shared by the hearer. Going back to the example of the Chinese student, after introducing the referent into the discourse for the first time (through an indefinite NP), I will be able to take her existence for granted and recall it by means of a definite expression (*the Chinese student*), even after a long period of time. However, not all the information that we present as presupposed is actually known to or shared by the hearer. This is often the case with advertisements or other types of discourse by means of which the speaker's persuasive intent is achieved in an implicit rather than assertive manner (Lombardi Vallauri, 2009a: 18). This is exactly what happens in the following ad, where – in order to convince the readers that they need this product – while explicitly asserting that there will be no way out for germs if they use Amuchina, the readers' agreement on the existence of the germs themselves is implicitly taken for granted by using the definite expression *i germi* 'the germs':

31. I   germi non avranno   scampo   con: Amuchina Spray !

The   germs not have.FUT.3PL escape   with Amuchina Spray

'The germs won't stand a chance with: Amuchina Spray!' [36]   (Opinioni.it)

Finally, as Lombardi Vallauri (2009a) points out, between Topic and Presupposition there is an indirect relation mediated by the activation and givenness categories, since what is given and activated tends to be both topical and presupposed, while what is new tends to be coded as focal and asserted (Lombardi Vallauri, 2009a: 160).

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[35] Earlier attempts to define a scale of (partial) correspondences between definiteness, identifiability, givenness and topicality are found in Prince (1981), Ward & Prince (1991), and Gundel et al. (1993), among others.
[36] The ad is available at https://opinioni.it/amuchina-spray/i-germi-non-avranno-scampo-con-amuchina-spray/.

In addition to all these different categories which can be subsumed under the umbrella of (micro-)pragmatics,[37] several other linguistic levels of analysis are involved in the expression of IS, whose correlates extend to include at least syntax and prosody.

Among many other scholars, Mereu (2009) argues that different informational, syntactic and semantic categories frequently overlap in language use. As shown in Table 2, the unmarked word order for Italian bi-argumental verbs – an example of which is provided in (32) – is Subject-Verb-Object (henceforth SVO) (Mereu, 2009: 77-78):

Syntactic order	Subject	Verb	(Object)
Semantic structure	Agent	Predicate	(Patient or other semantic roles)
Information structure	(Given)	New	
	(Topic)	Focus	

Table 2: The correspondences between the syntactic, semantic and informational structures of a syntactically and pragmatically neutral SV(O) sentence (adapted from Mereu, 2009:77)

32. Gianni ha   colpito   il   ragazzo

Gianni have.PRS.3SG hit   the   boy

'Gianni hit the boy'   (Mereu, 2009: 77)

This table not only suggests that topical information tends to be given and to occur at the beginning of the sentence, but also that it tends to coincide with the syntactic subject and the semantic agent of the predication.

The additional categories of IS discussed in §1.4 and the prosodic structure of the sentence can be added to the picture, so as to show that topic content also has a tendency towards being (more or less) active, to be coded as presupposed and to occur at the beginning of the utterance unaccented.

Syntactic order	Subject	Verb	(Object)
Semantic structure	Agent	Predicate	(Patient or other semantic roles)
Information structure	(Given)		New
	(Topic)		Focus
	((Semi-)Active)		Inactive
	Presupposed		Asserted

Prosody	(Unaccentuation)	Prominence

Table 3: Unmarked correspondences between the syntactic, semantic, informational and prosodic structure of utterances

One last principle could be called upon to summarize the correlation between word order, IS categories and referential encoding. According to Givón's well-known Principle of Progression from Given to New information, topic coding expressions tend to appear sentence-initially, while focus coding expressions tend to occur sentence-finally:[38]

(VI).   Principle of Progression from Given to New information

"More indefinite/discontinuous/new information follows more definite/continuous/old information"

(Givón, 1984:207)

However, all the cases of symmetrical correspondences between the different categories of IS that were described in this section ideally refer to unmarked structures and, as should not be overlooked, they only represent "tendencies". In § 2 a number of marked phenomena will be tackled, mainly from the syntactic and prosodic point of view.

3.   Markedness phenomena

In fact, although there is extensive evidence across languages that the principle in (VI) may be a trend in many languages, it does not apply to many others, especially those with a canonical VS order (cfr. Herring, 1990; Tomlin & Rhodes, 1992, among others). What is more, even in a language like English where the correlation between subject and topic is fairly strong, the canonical word order (SV(O)) is claimed to be unmarked with respect to IS (Lambrecht, 1994: 131). As pointed out in § 1.4.1, a canonical SVO sentence as that in (33) may have different readings in different discourse contexts (34a-d):

33. The children went to school. (Lambrecht, 1994: 120)

34. a). (What did the children do next?) The children went to SCHOOL.

b). (Who went to school?) The CHILDREN went to school.

c). (What happened?) The CHILDREN went to SCHOOL!

d). (John was very busy that morning.) After the children went to SCHOOL, he had to clean the house and go shopping for the party.   (Lambrecht, 1994: 123)

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[38] This principle was formulated in Givón's 1984 volume on syntax but removed from the 2001 revised version. It is roughly equivalent to other formulations known as Given before New (Gundel, 1988), Theme First Principle (Tomlin, 1986) or Topic First Principle (Hetland & Molnár, 2001).

While (34a) follows the topic-focus sequence, (34b) has a focus-topic structure, while in (34c) the focus extends to the whole sentence; finally, in (34d) the whole adverbial *After the children went to school* constitutes a scene-setting topic for the following clause, whose aboutness topic is John.[39]

Nevertheless, the situation is different in the case of noncanonical word order, as argued in Ward & Birner (2019):

> A variety of noncanonical-word-order constructions serve to mark the information status of their constituents, and at the same time facilitate processing through the positioning of various units of information. The speaker's choice of construction, then, serves to structure the informational flow of the discourse.　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　(Ward & Birner, 2019: 415)

3.1. Syntactically-marked constructions

A number of noncanonical word order phenomena have been found to occur cross-linguistically, with (slightly) different inventories and features characterizing each language. Following Benincà et al. (1988) and Mereu (2009), the term *syntactically-marked phenomena* shall be employed to "refer to all those sentences in which the constituents do not occur in their canonical position to express specific pragmatic meanings" (Benincà et al., 1988:115-116). In this section relevant constructions will be discussed with reference to English and Italian. The discussion has no exhaustive intent but is only aimed at providing the frame within which right-hand topics are construed as pragmatically-motivated constructions.

In Mereu (2004), syntactically marked constructions are viewed as phenomena whereby the syntactic and the pragmatic sequence do not overlap and in which an optional prosodic marking is involved.

Among these constructions some are topic and some are focus realizations.

3.1.1. Topicalizing strategies

According to Lambrecht (1994), many of the syntactically-marked constructions attested cross-linguistically can be interpreted as structures aiming to promote a referent on the topic accessibility scale – from a new, unused or accessible status to active – and to subsequently enabling speakers to recall it through unmarked topical expressions (Lambrecht, 1994: 176-177).

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[39] Lambrecht gives a slightly different interpretation of the adverbial clause in (29d), which he considers non-topical or semi-topical, at least in terms of his notion of aboutness topic. In addition, the clause is also presupposed, as is the case with many other adverbials (Lambrecht, 1994: 125).

Among such constructions are *thetic presentational sentences* – i.e. single-judgement sentences introducing a referent or entity into the universe of discourse and making it available for predication in subsequent clauses (Lambrecht, 1994: 181) – constructions that are cross-linguistically limited to a set of predicates with highly non-agentive and often locative arguments such as *be*, *live*, *arrive*, *have*, *see*, etc. However, intransitive or transitive predicates with unexpressed arguments and a limited degree of agentivity are sometimes also exploited as presentational. In (35) a new referent is first introduced into the discourse in post-verbal position, then subsequently recalled via an unaccented topical relative pronoun. (36) is an example of an Italian intransitive verb whose subject is in post-verbal position too, for the utterance is intended to introduce the referent *Giovanni* into the discourse by mentioning the fact that he called (Lambrecht, 1994: 80-81):

35. Once there was *a wizard* who was very wise and rich.   (Lambrecht, 1994: 180)

36. Ha   telefonato   GIOVANNI.

    Have.PRS.3SG called   Giovanni

    'Giovanni called.'   (Lambrecht, 1994: 181)

A second type of topic promoting construction is known as *left dislocation* or *left detachment* (henceforth LD), a marked type of extra-clausal topic instantiation which allows speakers to introduce a new topic and then recall it by means of a coreferential pronoun placed in the canonical clause-internal position of the constituent (37):[40]

37. One of the guys I work with, he said he bought over $100 in Powerball tickets.

                                                       (Ward & Birner, 2019:420)

In Italian the use of the coreferential pronoun is compulsory with direct object (DO) dislocations (38), but optional when other arguments are involved, as in (39):

38. Il   libro, Piero *(l')   ha   comprato

    The book Piero   DO.CL have.PRS.3SG bought

    'The book, Pietro bought it.'

39. A   Luisa, Piero (le)   ha   regalato un   libro.

    To Luisa   Piero IO.CL have.PRS.3SG give   a   book

    'To Luisa, Piero gave her a book.'   (Mereu, 2004: 76)

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[40] Along the same lines, in Prince (1997) these constructions are labelled as *simplifying* LDs, for they simplify the processing of new entities by placing them in a separate processing unit before they become given and can be recalled in their canonical position inside the clause in pronominal form (Ward & Birner, 2019: 421).

In Ward & Birner (2019), a distinction is drawn between LD proper and *preposing*, another topicalizing strategy including a wider range of phrasal constituents being placed sentence-initially rather than in their canonical position. According to Ward and Birner, unlike LDs, preposed arguments are necessarily discourse-old, that is given (active or textually-accessible),[41] and stand in a set relation with the preceding discourse that can be as varied as type/subtype, entity/attribute, part/whole, identity, etc.[42] In the case of preposing, no coreferential pronoun is required:

40. G: Do you watch football?

    E: Yeah. *Baseball* I like a lot BETTER.   (Ward & Birner, 2019: 433)

However, examples as that in (40) have been considered elsewhere (e.g. Lambrecht, 1994; Prince 1997; Mereu, 2004; Mereu & Trecci, 2004; Frascarelli, 2017) as cases of LD whose function is that of expressing a contrastive meaning, that is a contrast between elements of a closed set. Yet another function served by LDs is to mark a topic shift, i.e. a change from one topic to another, as in the passage in Roman Italian in (41), where the topic chain headed by *Mimmo is* interrupted by the introduction of the topic Piera heading a short topical chain. The referent Mimmo is then reintroduced by means of an LD:

41. *Mimmo* è uscito fuori de corsa perché lo lo volevano bagnà a lui -- e ce stava *Piera* –
    quella roscia - quella più carina -- che stava - 'mbè è la più carina - che stava al uhm - aspetta mica me ricordo

ah	niente	è	corsa	dietro a	Mimmo--	*insomma*	*dopo*	*Mimmo*	sai	quando
uhm	nothing	is	run	behind to	Mimmo	in.short	after	Mimmo	know	when
uno	lotta	de	qua	e	de	là--	*insomma*	*Mimmo*	la	pr- riesce a
one	fights	over	here	and over		there	in.short	Mimmo	DO.CL.3SG	manages to
prenderla		in braccio	e	se	mette	sul	bordo	della	piscina	
take.INF-DO.CL.3SG		in arm	and	REFL	puts	on	edge	of.the	pool	

    '*Mimmo* went out in a rush because they wanted to throw him in the pool, and there was *Piera*, the readhead, the prettiest one, who was – well she is the prettiest – who was at the uhm – wait I don't remember – uhm nothing, she went running behind Mimmo. In short,

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Mimmo after that – you know, when one keeps fighting – in short *Mimmo* manages to take her in his arms and goes to the edge of the pool.'

<div align="right">(Ar.Co.Dip, Brogelli - Annegamento)</div>

A particular type of left dislocation is also known as *hanging topic.* In the Italian literature, this type of LD is known as *anacoluto* or *tema sospeso (nominativus pendens)*, for the dislocated constituent "looses" its eventual preposition and is separated by the rest of the sentence by a virtual pause. In Italian and other Romance languages, hanging topic (HT) is obligatorily resumed, not only by unaccented pronouns, but also by tonic pronouns or other anaphoric NPs.[43] An example from Italian is provided in (42):

42. Giorgio, hanno   parlato bene di   quel furbacchione
    Giorgio have.PRS.3PL   speak well   about that old.fox
    '(As to) Giorgio, they spoke well about that old fox.'   (Mereu, 2004: 76)

Prince (1997: 17) also recognizes the availability in English of LD constructions with demonstratives or full NPs in the canonical sentence-internal position rather than pronominal forms. One example is taken from the FBI Watergate files:

43. Sirica$_i$, there was some indication that Sirica$_i$ might be putting together a panel.

<div align="right">(Prince, 1997: 17)</div>

Finally, a last type of topics is what Chafe (1976) calls *Chinese style Topics*, since they are believed to be generally available in this language, but rarely found in English. The peculiarity of these constructions is that generally no syntactic or semantic link is to be found between the dislocation and sentence predicate:[44]

44. 那棵树，叶子大.

    [*Nà-kē   shù*]   yèzi   dà
    That-CLF   tree   leaves big
    'That tree, the leaves are big.'   (Li and Thompson, 1976: 467)

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[43] Note, however, that there are different positions in the literature regarding the treatment of HTs. Benincà (2001), Frascarelli (2007, 2017) and López (2016), among others, argue that LDs and HTs should not be confused because of their different syntactic behaviour.

[44] In many accounts, *Chinese style topics* are treated together with HTs. Here I follow Lambrecht (2001), who argues that these topics are completely *unlinked* from a syntactic point of view and only a pragmatic relation holds between them and the predicate of the sentence (Lambrecht, 2001: 1058-1059). However, as insightfully pointed out by one of the reviewers of this thesis, in other languages such as Japanese, the syntactic/pragmatic relation between these kinds of topics and the clause can be signalled through the use of the marker *wa*, generally described as a topic marker (see e.g. Kitagawa, 1982: 176).

Nonetheless, in some cases a frame semantic relation may be found between the dislocation and the following NP, as can be observed also from the example in (45):

45. That's not the typical family anymore.

   [The typical family today], the husband and the wife both work.　　(Lambrecht, 2001: 1059)

While all the above-mentioned topics are produced at the left periphery of the sentence, *right dislocations* (RDs) are produced at the right periphery. This particular type of topic instantiation, which is part of the linguistic investigation of this thesis, shall be dealt with in detail in Chapter 2. For the limited purpose of the current discussion, suffice it to say that it refers to the rightward placement of information that would appear earlier in a canonical sentence, while the clause-internal canonical position is filled by a resumptive pronoun. The peculiarity of these topics is that they are believed to always represent discourse-old information (Ward & Birner, 2019: 426-427). An example is provided in (46):

46. Below the waterfall (and this was the most astonishing sight of all), a whole mass of enormous glass pipes were dangling down into the river from somewhere high up in the ceiling! *They* really were enormous, *those pipes*. There must have been a dozen of them at least, and they were sucking up the brownish muddy water from the river and carrying it away to goodness knows where.　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　(Ward & Birner, 2019: 427)

From Lambrecht (1994)'s point of view, similarly to LDs, these constructions allow speakers to use the preferred topic expressions – unaccented pronouns – in the canonical clause-internal position while putting on hold the announcement of the entity they refer to until the end of the sentence (Lambrecht, 1994: 203).

Another construction enabling speakers to exploit the same strategy is *extraposition*, that is a subordinate clause postposed from subject position and whose canonical sentence-initial position is filled with a nonreferential *it* in English. Unlike RDs, however, extrapositions do not necessarily represent familiar information but in fact frequently express hearer-new information, for they allow compliance with the given before new information principle (Ward & Birner, 2019: 425-427):

47. A: Jeffrey isn't a very good student.

   B: Yeah, *it*'s a miracle *that he turned in a term paper at all*.　　(Ward & Birner, 2019: 426)

3.1.2. Focalizing strategies

Just as LDs, HTs and RDs all represent topic instantiations, other syntactically-marked constructions serve the function of focalizing specific constituents, although in slightly different ways.

The first type of construction considered is *focus fronting* (FF), i.e. the placement of a single constituent in sentence-initial position, additionally characterized by prosodic prominence signalling a narrow type of focus.[45] Unlike LDs, fronted foci are not resumed by anaphorical expressions either in Romance languages or English (Mereu, 2004: 76-77):[46]

48. A: Piero ha   incontrato Maria al   cinema.
       Piero have.PRS.3SG meet   Maria at.the cinema
       'Piero met Maria at the cinema.'

    B: LUISA Piero ha   incontrato al   cinema.
       Luisa   Piero have.PRS.3SG meet   at.the cinema
       'Piero met LUISA at the cinema.'   (Mereu, 2004: 77)

49. Customer: Can I get a bagel?

    Waitress: No, sorry. We're out of bagels. A BRAN MUFFIN I can give you. [capital mine]

                                                           (Ward & Birner, 2019: 419)

A similar effect is achieved when a *wh-constituent* is fronted, with the consequent *marginalization* of the other constituents in postverbal position or before the fronted wh-element (Mereu, 2004: 78; Samek-Lodovici, 2015: 173-174).[47] Typical examples are given in (50)-(52):

50. Che   cosa   ha   dato a suo fratello, Giorgio?
    What thing have.PRS.3SG give to his brother   Giorgio
    'What did Giorgio give to his brother?'

51. Che   cosa   gli   ha   dato, Giorgio, a suo fratello?
    What thing IO.CL.3SG have.PRS.3SG give   Giorgio to his brother
    'What did Giorgio give to his brother?'

52. A suo fratello, Giorgio, che   cosa   gli   ha   dato?
    To his brother   Giorgio what thing IO.CL.3SG   have.PRS.3SG give
    'What did Giorgio give to his brother?'   (Mereu, 2004: 78)

In part similar to FF is *rightward focalization* (RF), a strategy involving the placement of a subject NP in postverbal position to focalize it and the concomitant *marginalization* of other eventual

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[45] In Mereu (2004), all FFs are considered to represent contrastive foci, but this is not necessarily the case, as pointed out by Lombardi Vallauri (2009a) and Mereu & Frascarelli (2006) (see § 2.2.1).

[46] In English, unlike Romance languages, pronominal resumption is absent in both the constructions descried as cases of preposing by Ward & Birner (2019), i.e. fronted foci and contrastive topics (Benincà, 2001).

[47] The term *marginalization*, as argued by Samek-Lodovici (2015), is currently used in the literature following Cardinaletti (2001, 2002)'s definition to refer to post-focal constituents occurring *in situ* with unstressed prosody (Samek-Lodovici, 2015: 10).

postverbal constituents. In this case too, the prosodic prominence narrows down the focus to a single constituent. An example is given in (53):

53. Ha   telefonato GIORGIO, alla   polizia.

    Have.PRS.3SG called   Giorgio   to.the police

    'GIORGIO called the police.'   (Mereu, 2004: 79)

Yet another type of focalizing strategy is represented by cleft-sentences (CF), i.e. bi-clausal units attested cross-linguistically in which any type of phrasal constituent can be placed in an independent clause with a copular structure and a null or expletive subject, and followed by a relative or relative-like clause (Lambrecht, 2001; Mereu, 2004; Roggia, 2008):[48]

54. È   PIERO che ha   incontrato Luisa al   cinema (,non Marco)

    Be.PRS.3SG Piero   that have.PRS.3SG meet   Luisa at.the cinema   not Marco

    'It's PIERO that Luisa met at the cinema.'   (Mereu, 2004: 77)

If the main purpose of the above-mentioned focalizing strategies is to allow the speakers to signal the sentence focus being (narrowly) located on specific constituents, their "side effect" is also that of defocalizing – hence topicalizing – both the pre- and post-focal elements of the utterance. In particular, the right-hand instantiations of the topics thus created are of particular interest and part of the linguistic investigation of this thesis. Regarding the examples trough (48) to (54), in (48B) the focalization of the NP *Luisa* confers topical status to *Piero ha incontrato al cinema*, a sentence fragment that was already introduced in the previous utterance (48A); in (49) *I can give you*, although not explicitly mentioned in the previous context, is still assigned a topical status in virtue of *a bran muffin* being focalized; a similar situation can be observed in (50), (51) and (52) as far as *Giorgio*, *Giorgio, a suo fratello* and *Giorgio, che cosa gli ha dato* are concerned respectively; lastly, *alla polizia* in (53) and *che ha incontrato Luisa al cinema* in (54) become topical by effect of the narrow focalization of the NPs *Giorgio* and *Piero* respectively. As shall become evident in Chapter 2, the topical status of such post-focal sentence components is hardly ever under examination in linguistic studies.

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[48] Note, however, that additional types of (pseudo)clefts are attested cross-linguistically. Among the most frequent are the pseudocleft and the reverse pseudocleft types illustrated in example (3) and (4) respectively. (1) represents the corresponding canonical order sentence and (2) the cleft version (Lambrecht, 2001: 467):

    (1) I like CHAMPAGNE.
    (2) It is CHAMPAGNE (that) I like.
    (3) What I like is CHAMPAGNE.
    (4) CHAMPAGNE is what I like.

3.2. Prosodically-marked constructions

Going back to Lambrecht's example in (33), which is reported here again for the reader's convenience as (55), it was argued that from a syntactic point of view, the canonical SVO order was unmarked with respect to IS. Nonetheless, the informational structure of the different allosentences is marked through prosodic means, making each of them compatible with a specific contextual situation (56a-d).

55. The children went to school. (Lambrecht, 1994: 120)
56. a). (What did the children do next?) The children went to SCHOOL.

    b). (Who went to school?) The CHILDREN went to school.

    c). (What happened?) The CHILDREN went to SCHOOL![49]

    d). (John was very busy that morning.) After the children went to SCHOOL, he had to clean the house and go shopping for the party.   (Lambrecht, 1994: 123)

At this point of the discussion, one can argue with a certain degree of confidence that the linguistic coding of IS is the result of a complex interaction between syntax and prosody, especially as far as spoken language is concerned. In fact, while spoken language primarily employs specific intonational patterns to express informative statuses, written language cannot avail itself of prosodic means to signal the IS of an utterance and relies more heavily on syntactic structuring. This does not imply, however, that written production cannot be associated with specific prosodic profiles. One means employed for this purpose is punctuation, the other is the writer/reader (implicit) convention according to which, unless otherwise signalled by lexical or morphosyntactic means, the main prominence will be assigned by default to the sentence-final position (Lombardi Vallauri, 2009a: 110-111).

The terms *prosodic* and *intonational prominence* have been used in the first part of this chapter in a rather intuitive way, but a formal definition seems at the very least appropriate for the subsequent discussion.[50] The acoustic correlates of IS have been a matter of debate in the literature for many years and go back at least to Halliday (1967)'s work on English, who takes into account different

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[49] Although two constituents are given by convention in capital letters, one should not interpret them as an instance of multiple foci within the same utterance. Rather, it is interesting to relate this phenomenon to Gagliardi et al. (2012)'s experimental data on broad focus utterances, which can in some cases contain "a series of comparable prominence peaks" (Lombardi Vallauri, 2014: 228).

[50] Prosody is defined in Breen et al. (2010) as "the way in which words are grouped in speech, the relative acoustic prominence of words, and the overall tune of an utterance. Prosody comprises acoustic features such as fundamental frequency (F0), duration, and loudness, the combinations of which give rise to psychological percepts such as phrasing (grouping), stress (prominence), and tonal movement (intonation)". (Breen et. al, 2010: 1047).

acoustic features attributed to what he calls *information focus*, viz. "the selection, within each information unit, of a certain element or elements as points of prominence within the message" or "the speaker's decision as to where the main burden of the message lies" (Halliday, 1967: 203, 204). According to the Halliday, the prominence is primarily a matter of pitch,[51] duration and intensity of the *tonic syllable*, which in the unmarked condition is located on the (accented syllable of the) final accented lexical item of the information unit.[52] However, other factors such as rhythm and intonation contours (what he calls *tones*) can be relevant in determining the extension of focus (Halliday, 1967: 208), at least in English.

As far as Italian is concerned, different scholars have argued that prosodic prominence is the result of a combination of at least two factors characterized by increased values – voice intensity and syllable duration – and specific tonal contours that are recognisable in correspondence of the tonic syllable of the last word composing the focus (Lombardi Vallauri, 2009a: 106). In particular, some works addressed the specific tonal events characterising different types of foci (e.g. Frascarelli, 2007; D'Imperio, 2002; Avesani & Vayra, 2004; Mereu & Frascarelli, 2006) – while others investigated the differences in the overall contour of the F0 of utterances expressing different pragmatic meanings, such as assertions, replies or comments (e.g. all the works of Cresti and her research group; Gagliardi et al., 2012; Lombardi Vallauri & Tamburini, 2012; Lombardi Vallauri, 2014).

From a cross-linguistic perspective, the relation between the acoustics of speech and the sentence IS has been tackled following two different approaches: most of the studies assume a *direct-relationship* between sets of acoustic features and particular meanings, others endorse an *indirect-relationship* mediated by phonological categories (e.g. Pierrehumbert, 1980; Ladd, 2008; other studies adopting the ToBI system employed in the Autosegmental Metrical Paradigm framework)[53] (Breen et al., 2010: 1048). While the debate on the acoustic correlates of IS – in particular those that

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[51] The English term *pitch* refers to the fundamental frequency (F0), viz. the frequency at which the vocal cords vibrate during verbal production (Lambert, 1994: 277). A *pitch pattern* thus indicates the specific intonational (supra-segmental) or prosodic contour of the voice while uttering the segmental-level sounds (Lombardi Vallauri, 2004; Ladd, 2008). Intonation, in turns, is defined by Ladd as "the use of suprasegmental phonetic features to convey 'postlexical' or sentence-level pragmatic meanings in a linguistically structured way" (Ladd, 2008: 4).

[52] Here a distinction must be drawn between *tonic stress*, which identifies the tonic syllable of a lexical word, and *pitch accent*, or *nuclear pitch accent*, which identifies the tonic syllable of (a word within) an information unit (Avesani, 1995; Avesani & Vayra, 2004).

[53] The ToBI (Tones and Breaks Indices) system was developed by Pierrehumbert and her colleagues (Pierrehumbert, 1980; J. Pierrehumbert & Hirschberg, 1990, and following works) to transcribe the intonation patterns and prosody of English utterances (Beckman & Gayle, 1993). In this system, the shape of the F0 contour is represented as a string of tones – either H(igh) or L(ow) – which can be of three types: pitch accents (*), phrase accents (–), and boundary tones (%). Pitch accents can be either high (H*) or low (L*) or a combination of both tones (e.g. L+H*) (Beaver & Clark, 2008: 11). The inventory of pitch events and their definitions are based on analyses combining two subtypes of intonational phonology, the autosegmental melodic component of intonation and the metrical structure representing prominence and phrasing. This framework of intonation is thus known as the autosegmental-metrical model (Arvaniti, 2017).

are more relevant to each language – is still open, whatever the quality of the pitch prominence, its presence and association with focus is widely recognized in the literature produced within both approaches (Mereu & Frascarelli, 2006: 258; Ladd, 2008; Breen et al., 2010, Lombardi Vallauri, 2014, Féry, 2017, among others).

3.2.1. Focus

While it is generally recognized that the unmarked position of the pitch accent is located in sentence-final position both in English and Italian (i.a. Halliday, 1967; Lambrecht, 1994; Frascarelli, 1999; Lombardi Vallauri, Avesani & Vayra, 2004; 2000; Mereu, 2004; Mereu & Trecci, 2004; Mereu & Frascarelli, 2006; Ladd, 2008; Breen, 2010), the exact extension of the focus signalled by it is still a matter of debate.

According to Lombardi Vallauri (2000 and following works), whenever the intonational prominence is on the tonic syllable of the last word of the utterance, there is no structural limitation to the extension of the focus. On this view, the sentence-final position of the main prominence is compatible both with a *broad focus* extending over the whole utterance (57), and with a *narrow focus* extending over the VP (58):

57. What happened?

    [Bill saw JOHN]F

58. What happened to Bill?

    [Bill/He]T [saw JOHN]F   (Lombardi Vallauri, 2000: 230)

While a similar polyfunctionality of the sentence-final pitch would be consistent with the definition of unmarked structure specified in § 1.4.1, the position is not the most accredited in the literature. Lambrecht (1994) argues that the sentence-final prominence is indeed unmarked but only compatible with foci extending over the VP, which in his view are the unmarked articulation of IS.[54] However, as pointed out by Lombardi Vallauri (2000), Lambrecht's position cannot account for cases in which, unlike in English, an Italian utterance can have the main prominence located on an element in

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[54] A similar position is taken in Mereu & Frascarelli (2006): even though the type of focus extending over the predication is labelled as *broad focus*, it is specifically argued that left topics, preverbal subjects and adverbials are excluded from the intonational phrase to which the (broad) focus belongs. In this and other works, Frascarelli also argues that the acoustic nature of the broad and narrow type of focus is qualitatively different, with the latter also implying a prosodic restructuring of the emarginated constituents. In terms of prosodic contour, the former is characterized by an H+L* tone, while the latter present a distinctive H* tone on the tonic syllable (Mereu & Frascarelli, 2006: 257, 260, 263).

sentence-final position that does not belong to the VP (e.g. a postverbal subject) and nonetheless the focus still being extended to the whole sentence, as in (59).[55]

59. E' finito   lo   ZUCCHERO

    Is   finished   the   sugar

    'The sugar is finished'   (Lombardi Vallauri, 2000: 232)

Conversely, there are a few cases both in English and Italian in which an instance of *narrow focus* on a single constituent results despite the sentence-final position of the pitch accent:

60. John painted the shed YESTERDAY   (Lombardi Vallauri, 2000: 237)

61. Uno   sport   BELLO

    A   sport   beautiful

    'A BEAUTIFUL sport'   (Lombardi Vallauri, 2000: 237)

However, both Lambrecht and Lombardi Vallauri agree that whenever the main prominence does not fall to the right edge of the utterance, the focus is obligatorily narrow, as in the following two examples from English and Italian respectively:

62. IERI   sono   andato a   Roma

    Yesterday am   gone   to Rome

    'YESTERDAY I went to Rome'

63. Ieri   sono   ANDATO   a   Roma

    'Yesterday I WENT to Rome'   (Lombardi Vallauri, 2000: 234)

The constituent on which the prominence falls may also be one already interested by some type of syntactic focalization (see § 2.1.2) as the cleft structure in (64). In this case too, we are dealing with a narrow type of focus extending over a single argument.

64. È   a   ROMA   che   sono   andato ieri

    Is   to Rome   that am   gone   yesterday

    'It was to ROME that I went yesterday'   (Lombardi Vallauri, 2000: 234-235)

While many proposals have been conjectured to account for the different instances of focus realisations, the one offered in Lombardi Vallauri (2000) seems particularly relevant, both for its

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[55] As a matter of fact, Lambrecht (1994) does consider utterances with accented postverbal subjects in Italian and characterizes them as having a marked type of IS with focus extending over the whole sentence, i.e. event-reporting constructions with sentence-focus, in his terminology. It could be assumed, thus, that Lambrecht considers this position to be syntactically marked for subjects in Italian, while the Italian literature, including Lombardi Vallauri, considers the postverbal position to be the unmarked one for this type of verbs (see also Mereu, 2009 for a similar position).

explanatory power and for its ease of application. According to Lombardi Vallauri's model, focus is narrow whenever the prominence is in a marked position. The meaning of *marked position* is further specified in the following way:

(VII).   By "marked position" we mean not only a position marked for the prominence (i.e. the left of the phrase), but also a position marked for the linguistic element that bears the prominence (i.e. the left or the right of the phrase, depending on the kind of word involved).

<div align="right">(Lombardi Vallauri, 2000: 238)</div>

This account of prosodic markedness is able to predict that the examples in (60)-(61) are obligatorily an instance of narrow focus since the prominence, although located in an unmarked position for prominence, falls on a linguistic element whose syntactic position is marked. As a matter of fact, since the unmarked position for English time adverbs is to the left, their accentuation in sentence-final position results in a narrow focus; in a similar fashion, the accentuation of an Italian adjective whose unmarked position is to the left of the noun also results in the narrow focalization of that single adjective.

Another important factor to take into account when looking at narrow focus is *contrastivity*. Following Kiss (1998), Mereu & Frascarelli (2006) define *information focus* as an element of a presupposed set that does not express an exhaustive identification, and *contrastive focus* as expressing an exhaustive identification, i.e. identifying an exhaustive subset that excludes any other element of the presupposed set (Mereu & Frascarelli, 2006: 257).[56] In a partly similar vein, Lombardi Vallauri (2000) argues that narrow focus yields a contrastive reading only if the focused element belongs to a closed system, i.e. to a paradigm which is closed in the language (paradigmatic contrast) or closed by the context (syntagmatic contrast) (Lombardi Vallauri, 2000: 244). The example in (65) is an instance of narrow information focus, while the focused elements in (66) and (67) are both contrastive: the former belongs to a closed set where contrast arises between *your* and the other possessive adjectives belonging to the paradigm that are excluded (*mine*, *her*, *his*, etc); the latter contrasts with the other excluded members of a closed set of alternatives evoked by the context in which a few persons have been mentioned, and thus provisionally forming a closed paradigm (Lombardi Vallauri, 2000: 242).

65. Did anyone leave?/Who left?

   GEORGINA left.   (adapted from Lombardi Vallauri, 2000: 242)

66. Si   è rotto   il   TUO   giocattolo

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[56] For an exhaustive account of different types of focus, including *verum*, *close*, *exhaustive*, *scalar* see for instance Krifka (2007).

REFL is broken the your toy

'YOUR toy broke' (Lombardi Vallauri, 2000: 240)

67. Who left? Harry, Fjona or Cornelia?

GEORGINA left (none of the ones you mentioned) (Lombardi Vallauri, 2000: 242)

3.2.2. Topic(s)

If the association between pitch accent and focus is widely recognized, much more uncertain is the prosodic status of topics. In fact, several scholars claim that, in addition to the focus prominence, Italian utterances can optionally contain a second prominence located on (specific types of) topics (Cresti, 2009, 2018; Lombardi Vallauri, 2014; Frascarelli, 1999, 2017; Mereu & Frascarelli 2006; Frascarelli & Hinterhölzl, 2007). The possible co-occurrence in the same sentence of a topic pitch accent – either marking contrast or shift – with a sentence-final focus pitch accent is endorsed also in Gundel & Fretheim (2006) for English.

Based on the results of two experiments conducted on spoken Italian with the use of an automated algorithm for the detection of prominence, Gagliardi et al. (2012), Lombardi Vallauri & Tamburini (2012), Lombardi Vallauri (2014) argue that main prominence has a demarcative rather than culminative function, i.e. that it serves the function of signalling the boundaries of IS units. In fact, the data of their study seem to indicate that: i) most of the utterances with a topic-focus articulation have the main prominence on the (right boundary of the) topic; ii) instances of narrow focus were consistently marked by the main prominence on the right edge of the focused constituent; iii) utterances perceived as broad focus constructions were either marked by a main prominence at the end of the utterance or did not show a clearly recognisable main prominence. Thus, only relevant constituents located at the left of the utterances (either topics or narrow foci) were consistently marked by the main prominence to indicate the boundaries of the IS, while right foci and broad foci, which represent the unmarked IS articulation, were not necessarily marked by prominence (Lombardi Vallauri, 2014: 227-228).

The results of this study could be seen as partly coincident with the analysis carried out by Frascarelli & Hinterhölzl (2007) and Frascarelli (2017) on the discourse and prosodic properties of different types of topics, from which it emerges that some topics are characterized by prosodic contours comparable to that of foci, while others are not. Since the discussion in the two papers is highly relevant for a detailed characterisation of right dislocations too, it will be presented as a conclusion to this section.

The model elaborated by Mara Frascarelli within the formal framework of generative grammar with a strong discourse-analysis oriented approach (Frascarelli, 1999; Frascarelli & Hinterhölzl, 2007; Frascarelli, 2007; Frascarelli, 2017) is one of the most detailed existing accounts of topics, both in terms of dislocations and framings. According to this model, different subtypes of topics can be identified based on formal and functional features. These subtypes are subject to a hierarchical ordering in the CP which determines their positions inside the sentence, as results from the figure below:

[ForceP [ShiftP [GP [FrameP [ContrP [FocP [FamP [FinP]]]]]]]] (Frascarelli, 2017: 489)

 The ShiftP Projection hosts *Aboutness Topics* (A-Topics), a category drawing on Reinhart (1981)'s notion of topic, i.e. "the entry identifying the file card under which the proposition expressed in the sentence is stored" (Frascarelli, 2017: 476). According to Frascarelli & Hinterhölzl's analysis carried out on spoken Italian and German, this type of topic is associated with a very specific prosodic contour presenting a rise of the F0 (Fundamental Frequency) in correspondence of the tonic syllable labelled as an L*+H tone in Pierrehumbert (1980)'s ToBI system. Furthermore, it is argued, following Krifka (2001), that the instantiation of this kind of topic represents a speech act itself requiring a subsequent speech act and is therefore only to be found in root clauses and "clauses endowed with illocutionary force" (Frascarelli, 2017: 477). An example of A-Topic is provided in (84):

68. Sempre a parlare di Leo! [Tua sorella]$_{\text{A-Top}}$, come sta?

     'Always talking about Leo! Your sister, how is she doing?'   (Frascarelli, 2017: 476)

 Lower in the hierarchy and distributionally following A-Topics in the sentence are found *Limiting-Topics* (L-Topics), which have been referred to in different ways in literature (cf. Chafe's 1976 "Chinese style" topics, Lambrecht's 1994 "scene-setting" topics and Krifka's 2007 "frame-setting topics") but nevertheless can be said to serve the function of "providing a frame for the following sentence [and] limiting the truth-conditional validity of the sentence it is associated with", rather than being an entity about which the proposition is construed (Frascarelli, 2017: 474). Carella (2015) identified three main types of L-Topics in Italian corresponding to the types hypothesized in Chafe (1976), all having an H* type of prosodic contour, i.e. a sharp rise of the F0 extending over the constituent with a peak located on the tonic vowel: spatial, temporal and domain or field topics (Carella, 2015: 374). [57]

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[57] While spatial and temporal frameworks are rather transparent terms, the exact denotation of the *domain* framework is somewhat trickier. Although explicitly tackled in Carella (2015), its definition reflects the vagueness expressed by Chafe (1976), who refers to a "domain" to which the predication applies being restricted by the topic expression: "What the topics appear to do is to limit the applicability of the main predication to a certain restricted domain. [...] Typically, it

The following is an example of Space L-Topic co-occurring with an A-Topic in Italian:

69. Nel primo c'era la traduzione in italiano a sinistra dello schermo – c'erano tutti i vari sistemi per avere informazioni in più e

[io]A-Top [lì]Space non l' avevo capito insomma.

I there not DO.CL have.PST.1SG understood in.short

'In the first [case] there was the Italian translation on the left side of the screen – you could find different ways to get additional information and I could not understand it [there], that's it.' (Frascarelli, 2017: 486)

L-Topics, it is argued, can occur both at the left and the right periphery of the sentence. Nevertheless, when right-dislocated, the prosodic contour of these topics changes drastically into an L* tone, i.e. a low and flat contour very close to the speaker baseline (Carella, 2015: 375) that Frascarelli & Hinterhölzl (2007) attribute to Given-Topics, and that is typically associated with afterthoughts and right dislocations in literature (e.g. Lambrecht 1981, 1994; Benincà et al., 1988; Berruto, 1986; Simone, 1997; Gagliardi et al., 2012; Lombardi Vallauri & Tamburini, 2012; Lombardi Vallauri, 2014; Samek-Lodovici, 2015, among others).

The third subtype of topic is the *Contrastive Topic* (C-Topic), which is argued not to alter the Focus value of the sentence but only to provide an instruction to "'break down' a complex proposition into a conjunction of simpler ones in which a predicate applies separately to each member of a salient set" (Frascarelli, 2017: 477). As such, it is devoid of illocutionary force and is not restricted to root clauses, but cannot appear in adverbial clauses which do not express a proposition. The example in (70) is provided to exemplify the difference in acceptability between the sentence in (70a) containing an A-Topic – and thus illocutionary force – and the one in (70b) containing a C-Topic – devoid of such force and thus felicitous when occurring in an embedded clause:

70. a. * I hope that the past he will forget it soon, so as to bravely face the future.[58]

   b. okI hope that the past he will forget, and the future he will face bravely.

(Frascarelli, 2017: 481)

Interestingly enough, C-Topics appear to have the same prosodic profile as L-Topics, i.e. H*, although the two types are argued to be essentially different with respect to i) their *denotata*, using Lambrecht's terms – since the former denotes entities and the latter encode types/domains – and ii)

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would seem, the topic sets a spatial, temporal, or individual framework within which the main predication holds (Chafe, 1976: 50).

[58] Note, however, that one of the reviewers of this thesis has argued for the complete acceptability of the sentence in (70a).

the possibility of being right-dislocated, which only applies to the limiting type. Even more interesting is that the H* is the same tonal event that in Mereu & Frascarelli (2006) is argued to characterize narrow focus, both informative and contrastive.

Moreover, the property in ii) is also argued to apply to the last type of topic identified in the papers, i.e. *Given-Topic* (G-Topic), which can be said to be discourse-given or at least 'familiar'. Thus, their function in the sentence is either that of maintaining the current A-Topic (Given A-Topics) or that of mentioning "a constituent that is part of the background but was not proposed as an A-Topic in the previous context (Background G-Topics). The difference between the two is illustrated by the following example from Italian, where the pronoun *loro* and the NP *i gladiatori* "resume (and maintain) the current A-Topic (introduced at the beginning of this passage and heading a long chain of null subjects)", while the left-dislocated PP refers to an entity already introduced into the discourse but not instantiated as an A-Topic (Frascarelli, 2017: 478).

71. [i gladiatori]$_k$ entravano nell'arena, pro$_k$ sfilavano, pro$_k$ salutavano gli spettatori e pro$_k$ salutavano soprattutto l'imperatore, poi pro$_k$ si recavano davanti alla tribuna […] e c'era l'arena che era praticamente un tavolato di legno sul quale veniva buttata della sabbia e [su questa]$_{G-Top}$, [loro$_k$]$_{G-Top}$, [i gladiatori$_k$]$_{G-Top}$, lottavano.

'The gladiators entered the arena, [they] marched, [they] greeted the public and especially hailed the emperor, then [they] used to go in front of the gallery […] and there was the arena, which was practically a wooden stage covered with sand and on this they – the gladiators – used to fight.'   (Frascarelli, 2017: 478

G-Topics, independently of their position at the left or right periphery of the sentence, are argued to be always realised with an L* prosodic contour and to be found in any type of clause, since they do not realise an independent illocutionary act (here used in alternation to "conversational move").[59] While one sentence can host no more than one A-Topic and/or C-Topic, multiple realisation of L-Topics and G-Topics are possible within one single sentence, as it was possible to observe from (71).

To sum up, according to this model, only Given-Topics and Limiting-Topics can be right-dislocated and they are always produced with a distinctive low and flat contour (L*).

Moving to the second type of sentence-final topics that are under exam in this thesis, i.e. non-dislocated sentence-final topics, some information can be put together from *passim* mentions in focus-related works. In Frascarelli (2004)'s study on the prosodic realization of focus in Italian, it is possible

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[59] The illocutionary act can be defined in terms of the type of linguistic action that the transmitter intends to perform by uttering a certain string of words (Austin, 1962).

to read that narrow focus is realized with either an H* or H* + L tone, depending on the focus signalling or not the end of the clausal structure, i.e. the depending on its being part of a wider focal constituent or on the extraclausal nature of the post-focal material (Frascarelli, 2004: 8-13). Thus, a different tonal realization characterizes the foci in (72) and (73), only the second of which signals the end of the focus domain:[60]

72. LUI   me   l'   ha   detto, IO non ho   mai parlato.

    3SG.M to.me   DO.CL have.3SG said   1SG not have.1SG   never speek

    'HE told me, I've never said anything.'

73. A me PIACE   comunque l'idea   di   fare una cosa   anche diversa.

    To me like.3SG anyway   the.idea of do one thing also   different

    'I LIKE the idea of doing something different anyway.'   Frascarelli (2004: 12)

What is relevant for the purposes this thesis, however, is that the post-focal part is always characterized by an F0 fall, regardless of its syntactic features, i.e. regardless of its representing what Cresti (2000) calls an *appendix*, i.e. an extra-clausal component, or "non-marginalizable" material which is part of a wider focal constituent (Frascarelli, 2004: 13).

4.   The Information Structure of Chinese sentences: an introduction

In the first section of this chapter it was argued that the research in the field of IS can be said to have originated in Europe with the Prague School (see § 1). However, although centred on Indo-European languages, the discussion was presumably fuelled by the observations on what have been called *topic-prominent languages*. According to Li & Thompson (1976)'s typology of language classification that was based on the grammatical relations subject-predicate and topic-comment, Chinese belongs to the group of languages in which the relation holding between the topic and the comment of a sentence appears to have more significant manifestations than that between its subject and predicate (Xu, 2015: 393). Perhaps not just by chance, as (Xu, 2014) notices, some of the major scholars in the field of IS were also Chinese language scholars (Xu, 2014: 446).[61]

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[60] Note, however, that it is not entirely clear whether all the elements receiving an H* prosodic prominence as the one in (72) can be indeed considered as cases of narrow foci: at least as far as the subject NP *io* in (72) is concerned, I believe it should be better analysed in terms of a contrastive topic (see § 3.1.1). In other cases, the material following the so-called narrow focus is clearly focal (e.g. *e viceversa* in Frascarelli (2014)'s e.g. 11d). However, such matters will be disregarded on this occasion for the purpose of inquiry concerns the tonal events associated with sentence-final topics and non with focus.

[61] Unless otherwise specified, the term Chinese is used in reference to the standard language of the Popular Republic of China, established as official language in 1955 (H. Chappell 2001). The term Mandarin or Mandarin Chinese is sometimes

In fact, the grammatical relations – i.e. syntactic functions (Bickel, 2011: 399) – shaping the structure of the sentence have represented one of the most debated points in the grammar of Chinese ever since the 1950s (LaPolla, 2013: 36). It would not be farfetched to say that every single treatise on the IS of Mandarin Chinese, even the most recent ones, have been chiefly concerned with the definition of topics, topic structures and their relation with sentence subjects. In the enormous corpus of literature produced on this particular matter, what is generally agreed upon is that Mandarin Chinese, unlike Indo-European languages, does not mark the syntactic function of subject through overt morpho-syntactic devices such as verbal agreement or case-marking (i.a. Chao, 1968; Tsao, 1977; Li & Thompson, 1976, 1981; Chu, 1998).[62] Also, the sentence-initial slot is not necessarily connected with subjects, as exemplified in (74), where the NP *yú* 鱼 'the fish' can be interpreted both as the one that has eaten and the thing that has been eaten:[63]

74. 鱼吃了。

Yú   chī   le

Fish   eat-PERF

'The fish has eaten.'/' I/you...they have eaten the fish.'   (Chao, 1968: 98)

Whether or not Chinese employs other covert means for the purpose of marking subject remains a matter of debate (Morbiato, 2018). According to LaPolla (2013: 37), three views can be identified with regard to this matter: those studies taking topic-comment as the only relevant (and grammaticalized) relation; those adopting a topic-prominent account; those arguing for the centrality of the subject-predicate relation. Aware of the impossibility of doing justice to the extremely rich literature produced around this matter, I shall only briefly introduce the three accounts to provide a general sketch of the relation between subject and topic in Chinese, for it is only indirectly relevant to the purpose of this volume.

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used as a synonym and/or to differentiate the standard language from any of the other Sino-Tibetan varieties spoken on the national territory or abroad.

[62] As discussed in Morbiato (2018), the identification and definition of subjects was initially based on a set of overt morpho-syntactic criteria observed in Indo-European languages: i) indexation/agreement; ii) flagging/case; iii) verb cross-reference; iv) fixed and relative word order in the sentence. After the 1970s, the set was extended to other covert criteria in order to account additionally for the grammatical relations holding in non-Indo-European languages, including at least: i) relativisation; ii) reflexivisation; iii) passivisation; iv) topic extraction; v) equi-NP deletion; vi) floating; vii) finiteness; viii) control; ix) raising (Morbiato, 2018: 321).

[63] For all the Chinese data, in the body of the text as well as in examples, both the *pīnyīn* 拼音 'pinyin' transcription with tones and the characters will be provided, followed by the closest English equivalent. Upon the second occurrence, only the *pinyin* transcription without tones and in italics will be provided for specific expressions occurring in the body of the text. Quotations from Chinese will only present the original text in characters and the closest English translation.

4.1. Pragmatic and syntactic functions

The first type of stance taken with regards to the grammatical relations in Chinese– strongly endorsed by LaPolla (1990 and following works) – can be dated back at least to the works of Chao (1968) and Lü (1979), with both arguing that the notions of subject and predicate in Mandarin are to be described as equivalents of topic and comment.[64] In Chao's view, the notions of grammatical subject and predicate can be subsumed under the more general categories of topic and comment (Chao, 1968: 93).[65] As an illustration, Chao (1968) argues that the NP *zhè jiàn shì* 这件事 'this matter' in (75) can be considered the subject of the clause only in terms of an aboutness relation with the predicate, for although the verb *fābiăo* 发表 'publish' would be translated with a passive voice in English, no passive marker (*bèi* 被) is or could be appropriately used on the Chinese verb in this case (Chao, 1968: 93-94).

75. 这件事早发表了。

Zhè jiàn shì   zăo   fābiăo-le

This CLF thing early publish-PERF

'This matter has long been published.'   (Chao, 1968: 93)

A similar approach is taken in Lü (1979: 72), who discusses subject in relation to object and points out that the two are not to be considered on the same level of analysis, that is while the object belongs to the level of verb structure, the subject belongs to that of sentence structure: in other words, Lü uses the term *bīnyŭ* 宾语 'object' to refer to any verbal argument, whereas the term *zhŭyŭ* 主语 'subject' is employed to refer to that argument of the verb which happens to be "placed" in the position of the topic, i.e. sentence-initially. The situation is metaphorically compared to that of the members of a

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[64] The discussion on the notion of subject in Chinese actually started in the 1950s and triggered the production on the mainland of a rich critical literature, chiefly concerned with the definition of its logico-semantic and positional properties. Others before Chao (1968) contended the existence of topic and its possible overlapping with subject in Chinese (e.g. (Zhang, 1952-1953 [1957]). However, it was not until the introduction of Chao (1968)'s volume translated in Chinese by Lü Shuxiang in 1979 that the subject discussed vis-à-vis the notion of topic and defined (mainly) in terms of positional properties started to become more than a purely "instrumental" notion (Abbiati, 1990: 172-174).

[65] The most prototypical (semantic) definition of grammatical subject and predicate is that of *doer* of an action and the action itself, respectively (Crystal, 2008: 461).70 However, according to Chao (1968), the terminological pair subject-predicate in Chinese cannot be simply understood as actor-action, since it applies to no more than 50% of the sentences actually produced (Chao, 1968: 93). In Indo-European languages, the subject is typically described as the noun phrase marked by inflectional agreement with the verb, as in the following example from Italian: 'Gli piace *la musica*' (Frascarelli, et al., 2012: 52). Alternatively, it has been described in distributional terms as the NP occurring in the immediately preverbal position, as has been observed with particular reference to English (Crystal, 2008: 461; Frascarelli et al., 2012: 52). Similarly, the predicate cannot be conflated with the notion of action, since not only verbs – and certainly not only those expressing actions– but also nominals and adjectives may "predicate" some quality of an entity (Frascarelli, et al., 2012: 52, Crystal, 2008: 381).

committee, each performing their own duties in addition to taking turns in chairing the committee (Lü, 1979: 73). This implies that despite the use of the label *subject*, what Lü (1979) has in mind is closer to a context-dependent pragmatic category. As an illustration, Lü gives a few examples to show how *subject* and *object* are partly overlapping notions. In (76), according to Lü, both *chuānghu* 窗户 'window' and *zhǐ* 纸 'paper' can be considered the subject of the sentence in a) and b) respectively.

76. a) 窗户已经糊了纸。

    Chuānghu   yǐjīng   hú-le   zhǐ

    Window   already   paste-PERF   paper

    'The window has already been pasted with paper.'

    b) 纸已经糊了窗户。

    Zhǐ   yǐjīng   hú-le   chuānghu

    Paper already   paste-PERF   window

    'The paper has already been pasted on the window.'   (Lü, 1979: 73)

LaPolla (1990 and following works) draws on this view and further claims that there is no grammaticalized relation between subject and predicate in Chinese, for what really shapes the word order of a Chinese sentence are the pragmatic relations among IS constituents (LaPolla, 1995: 297). This is contended based on the results of a number of tests applied by LaPolla in order to assess the existence of covert means of subject-marking/coding: cross-clause coreference, relativisation, clefting, comparative, raising, indispensability and reflexivisation.[66]

    A less "radical" view is held by Li & Thomson (1976, 1981). In particular, they have argued that unlike the other three types of languages identified in their article – subject-prominent, both subject-prominent and topic-prominent, neither subject-prominent nor topic-prominent – Mandarin Chinese displays a number of characteristics reflecting the priority role of sentence topics. In particular, the pervasiveness of the so-called *double-subject* construction and *topic-comment* representing the basic type of sentence have played a crucial role in highlighting the differences between Chinese and Indo-European languages. The double-subject or double-nominative structures are sentences in which (apparently) there are two subjects, the first traditionally referred to as *main subject* (*dà zhǔyǔ* 大主语) and the second as *secondary subject* (*xiǎo zhǔyǔ* 小主语) (Chao, 1968: 118; 1979: 57), *secondary topic* or *sub-topic* (Xu, 2015: 395). What is peculiar is that the first NP has no selectional relationship

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[66] Note, however, that the results are not unchallenged, since other scholars have applied some of these tests with (at least partially) different outcomes (cf. Bisang, 2006; Morbiato, 2018).

with the verb, i.e. it is not an argument of the verb. One example from Li and Thompson is given in (77) below:

77. 那棵树叶子大。

    Nà-kè   shū yèzi   dà

    That-CLF   tree leaf   big

    'That tree, the leaves are big.'   (Li & Thompson, 1976: 468)

Not only are such sentences "pervasive", they are also hardly conceivable as derived from any other sentence type, Li and Thompson argue. According to them and to many other scholars within and outside mainland China, this type of sentence characterized by a topic-comment structure first and foremost, is a basic type of sentence in topic-prominent languages.[67] In other words, the topic-comment type of sentence is an *unmarked* one. However, Li and Thompson also argue for the existence of a subject in Chinese, despite its "limited" importance in shaping grammatical relations. For example, according to them, the subject and not the topic is in control of the serial verb construction (79) and the reflexivisation process (80) (Li & Thompson, 1976: 478-479).[68]

78. 张三买了票进去。

    Zhāngsān mǎi-le   piào   jìnqù

    Zhangsan buy-PERF   ticket go.in

    'Zhangsan bought a ticket and went in/to go in.'   (Li &Thompson, 1976: 478)

79. * John，我喜欢他自己。

    John   wǒ hǐhuān tā   zìjǐ

    John   1SG like   3SG REFL

    'John, I like himself.'   (Li &Thompson, 1976: 478)

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[67] However, it must be pointed out that, unlike other languages displaying topic-prominent features such as Japanese, Korean, Lahu and Lisu, Chinese is rather peculiar for it is not a verb-final language, although Li andThompson contended it to be in the process of becoming one (Li & Thompson, 1976: 470). Despite few authors simply arguing against the possibility of assigning a word order based on the S/O asymmetry in Chinese (e.g. LaPolla 1990 and following works), in more recent studies and generally speaking in all formal accounts, Mandarin Chinese is considered an (S)VO language. Nonetheless, it seems to display a few "oddities" in terms of its typological classification, such as the order Rel-N in relative clauses, the order PP-V in prepositional phrases (but cfr. Djamouri, et.al. (2013) and Paul (2015b) for a more complex and detailed characterization of the construction), and the order St-Adj in comparative constructions. In addition, Mandarin Chinese also employs a few syntactic constructions that are unusual or infrequent from a cross-linguistic perspective. These at least include polar questions in the form A-not-A and the potential complement construction V-de-C, V-bu-C (Wu & He, 2015: 379).

[68] As pointed out, some authors (i.a. LaPolla, 1990, 1995; Morbiato, 2018) came to different results concerning the process of reflexivisation due to a different definition of the notion of subject. What Li & Thompson (1967, 1981) and other similar approaches treat as subject is chiefly defined through a semantic rather than syntactic criterion, i.e. "the most prominent or agent-like argument in the verb's argument structure" (Morbiato, 2018: 328).

Finally, the last approach is represented by those scholars considering subject to be not only a viable but also a necessary notion in Chinese (as is that of topic). This view has been adopted within most of the formal studies of Chinese (e.g. Huang, 1982 and following works) as well as in some functionalist studies such as Her (1991) and Tai (1997), among others. However, also within this view, different authors have come to define and conceive topics and subjects in different ways.

Taking Huang (1982)'s work as a reference, we can say that in most formal accounts Mandarin topics can be either *base-generated* – i.e. not subject to movement from a different position in the clause, or *derived*, i.e obtained through movement. Following Teng (1974), Huang acknowledges that sentences such as that in (77) can only be explained as belonging to the first type, for there is no other possible slot they could occupy if not the sentence-initial one, while topic-comment utterances as that in (80a), Huang (1982: 87) suggests, would be more naturally analysable as "derived from underlying subject-predicate sentences". As a consequence, in the example below the reference of the pronoun *tā* 他 'he' is to be interpreted in disjunction from *Zhāngsān* 张三 'Zhangsan':

80. a. [张三]$_i$，[他]$_j$知道[我]$_k$喜欢。

 [Zhāngsān]$_i$, [tā]$_j$ zhīdào [wǒ]$_k$ xǐhuān.

 Zhangsan 3SG know 1SG like

 'Zhangshan, he knows I like.'

 b. [他]$_j$知道[我]$_k$喜欢[张三]$_i$。

 [Tā]$_j$ zhīdào [wǒ]$_k$ xǐhuān [Zhāngsān]$_i$.

 3SG know 1SG like Zhangsan

 'He knows [that] I like Zhangshan.'

Apparently similar is the position held by Tai (1997). However, at least one fundamental difference can be identified: Tai (1997: 96) ties the preverbal NP position to that of subject, regardless of its base-generated syntactic function or semantic role. Hence, he argues that "in a language as Chinese, when there is only one argument, this argument should be selected as the subject, and it can be placed before the preverbal position" (Tai, 1997: 94). Based on this criterion, Tai assigns the NP *kèrén* 客人 'guests' in (81) the syntactic function of subject, but considers it to be an object in (82) because it is found in post-verbal position (Tai, 1997: 95).

81. 客人来了。

 Kèrén lái-le

 Guest come-PERF

 'The guests came.'

82. 来了客人。

Lái-le　　　　kèrén

Come-PERF　　guest

'Some guests came.'　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　(Tai, 1997: 94)

However, Tai fails to acknowledge that what really changes in the two sentences is not necessarily the syntactic function of the NP but certainly its informational and cognitive status. As has been argued for Italian (see § 2.1), in the first case the NP is topical and cognitively (at least) accessible, while it is focal and (presumably) inactive in the second scenario.[69]

Lastly, a few recent works seem to acknowledge the different linguistic levels to which subject and topic belong, i.e. to the syntactic and pragmatic ones respectively, an example being Lu (2003). Lu not only sets a clear boundary between the syntactic subject and the pragmatic topic, but also distinguishes them from the discourse notion of theme, presumably drawing on Halliday (1994)'s notion of theme as the starting point of the sentence and distinguishable in textual, interpersonal, and ideational or topical theme(s) (Lu, 2003: 246-248). According to Lu (2003), although the three notions of subject, topic and theme can overlap, they need not, as shown below:
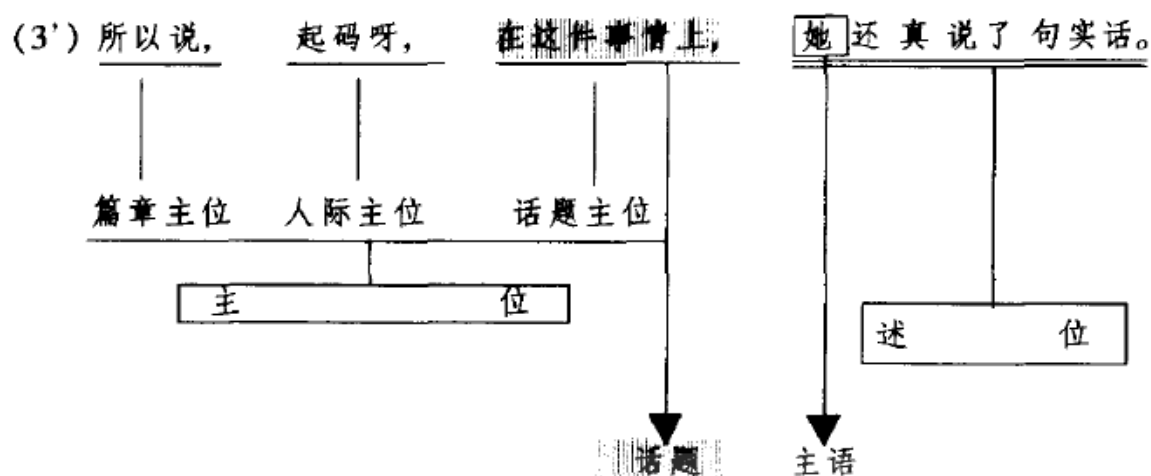
Figure 1: Co-occurrence of theme, topic and subject in Mandarin Chinese (Lu, 2003: 248)

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[69] More recent works which cannot be discussed here for reasons of space take a distance from all three approaches, in the wake of newer large-scale cross-linguistic research on grammatical relations (e.g. Bickel, 2011; Witzlack-Makarevich & Bickel, 2013). One such work is Morbiato (2018), who argues that neither the positional nor the semantic criterion can be considered reliable indicators of syntactic functions: while sentence-initial or preverbal position has been demonstrated to be linked to cognitive/informational and discourse-organizing functions, semantic role or 'logical subjecthood' cannot be equated with grammatical subjecthood either, for the two do not necessarily coincide, e.g. in the case of passive constructions, where actors/agents are demoted to obliques and patients/undergoers are promoted to subjects (Morbiato, 2018: 325-328). For further details on the language-driven and construction-specific criteria proposed to re-examine the notion of subject in Mandarin Chinese, I refer the interested readers to Morbiato (2018)'s work.

One striking feature emerging from this kind of analysis is that the different types of topics/themes can be (optionally) separated from the rest of the clause by a pause and a particle such as *a* 啊, *ba* 吧, *ne* 呢, *ma* 麻, as extensively shown also in Zhang & Fang (1996, 2020).[70] The following is an instance of multiple themes, two of which are marked – or demarcated – by the particle *a*.

83. [所以]TEXT[她一直啊]INT[没　有把这一片痴情啊]TOP 告诉老师。

[Suǒyǐ]TEXT [tā　　yīzhí　　a]INT [méiyǒu　bǎ　zhè yī-piàn　chīqíng　a]TOP
So　　　3.SG.F　always　SFP　not have　BA　this one-CLF　passion　SFP

gàosù lǎoshī

tell　teacher

'So she has never unbosomed her passion to her teacher. '(Zhang & Fang, 2020: 32-33)

The picture outlined in this paragraph depicts a rather fragmented opinion as to what grammatical relations are relevant in Chinese (if any) and to what extent. Even so, what does stand out rather clearly is that word order, context and information structure all play a first-order role in determining Chinese syntactic functions. Nonetheless, up until recently, very few studies have looked at the IS of the Chinese sentence as a whole to delineate a comprehensive account of how categories of IS interact in tailoring the linguistic material to fit the communicative needs of the speakers. In the remaining part of this section, I shall attempt to put together the resources that are available for Chinese in the light of the functionalist IS models outlined in § 1.

4.2. Referent identifiability and definiteness

The examples in (81)-(82) containing the bare noun *keren* in preverbal and postverbal position respectively, bring about another thorny issue in the grammar of Chinese, that of *definitesess*.

According to Chen (2004, 2009, 2015), unlike English or Italian, Chinese has no fully-developed lexical (in)definiteness articles, but it uses three different strategies to encode the cognitive identifiability of referents: lexical, morphological, and positional (Chen, 2004: 1150-1151).

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[70] These particles are known to express a range of discourse-sensitive meanings such as illocutionary force and speaker attitude, prototypically in sentence-final position (Simpson, 2014: 157). They have also been argued to serve as pause particles – and by extension as topic markers – in a number of works. However, when acting as pause particles in sentence-medial positions, whether they are indeed used to mark off a topic (Paul & Gasde, 1996), to signal the relevance of a piece of information to the context it occurs in (Chu, 2009), to convey speaker attitude (Pan & Paul ,2018), or for the totality of these functions (e.g. Lepadat, 2017 for the particle *ma* 嘛), this is still an open issue in Chinese linguistics. In these and the following examples, such particles are uniformly glossed as sentence-final particles (SFPs), regardless of their sentence-medial or sentence-internal position.

As for the lexical encoding of identifiability, in addition to proper names and pronouns, Chinese uses demonstratives, possessives and universal quantifiers. Among the demonstratives, *zhè* 这 'this' and *nà* 那 'that' and their plural versions *zhèxiē* 这些 'these' and *naxiē* 那些 'those' are the most commonly used.[71] It is important to notice than Chen (2004: 1152) also points out that when used anaphorically, *zhe* is preferred in correlation to recently introduced referents, whereas *na* is most frequently used to indicate referents after at a certain distance from their introduction. Moreover, Tao (1999: 90-93) crucially observes that the distal demonstrative *na* is frequently used to denote new referents that are nonetheless identifiable to the hearer, whereas *zhe* is preferred for new referents that are only identifiable to the speaker himself. The different marking can be observed in examples (84)-(85): in (84) the distal demonstrative *nàr* 那儿 'there' marks the referent *Zhōnghúan* 中环 'Central District', which is being newly introduced into the discourse but is assumed to be familiar (identifiable) to the hearer, since both the interlocutors are studying in the same city involved in the description; in (85), on the other hand, the proximal *zhexie* marks the referent *zhèngwù* 证物 'evidence', which has already been introduced into the discourse in A's first turn, but is nonetheless considered to be unidentifiable for hearer B.

84. A: 西区警署啊？

      Xīqū   jǐngshǔ   a

      West.district   police.station SFP

      '(Did they take you to) the West District Police Station?'

  B: 不是西区警署。那个中环那儿[…]

      Bú shì xīqū   jǐngshǔ   nà-ge   zhōnghuán   nà'er […]

      Not be west.district police.station that-CL central.loop there

      'No, not the West District Police Station. It's there you know, the Central District.'

                                                      Adapted from (Tao, 1999: 91)

85. A: 我去了。结果呢，他说，在一个叫做证物室啊。

      Wǒ qu le   jiéguǒ ne tā shuō zài   yī-gè   jiàozuò zhègshìwù   a

      1sg go PERF result SFP 3sg say   be.at one-CL   so.called evidence.room SFP

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[71] In addition to their situational, discoursal and anaphorical deictic uses, it has been argued that the two elements are in a process of grammaticalization to become definite articles. Nonetheless, they often still preserve their deictic functions, they are not compulsory in contexts marked for definiteness, and are rarely used in some of the most prototypical contexts of occurrence of definite articles, namely referents whose identifiability relies upon frame-based, shared or encyclopaedic knowledge (Chen, 2004: 1155). Huang (2013) contends that the distal demonstrative *nage* is further ahead on the process of grammaticalization as a definite determiner in spoken discourse, while *yígè* 一个 'one' may be said to be at an early stage of grammaticalization as an indefinite article (Huang, 2013: 118-120).

'I did go there. And you know what? They told me [my wallet] was in a place called Evidence Room.'

B: 专门存放的地方。

Zhuānmén cúnfàng de dìfang

Specially store REL place

'A storage room?'

A:哦，存放这些证物的地方。

Ò cúnfàng zhè-xiē zhèngwù de dìfang

INTJ store these-CLF evidence REL place

'Yeah, it holds these evidence sort of things.'   Adapted from (Tao, 1999: 92-93)

As for possessives, Chen (2004: 1157) argues that unless an indefinite determiner such as *yī* 一 'one' +*cl(assifier)* is added, a bare noun occurring with a possessive (personal pronoun + DE determiner particle + bare NP) is always interpreted as definite (86):

86. 我的铅笔怎么找不到了？

Wǒ de qiānbǐ zěnme zhǎo-bu-dào-le?

1sg POSS pencil how search-not-arrive-PERF

'How come I cannot find my pencil/*a pencil of mine?'   (Chen, 2004: 1157)

As regards universal quantifiers, Chinese uses both collective – *suǒyǒu* 所有 'all' and *yīqiè* 一切 'all' – and distributive universal quantifiers – *měi* 每 'each, every' and *gè* 各 'each, every' – in addition to a number of what Lü (1942) and Chao (1968: 324) have called indefinite determiners – *shénme* 什么 'what(ever)', *shéi* 谁 'who(ever)', and *nǎ* 哪 'which(ever)'. The latter are termed *free-choice quantifiers* in Chen (2004: 1158) and are exemplified in (87) below:

87. 他什么菜都尝了一点儿。

Tā shénme cài dōu cháng-le yīdiǎn'r.

3sg any dish all taste-PERF a.bit

'He had a taste of all the dishes/every dish.'   (Chen, 2004: 1157-58)

Unlike English and Italian, Chinese doesn't have an indefiniteness article either. Nonetheless, the most frequently used expression is the indefinite determiner *yī+cl*. According to Chen (2004, 2015), *yī +cl* has undergone a process of grammaticalization towards a marker of indefiniteness, although it can still be used both as a determiner and as a pronoun (Chen, 2015b: 409). In example (88), the indefinite determiner introduces a new referent in discourse in sentence-initial position.

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88. 一只小企鹅摇摇摆摆走了上来。

Yī-zhī   xiǎo   qǐ'é   yáoyáobǎibǎi zǒu-le   shànglái

One-CLF small penguin swaying   leave-PERF   come-up

'A little penguin was waddling up.'   (Chen, 2004: 1160)

Other markers of indefiniteness include a weakened phonological form of the same indefinite determiners used to convey definiteness – *shénme* 什么 'some, any' and *shéi* 谁 'someone, anyone' (Chao, 1968: 651-657) and the mid-scalar quantifier *yīxiē* 一些 'several'. Example (89) of *yixie* to indicate an indefinite quantity:

89. 你知道在那个就是在那个双流机场那有一些好房子嘞 。

Nī zhīdào zài nà-gè   jiùshì   zài nà-gè   Shuāngliú jīchǎng nà   yǒu

2sg know   at   that-CLF exactly-be at   that-CLF Shuangliu airport there have

yīxiē   hǎo fángzi lei

some   good   house SFP

'You know, at the Shuangliu Airport, there are some good houses over there.'

(Callfriend Corpus/zho-m/5906, Speaker A)

Morphological marking of identifiability includes monosyllabic classifiers and sometimes monosyllabic nouns being reduplicated to obtain the same effect as the distributive universal quantifiers. An example from Chen (2004: 1163) is provided in (90):

90. 人人都说他是个好人。

Rén-rén   dōu shuō tā shì gè hǎo   rén.

Person-person ALL say   3sg be   CLF good   person

'Everybody says he is a nice person.'   (Chen, 2004: 1163)

As Chen (2004, 2015) points out, the cases hitherto discussed are all marked for the feature (in)definiteness, i.e. whenever used referentially, they are interpreted as either definite or indefinite, regardless of their position in the sentence.[72] However, Chen argues, there are two types of

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[72] In order to be used referentially, an NP must "refer" to an entity, broadly speaking (Li & Thompson, 1981: 126). What is at stake here is not the inherent referential property of NPs – referentiality in the semantic sense of the term – but the use of NPs in specific contexts – referentiality in the pragmatic understanding of the term (Chen, 2015b: 405). According to Chen (2009: 1660), a context-dependent, pragmatic notion of referentiality applies to an expression whenever: i) the existence of the entity is presupposed, ii) the entity is uniquely identifiable, i.e. has a specific reference, and iii) the speaker intentionally uses the expression to refer to a specific entity. Nonetheless, Chen (2009, 2015) ascribes to both definites and indefinites the possibility of being used referentially, which would entail a presupposition of existence being triggered by both types of expressions. However, as mentioned in § 1.4, the presupposition of existence is only triggered by the use

expressions which are unmarked with respect to this feature from a lexical and morphological point of view: bare NPs and cardinality expressions, i.e. NPs modified by a cardinal numeral or a quantifier such as *jǐ* 几 'several'. These *indeterminate* expressions, to use Chen's label, can be interpreted as either definite (81), indefinite but specific – i.e. unidentifiable for the hearer but not for the speaker– (82), generic, as the NP *xióngmāo* 熊猫 'panda' in (91), or even non-referential, as the NP *lǎoshī* 老师 'teacher in (92):

91. 熊猫喜欢吃嫩珠子。

    Xióngmāo   xǐhuan   chī nèn   zhūzi

    Panda   like   eat tender bamboo

    'Pandas like to eat tender bamboo.'   (Loar, 2011: 379)

92. 她的男朋友是老师。

    Tā   de   nánpéngyou   shì   lǎoshī.

    3sg   POSS boyfriend   be   teacher

    'Her boyfriend is a teacher.'   (Loar, 2011: 378)

For these expressions, it is mainly, although not exclusively, their position in the sentence that determines either one of the interpretations (Chen, 2015b: 409).[73]

    As Li & Thompson (1975, 1981) and Sun & Givon (1985), among others, pointed out much earlier, there is a tendency in Chinese, as there is in many languages (Givón, 1984), for definite and indefinite expressions to occur in specific positions in the sentence:

(VIII).   Tendency A: Nouns preceding the verb tend to be definite, while those following the verb tend to be

            indefinite.   (Li & Thompson, 1995: 170)

More specifically, sentence-initial positions hosting subjects, *ba*-marked objects, preverbal objects, and first objects of ditransitive sentences tend to favour a definiteness interpretation of referential expressions, while sentence-final positions hosting postverbal NPs in *you*-presentatives, postverbal NPs in presentative and existential sentences, as well as second objects of ditransitive sentences tend to favour an indefinite interpretation of referential expressions (Chen, 2004: 1168). This is argued to

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of definite expressions (Lambrecht, 1994: 51-65; Lombardi Vallauri, 2009a: 30) and the less definite the expressions, the lower their presupposing strength (Lombardi Valllauri, 2009a: 41).

[73] With respect to this aspect, Chinese appears to resemble Latin, a language that didn't possess (in)determinate articles either, but wherein the possibility of interpreting noun phrases as either definite or indefinite was ensured at least by the speakers' knowledge of the ongoing discourse (Lombardi Vallauri, 2009a: 49-50). To put it differently, in addition to their position in the sentence, other factors influencing the (in)definiteness reading of Mandarin indeterminate expressions might be said to include the expectations associated with the preceding discourse and its structure (Sun & Givón, 1985: 329) and our encyclopaedic knowledge (Lombardi Vallauri, 2009a: 30; Loar, 2011: 377-378).

be the reason why the NP in (81) and (82) has either a definite or indefinite reading according to its position in the sentence (Chen, 2004: 1164).

In addition, the tendency also seems to correctly predict a number of constraints on lexically or morphologically encoded (in)definite NPs to occur in some positions in the sentence: relevant examples are the impossibility of reduplicated nouns or classifiers to occur in any of the *indefiniteness-inclined positions* or the tendency of indefinite NPs not to be acceptable as subjects of stative verbs, as in (93):

93. * 一个人很聪明。

    Yī-gè   rén   hěn   cóngmíng.

    One-CLF person very   smart

    'One person is very smart.'   (Chen, 2015b: 410)

However, the correlation between the interpretation of an NP with respect to identifiability and the position they occupy in the sentence is to be considered as tendential rather than absolute, as many exceptions have been noticed. As an illustration, the following example from Chen (2015b: 411) shows that the same indeterminate NP can receive a different interpretation in terms of definiteness/identifiability in the same sentential position: upon its first occurrence in the discourse the NP *liǎng gè qiángdào* 两个强盗 'two bandits' is unidentifiable and thus interpreted as indefinite, while it is identifiable and interpretable as definite upon its second occurrence in the discourse:[74]

94. 两个强盗从这里走过，看到周围没有人，只有欧寄这么一个小孩子，就起了坏心。。。两个强盗把欧寄的双手反绑住。

    Liǎng-gè giángdào cóng zhèlǐ zǒu-guò, kàn-dào   zhōuwēi méi yǒu   rén,

    Two-CLF bandit   from here   pass-EXP see-arrive   around   not have   people

    zhǐ yǒu Ōu Jì zhème yī-gè   xiǎoháizi, jiù   qǐ-le   huáixīn… Liǎng-gè

    only have Ou ji this   one-CLF kid   then   arise-PERF evil.idea   two-CLF

    qiáng-dào bǎ Ōu Jì de   shuāng-shǒu fǎn-bǎng zhù.

    bandit   BA Ou Ji POSS pair-hand   back-tie stop

    'Two bandits passed by, saw nobody around except the kid Ou Ji, and then had an evil idea…The two bandits tied Ou Ji's hands behind his back.'   (Chen, 2015b:411)

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[74] Nonetheless, it should also be pointed out that here a certain amount of pragmatic accommodation (Lewis, 1979: 340; Lambrecht, 1994: 66-67; Lombardi Vallauri, 2009a: 42), generally associated with *narrative incipits*, might be a contributing factor in allowing the unidentifiable and indefinite NP to occur in sentence-initial position.

4.3. Referent activation and referring expressions

While identifiability plays a crucial role in determining the (in)definiteness of an expression, the relation between the two categories is at best an imperfect one. Other factors such as referent activation have also been contended to influence the way speakers encode referents. LaPolla (1995) suggests the following correspondences between the cognitive status of the referent (in terms of activation and identifiability) and the different referring expressions between which a speaker can choose to encode it:

Referent activation	Possible codings
Active	zero, pronoun, bare NP, with deictic pronoun
Accessible	pronoun, bare NP, with deictic pronoun
Inactive	bare NP, with deictic pronoun
Unanchored Unidentifiable	bare NP, (numeral +) classifier
Anchored Unidentifiable	genitive phrase, relative clause
Non-referential	bare NP, (numeral +) classifier

Table 4: LaPolla's correspondences between referent activation and encoding (Adapted from LaPolla, 1995:307)

As can be observed from Table 4, the discontinuity of the referring expressions increases with the decrease in the referent accessibility. On this view, only the cognitively most salient referents, those which are already in the speaker's short-term memory (Chafe, 1987) can be encoded through a zero anaphora, a device which is known to be frequently employed in Chinese (Li & Thompson, 1981: 657),[75] while non-active referents require overt coding; moreover, only identifiable referents may be encoded through deictics, but not the unidentifiable ones. However, one can also notice that there is no one to one correspondence between cognitive status and referring expressions, but speakers have different available options for the encoding of each one of the former.

Chen (2009) and Huang (2013) both propose an accessibility scale of Chinese anaphoric expressions, discussing some of the factors impacting the selection of the expressions and their relative order on the scale. Huang (2013) is particularly interesting in that it also compares written and spoken texts on a fairly large scale, that is a total of 1295 anaphoric expressions analysed (Huang, 2013: 144). The scale provided by Huang, we can observe, confirms LaPolla (1995)'s intuition by also adding proper nouns to the picture:

(IX).   Accessibility Scale for Chinese Anaphoric Expressions

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[75] However, cfr. Huang (2013: 112) for a different view on Chinese zero anaphoric links.

zero anaphor> pronoun > determinate NP > proper noun > bare NP> possessive NP> complex NP

(Huang, 2013: 144)

In addition, Huang (2013)'s study also highlights that the different medium of discourse – i.e. written vs. spoken – by virtue of the essentially different nature of planned vs. unplanned discourse and of the different cognitive and processability constraints impinging on the two, is also relevant to the choice of referring expressions on the part of the speaker. The study provides evidence that although the scale generally holds for both types of discourse, the referring expressions are used in different proportions, as one can observe from Table 5: zero anaphors, to start with, are much more frequent in written texts than they are in spoken discourse, which instead recurs more often to pronouns and determinate NPs. In addition, bare NPs are also more frequent in written texts, while possessive NPs are more recurrent in oral contexts.

Anaphoric form	Writing		Speech	
	N	%	N	%
Z[ero]A[naphora]	218	48	185	22
Pronoun	89	19.6	292	34.7
Det NP	13	2.8	155	18.4
Bare NP	55	12.1	39	4.6
Poss NP	7	1.5	58	6.9
Proper NP	64	14	100	11.9
Complex NP	8	1.7	12	1.4
Total	454	100	841	100

Table 5: Huang (2013)'s anaphoric forms in written and spoken texts (Adapted from Huang, 2013: 146)

Moreover, Huang also argues that there are context-related factors contributing differently to the accessibility of the referents in written and spoken texts: antecedent distance and competing referents seem to impact anaphoric relations in spoken discourse more heavily than in written texts, due at least to the limited cognitive capacities of short-term and working memory; antecedent saliency proved to be equally significant for both, with zero anaphors and pronouns favouring topical antecedents – i.e. maintaining continuous topics across sentences and topic chains – and all the remaining types of referring expressions favouring topical discontinuity. Nonetheless, an important generalization is made by Huang, who contends the following, once again confirming LaPolla (1995)'s intuition:

> Referring expressions in Mandarin Chinese are specialized as to the degree of accessibility they mark […] Z[ero] A[naphors] and pronouns are high accessibility markers, determinate NPs mid accessibility markers and the rest low accessibility markers. When the speaker uses a high accessibility marker, she

assumes its antecedent is the most accessible (i.e. activated) to the hearer, while use of a low accessibility marker means its antecedent is the least accessible. (Huang, 2013: 160)

4.4. Presupposition

As mentioned, a presupposition of existence is always triggered by the use of referring expressions with identifiable referents and overt markers of definiteness. However, the interpretation of *indeterminate* NPs is heavily influenced by their context of occurrence, which comes to be identified with the whole universe of discourse (Lambrecht, 1994: 36-37). Whether a referring expression is used non-referentially or referentially, and in the latter case if it refers to an entity that is identifiable or not, specific or generic, is to be assessed by the hearer based on the content of the ongoing discourse, her knowledge and understanding of the world, the setting of the ongoing discourse, as well as the structural position of the given NP. Thus, ultimately, whether an indeterminate NP does or does not trigger a presupposition of existence is highly impacted by all the above factors and necessarily requires a context-based assessment. Nonetheless, there is at least one generalization that can be made: according to Chen (2009: 1665), although "there is no special linguistic device that systematically and consistently marks an expression as pragmatically referential or nonreferential in English or in Chinese", the most frequent type of nonreferential encoding has been observed to be bare NP.[76] Also pointing in the same direction were earlier Li & Thompson (1981: 128), who contended that objects of verbs are often used nonreferentially, as in (95):

95. 那个商人卖水果。

Nà-gè   shāngrén   mài shuǐguó.

That-CLF merchant   sell fruit

'That merchant sells fruit.' (Li & Thompson, 1981: 128)

An example as that in (95) is hardly conceivable as presupposing the existence of the entity *fruit*. According to Li & Thompson (1981: 128), the expression is not being used to refer to a specific referent but rather to describe a property or quality in terms of which the type of things that the

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[76] In addition, according to Chen (2009)'s study, bare NPs also seem to be a rather reliable indicator of what he calls low *thematic referentiality*, i.e. "the importance of the entity in the thematic organization of the discourse" (Chen, 2015b: 407), which is differently referred to in the literature as simply *thematicity* or *topicality*. In his analysis of 453 initial-mention entities in a Mandarin Chinese vernacular style story, 85% of the referents with the lowest thematic importance were first introduced into the discourse through a bare NP, while all the referents with the highest degree of thematic importance were NPs marked by *yi+cl* (Chen, 2009: 1667-1668). This suggests that while referents of thematic importance are more likely to be overtly marked for the feature of (in)definiteness, referents that do not contribute much to the development of the ongoing discourse are more likely to be encoded through an unmarked expression.

merchant sells can be described. In other words, *shuǐguǒ* 水果 'fruit' is not used to refer to a specific referent, but to a category of referents, i.e. it is used categorically. As a result, it is not the existence of a specific entity that is being presupposed, but the existence of the category *fruit*, which is presented as identifiable for both the speaker and the hearer.[77]

In addition to the presupposition of existence resulting from the use of a definite description, other presuppositions are triggered in Chinese by the same factors that are involved in English and Italian, possibly with a few language-specific variations (He, 1988: 119).

The most common lexical elements which presuppose the truth of an entire clause in Chinese include:

i) judging verbs such as *zhǐzé* 指责 'criticize', *zànměi* 赞美 'praise', *pīpíng* 批评 'criticize', or *xiànmù* 羡慕 'admire' Zuo (2000: 137-138; Wang, 2011: 119). In (96) the use of the verb *piping* presupposes the truth of the embedded clause *tā bù ài láodòng* 他不爱劳动 'he doesn't like doing physical activity':

96. 老师批评他不爱劳动。

    Lǎoshī   pīpíng   tā   bú ài   láodòng.
    Teacher criticize 3SG.M   not love   physical.activity
    'The teacher criticized him for not liking physical activity.' (> He doesn't like physical
    activity)   (Wang, 2011: 119)

ii) implicative verbs such as *wàngjì* 忘记 'forget', *dáfù* 答复 'reply', *jùjué* 拒绝 'refuse' (Wang, 2011: 119) and resultatives as *shuìzhào* 睡着 'fall asleep', *chīguāng* 吃光 'eat up', *hēzuì* 喝醉 'get drunk' (Kong, 2013: 1993), which assert the result of an action while presupposing the action itself. In (97) the use of the resultative *chiguang* presupposes that the soldiers ate their meal.

97. 战士们把饭吃光了。

    Zhànshìmen   ba   fàn   chī-guāng-le.
    Soldiers   BA   meal   eat-up-PERF
    'The soldiers ate up the meal.'(> The soldiers ate their meal)   (Kong, 2013: 1993)

iii) aspectual / change of state predicates such as *tīngzhǐ* 停止 'stop', *kāishǐ* 开始 'start', *fàngqì* 放弃 'give up', *jìxù* 继续 'continue', *jìnlái* 进来 'enter'; in Chinese, it is also possible to convey a change of state through structures like *X-qǐlái* 起来 – e.g. *pàng-qǐlái* 胖起来 'gain weight' – *X-xiàqù* 下去

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[77] I am indebted to one of the reviewers of this thesis for pointing out this issue.

– e.g. *shòu-xiàqù* '瘦下去 lose weight' (Zhao, 2001: 71) – or *X-le* 了 – e.g. *lǎo-le* 老了 'become old' (Lü, 1980: 354). In (98) the use of *lao-le* and *chà-le* 差了 'become bad' presupposes that the subject NP was once not old and that his health was once not bad:

98. 他老了，身体差了

    Tā   lǎo-le,   shēntǐ chà-le.

    3SG.M   old-PERF   health bad-PERF.

    'He became old and his health became bad.' (＞ He was once not old and his health was not poor). (Kong, 2013: 1993)

iv) iterative adverbs such as *yòu* 又 'again', *zài* 再 'again, once more', *hái* 还 'still, also', *chóngxīn* 重新 'again, anew', which all presuppose that the event or state of affairs described as iterating has already happened or already existed (Wang, 2011: 119). In (99) the use of the adverb *you* presupposes that the daughter had already bought her mother a dress before:

99. 女儿又给她买了一件新衣裳。

    Nǚ'er   yòu gěi tā   mǎi-le yi jiàn xīn yīshang.

    Daughter   again for 3SG.F buy-PERF one CLF new dress.

    'Her daughter bought her one more new dress.' (＞ Her daughter already bought her new clothes before) (Kong, 2013: 1993)

v) factive verbs such as *zhīdào* 知道 'know', *míngbai* 明白 'understand', yìshi-dào 意识到 'realize', *hòuhuǐ* 后悔 'regret', factive adjectives such as *zìháo* 自豪 'proud', *gāoxìng* 高兴 'glad', *nánguò* 难过 'sad', and factive adverbs such as *nánguài* 难怪 'no wonder', *xìngkuī* 幸亏 'luckly', *guǒrán* 果然 'as expected', *gèngjiā* 更加 'more', *bái* 白 'in vain', which all presuppose the truth of the embedded clause (Wang, 2011: 119-120). In (100), the use of *gaoxing* presupposes the truth of the fact that she passed the exam:

100. 我高兴/不高兴她 通过了面试。

    Wǒ   gāoxìng/bù gāoxìng tā   tōngguò-le miànshì.

    1SG   happy   not happy   3sg.F pass-PERF interview.

    'I'm happy that she passed the interview.' (＞ She passed the interview)

    (Kong, 2013: 1992)

vi) relatives, adverbial clauses, conditionals: the use of specific structures such as temporal adverbials can also presuppose the truth of the proposition expressed by the clause. In (100), the fact that the speaking subject became a model is presupposed:

101. 没入 这行 之前，我只 觉得 做 模特 挺 好玩。

Méi rú   zhè háng   zhīqián, wǒ zhǐ juéde zuò mótè tǐng   hǎo   wán.

Not enter this profession before,1SG just think do model quite good fun

'Before I got into this business, I just thought it was fun to be a model.' (＞ I became a

model)   (Kong, 2013: 1994)

vii) partial values of a scale, as the indefinite quantifiers (*yī*)*xiē* (一)些 'some', *bùfen* 部分 'some',
yi+cl, trigger a scalar implicature: the state of affairs described by the clause does not apply to a larger
or smaller quantity than the one they indicate. In (102), the hearer will assume that the speaker is
complying to the Gricean Maxim of quantity, hence only some flowers and not all the existing ones
bloomed:

102. 天气暖和起来了，有些花儿已经开了。

Tiānqì nuǎnhuo qǐlái-le,   yǒu xiē   huā'r   yǐjīng   kāi-le.

Weather warm.up start.to-PERF have some flower already open-PERF

'It's warming up and some of the flowers are already blooming.' (＞Not all the flowers are

blooming)   (Lü, 1980: 580).

It goes without saying that the presupposing strength of many of the lexical and structural triggers are
highly constrained by different factors, including the aspect of the verb and the context of use, as well
as the IS of the utterances. As mentioned, the presupposing strength of a trigger is higher under the
topical than under the focal condition (Lombardi Vallauri, 2009a: 37-42). As an example, in the
following two utterances, the existence of the referent *wǒ gēge de nǔ péngyou* 我哥哥的男朋友 'my
brother's girlfriend' is much stronger in the topical (103) than in the focal condition (104):

103. 我哥哥的女朋友是一位有名的演员。

Wǒ   gēge   de   nǔpéngyou shì yī wèi   yǒumíng de   yǎnyuán.

1SG   brother POSS girlfriend be one CLF famous REL actress

'My brother's girlfriend is a famous actress.'

104. 那位有名的演员是我哥哥的女朋友。

Nà   wèi yǒumíng de   yǎnyuán shì wǒ gēge   de   nǔpéngyou.

That CLF famous REL actress   be 1SG brother POSS girlfriend

'That famous actress is my brother's girlfriend.'

4.5. Topic and focus

What emerges from the previous sections is that the (dis)continuity of the referring expressions is not directly connected with the position they occupy in the sentence, although there might be an indirect connection: according to LaPolla (1990 and following works), examples like (94) – wherein the same expression in the exact same position can have a different activation and identifiability status and can receive different interpretations in terms of definiteness – are indicative of the fact that what is coded through word order in Chinese is not definiteness, but simply informational status. According to LaPolla, although topical or focal status can play a role in the interpretation of referential expressions, this is only a "side effect" of the most general and cross-linguistic tendency of having the focus in sentence-final position (LaPolla, 1995: 309). LaPolla thus modifies Li & Thompson (1975)'s tendency given in (VIII) with that in (X):

(X).   Topical or non-focal NPs occur preverbally and focal or non-topical NPs occur post-verbally.

(LaPolla, 1995: 310)

Since LaPolla adopts Lambrecht (1994)'s notion of topic in terms of *aboutness*, he distinguishes (aboutness) topics from framing topics as well as secondary topics, which he simply considers non-focal elements, since they are not what the sentence is about (LaPolla, 1995: 310; LaPolla, 2009: 10). He also distinguishes between focal NPs proper and NPs (including non-referential ones) which he feels should be defined non-topical rather than focal, such as those occurring in event-central thetic sentences (Lambrecht, 1994: 237). However, in the illocutionary-oriented view, a distinction between topical and non-focal NPs becomes redundant.

According to the principle in (X), an NP is produced in sentence-initial position by virtue of its being topical. In addition, as predicted by Lambrecht (1994: 165)'s topic acceptability scale, it is also very likely to be cognitively accessible, identifiable to the hearer and thus encoded as definite. On the contrary, focal referents are more likely to be cognitively new, unidentifiable to the hearer and thus encoded as indefinite.[78] However, a study by Sun & Givón (1985) comparing the (in)definiteness of preverbal and postverbal objects has shown that there is only a slightly stronger tendency to code preverbal objects as definite when compared to postverbal ones. In fact, as much as 66% of the postverbal objects in spoken texts and 73% in written texts are encoded as definite (Sun & Givón, 1985: 336).[79] Not only does this observation tell us that the principle in VIII) is indeed only a tendency, it also suggests that the principle in (X) is probably not showing the whole picture either: while it

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[78] However, this it is not necessarily always the case in actual language usage, as observed from a cross-linguistic perspective (Arnold et al. 2013: 12).
[79] These percentages are not directly given by Sun and Givón but have been calculated based on the raw counts provided in their paper (Sun & Givón, 1985: 336).

may be true that the majority of utterances have topics in sentence-initial position – some of which may be objects – it is also possible for postverbal objects to represent topical information. One example is the sentence in (105), which displays a sentence-initial narrow focus on the preverbal subject and a topical object in postverbal position; still another example is the (broad) informational focus followed by the right-detached topic in (106):[80]

105. 是我妈妈写的书。

    Shì wǒ mama xiě   de   zhè běn shū.

    Be 1SG mother write NMLZ   this CLF book

    'It is my mother who wrote the book.'   (Loar, 2011: 472)

106. 进来吧，你！

    Jìnlái ba, nǐ!

    Enter SFP 2SG

    'Come in, you!'   (Chao, 1968: 92)

Partially confirming LaPolla (1995)'s tendency in (X) is data from Huang (2013), who suggests that the positional split between preverbal and postverbal S(ubject)s is indeed motivated on pragmatic grounds, with more than 90 of the preverbal Ss being given and identifiable, against approximately 70% of the postverbal Ss being new and unidentifiable. However, the situation appears to be far less clear-cut where O(bject)s are concerned: although almost 90% of the preverbal Os are given and identifiable, only 40% of the postverbal Os are new and less than 30% unidentifiable. While Huang (2013) takes this to mean that the positional split of O is much less motivated on pragmatic grounds than that of S, things actually change if we consider the perspective of unmarked vs. marked word order: while the unmarked position for O is postverbal (85%) as part of the sentence focus (which simply fulfils the illocutionary purpose of the utterance, regardless of Os being new or given information), the fact that in the majority of cases in which the O occurs sentence-initially is given and identifiable (86%) then acquires a new significance, suggesting that its marked sentence-initial position could as a matter of fact be motivated by pragmatic reasons (high accessibility and presumably topicality); the same holds for the S, in unmarked sentence-initial position (87%) which presumably occurs in post-verbal position in order to signal a marked informational status of the referent, i.e. new (69%) or unidentifiable (76%) and presumably focal (Huang, 2013: 91-92).[81]

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[80] These cases shall be discussed in more detail in § 5 and Chapter 2.
[81] Note, however, that Huang (2013) labels semantically or frame-based accessible referents as new, thus the number of given elements could be higher (Huang, 2013: 88).

4.6. (A)symmetries in the information structure of Chinese

One element that can be clearly asserted based on literature discussed is that topic-focus is the unmarked IS articulation in Chinese. The most intuitive and frequent representation of this articulation can be found in SVO sentences such as (107), where the topical information is represented by the subject *wǒ* 我 'I' and the focus extends over the VP comprising the verb *xīhuān* 喜欢 'like' (plus its adverbial modifier *hěn* 很 'very') and the object *yīnyuè* 音乐 'music':

107. [我]TOP [很喜欢音乐]FOC。

[Wǒ]TOP [hěn   xīhuān   yīnyuè]FOC.

1sg   very   like   music

'I like music.'   (Huang et al., 2009: 199)

In Lambrecht (1994)'s terminology, this corresponds to the predicate-focus articulation (§ 1.4.1), for which LaPolla (1995) provides an equivalent:

108. 我的车子坏了。

Wǒ   de   chēzi   huài-le.

1sg   POSS   car   break-perf

'My car broke down.'   (LaPolla, 1995: 299)

This type of IS articulation can be said to be unmarked based on the frequency criterion. According to Huang (2013)'s study, 55% of the clauses found in his corpus follow an SV(O) order, including both the cases in which the subject is S or A from a semantic point of view, and an additional 31% of the clauses are VO or simply V, which altogether add up to 86% of the entire sample (Huang, 2013: 85).[82] This does not tell us much about the IS articulation of the utterances, but it does tell us that the SV(O) word order is unmarked. Although no information is available in connection to eventual morphosyntactic focus markers or prosodic prominence signalling a marked type of IS articulation in the SV(O) sentences such as that in (105), even taking into account the figures regarding the focalizing *shì* 是 (...*de* 的) construction available in Huang (2013: 266) – which only occurs in 7% of the total clauses – the total number of predicate-focus sentences would still remain significantly high (79%).

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[82] S refers to the sole argument of an intransitive verb, while A refers to the most actor-like argument in a transitive verb. The distinction is made following the schema of labels introduced by Comrie (1978) and Dixon (1979), which also include, among others, O (or P in Comrie's original terminology) to refer to the 'not most actor-like argument in a transitive verb' (Bickel, 2011: 401).

Moreover, this type of IS articulation can be said to be unmarked also in the Praguian sense of the term (Lambrecht, 1994: 17), since it can be used in more than one situation. Similarly to what has been argued for Italian (Lombardi Vallauri, 2000 and following works), such an SV sentence could be used as a reply to the question 'What happened?', but also to 'What happened to your car?'. A quick check in the PKU corpus of Modern Chinese (henceforth PKU corpus) tells us that a sentence of this type could be used to add information about a referent that has already been introduced into the discourse (109), but also as a reply to a generic question as that of *Lù Píng* 陆平 in (110).[83]

109. 那驾驶员对姑娘说：“我车上还有两位客人。我车坏了，多亏他们帮忙修好。

Nà   jiàshǐyuán duì gūniang shuō: "wǒ chē shàng hái yǒu   liǎng-gè kèrén.
That driver   to girl   say   1SG car on   also have two-CLF guest

Wǒ   chē huài-le,   duōkuī tāmen bāngáng xiū-hǎo.
1SG   car break-PERF   luckily 3PL.M help   repair-good

'That driver said to the girl: "There were also two guests in my car. My car broke down, luckily they helped me fix it.'   (PKU corpus)

110. 陆平：有事吗？

'Lu Ping: Can I help you?'

宋嘉仪：我的脚踏车坏了，我爹叫我来找你。

Sòng Jiāyí: wǒ de   jiǎotàchē huài-le,   wǒ diē jiào wǒ lái   zhǎo nǐ.
Song Jiayi 1SG POSS bicycle   breake-PERF 1sg dad call 1SG come search 2SG

'Song Jiayi: My bicycle broke down, my dad told me to come look for you.'

(PKU corpus)

In addition, recent studies seem to confirm that SVO sentences as that in (108) can be considered unmarked also with respect to cognitive complexity (Givón, 1991; 2001). With data results pointing in the same direction as those obtained in Erbaugh (1992), Chen et al. (2012)'s experimental study suggests that early age Mandarin-speaking children tend to adhere to a rigid SV(O) order and only later, typically after the age of 4 are they able to master more complex structural patterns such as topicalizations, framings and double nominative constructions (Chen, 2009: 175-176).

Moreover, such an SV sentence can also be said to be unmarked from the point of view of structural complexity (Givón, 1991; 2001), when compared to other types of IS articulations. For example, the

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[83] One might argue that a context in which Song Jiayi's bike is physically present in the context of utterance – and thus accessible to both interlocutors – would not be difficult to imagine. In fact, this reinforces the view that such a sentence is "compatible" with different pragmatic contexts.

argument-focus articulation (Lambrecht, 1994) would require, according to LaPolla (1995), the addition of the focus marker *shì* 是, resulting in a *shi*-cleft sentence:

111. 是我车子坏了。

> Shì   wǒ   chēzi   huài-le.
> Be   1SG   car   break-PERF
> 'My CAR broke down.'   (LaPolla, 1995: 300)

On the contrary, a sentence-focus reading would require that the subject NP be somehow marked as non-topical. According to LaPolla (1995), it is only possible to do so via word order variation with a number of unaccusative verbs. In (112) the subject NP is marked as non-topical by its post-verbal position and thus the sentence has a sentence-focus type of IS articulation (LaPolla, 1995: 309):

112.   A:发生了什么事？

> Fāshēng-le   shénme   shì
> Happen-PERF   what   affair
> 'What happened?'

> B:刚来了一大队流氓。

> Gāng   lái-le   yí   dà   duì   liúmáng
> Just.now   arrive-PERF   one   big   CLF   hoodlum
> 'A group of hoodlums just arrived.'   (LaPolla, 1995: 301)

In Huang (2013)'s corpus, VS order sentences only amount to 8% of the total number of clauses, demonstrating that it is indeed a marked type of IS articulation.

Also, according to Loar (2011), sentences as that in (112) are presentational, for they introduce a new referent into discourse (entity-central thetic sentences), and their IS articulation is indeed characterized by a broad focus extending over the sentence – as is also the case with Italian presentational structures such as (40), reported here again as (113).

113. Ha   telefonato   GIOVANNI.

> Have.PRS.3SG   called   Giovanni
> 'Giovanni called.'   (Lambrecht, 1994: 181)

Yet another structure is also passible of sentence-focus reading, one whose function is to announce the happening of an event, i.e. event-reporting or event-central thetic sentences. According to Loar (2011: 375-376), event-reporting sentences have an SVO structure wherein – crucially – a marked (secondary) prominence on the sentence-initial NP signals its non-topical status. One example is given in (114):

114. 张三来了。

    <u>Zhānsān</u>   lái-le.

    Zhangsan   come-PERF

    'Zhangsan is coming.'   (Loar, 2011: 376)

In Lambrecht (1994: 144) it is argued that the two types of constructions are frequently introduced in one language by means of the same sentential structure. In Italian, they both have post-verbal subjects with a certain number of verbs (unaccusative and monoargumental), although according to Lombardi Vallauri (2000, 2009a), SVO utterances are also passible of broad-focus interpretation. In English, the presentational and event-reporting sentence are both formally equivalent to the topic-comment structure, but for the accentuation of the sentence-initial NP. If we now use the example in (81) to represent the three types of sentences in each language, the result is the following:

115. Presentational

    Some GUESTS arrived   (English)

    Sono arrivati degli OSPITI.   (Italian)

    Lai-le KEREN.   (Chinese)

116. Event-reporting

    Some GUESTS arrived.   (English)

    Sono arrivati degli OSPITI/Gli ospiti sono ARRIVATI.   (Italian)

    KEREN lai-le.   (Chinese)

117. Topic-comment

    The guests ARRIVED.   (English)

    Gli ospiti sono ARRIVATI.   (Italian)

    Keren LAI-le.   (Chinese)

If the above claims are correct, what can be observed is that Chinese is somewhere in between English and Italian with respect to how it employs word order variation: while English maintains the SV order in all the cases, Italian uses word order variation in both presentational and event-reporting sentences, displaying the SV order only in the topic-comment – and possibly as a variant of the event reporting – sentence; Chinese uses inversion for presentational sentences, SV order with sentence-final prominence for the topic-comment, and SV with sentence-initial prominence for event-reporting sentences.

To sum up, layers of correspondences between the different categories of IS can be observed in Chinese pretty much in a comparable fashion to Italian and English.

First, a tight relationship can be observed between the continuity of referring expressions and the encoding of the referent identifiability/activation: Loar (2011) argues that the first mention of a referent will prototypically be indefinite and possibly ushered into the discourse by means of a presentational construction or another focal-inclined position such as the postverbal object. This is what happens with the referent *yī zhāng huà* 一张画 'a painting' in the first clause of (118):

118. 王教授有[一张画]ᵢ，[Ø]ᵢ/[那张画]ᵢ很值钱。

Wángjiàoshòu yǒu   yī zhāng huà, [Ø]/nà zhāng huà   hěn   zhíqián.
Wangteacher   have one CLF   painting [Ø]/that CLF painting very   valuable
'Professor Wang has a painting, it is worth a lot of money.'   (Loar, 2011: 377)

Once the referent is introduced into the discourse, it becomes identifiable and active in the hearer's short-term memory, so the speaker can successively use a definite encoding such as a demonstrative or a zero pronoun, as in the second clause of (118).

Second, an iconic relation can be observed between the cognitive status of the referent (activation and identifiability), its informational encoding (thematic structure), and its position in the clause: the previously unidentifiable and inactive referent is first introduced into the discourse in a sentence-final, focal position, for it is part of the illocutionary purpose of the first clause, i.e. it is key in the information that the speaker wants to communicate to the hearer; but once the referent becomes identifiable and active in both the interlocutor's minds, it is possible for the speaker to encode it in a sentence-initial, topical position – which, if present, is only ancillary to the achievement of the illocutionary purpose of the second clause.

However, with respect to this second point, two types of exception can be identified. On the one hand – although perhaps not equally frequent in all types of text genres – topical information can be completely new (unidentifiable and inactive), as demonstrated by the first occurrence of the NP *liang ge qiangdao* in (94), wherein a certain amount of pragmatic accommodation is needed in order for the hearer to establish the existence of a referent while also processing the information about that referent contained in the focus; still another example is provided in Loar (2011: 409), who contends a certain "awkwardness [that] is sensed as the addressee is expected to interpret a topic as totally new and unconnected with anything previously introduced".

119. 一个客人来到我家。

Yī-gè   kèrén láidào wǒ jiā.
One-CLF   guest arrive 1SG house
'A guest came to my house.'   (Loar, 2011: 409)

On the other hand – although infrequent from a statistical point of view – focal information can be entirely composed of given information (identifiable and active), if the illocutionary purpose of the utterance is not that of communicating something unknown to the hearer but rather to emphasize some particular aspect of it. One such example taken from the PKU corpus is given below.

120. 夏小丽扯着嗓子轰乘客们下车："坏了坏了坏了，这车坏了，不开了，下去下去下去!"

Xià　Xiǎolì chě-zhe　sǎngzi hōng　　　chéngkèmen xiàchē: "Huài-le　　huài-le
Xia　Xiaoli tear-DUR throat shoo.away passengers　get.off　break-PERF break-PERF

huàile,　　　　zhè chē huài-le,　　bù kāi　　le,　　xiàqù　　xiàqù　　xiàqù!
break-PERF　　this car break-PERF not drive　SFP　　get.off　get.off　get.off

'Xia Xiaoli yelled at the passengers to get off the bus: "It broke down, it broke down, it broke down, this car broke down, it won't start, get off, get off, get off!"　　　　　(PKU corpus)

Here the driver repeats items of information many times in order to make sure it is understood (and acted upon) by the passengers. Moreover, one can also observe that the referent *zhè chē* 这车 'this car' – surely salient and active because of the situational context of utterance – is treated as already active upon its first mention, since it is omitted (zero anaphora) in the first clause. Nonetheless, it is lexically introduced upon the fourth occurrence of the verb *huài-le* 坏了 'broke down', presumably for emphatic reasons.

The fact that focus and newness are different categories, despite their frequent overlapping, is also backed up by the results of Chen et al. (2012)'s experimental study on discourse processing. Their experiment conducted on Mandarin Chinese readers suggests that referent processing is cognitively less demanding in the focal than in the non-focal condition, while unidentifiable referents require more processing effort than identifiable ones, indicating a split between the cognitive category of identifiability and the linguistic category of topicality (Chen et al., 2012: 7).

Third, the tendential overlap of referent activation and presupposition can be observed in Chinese too, for once introduced into the discourse by means of a previous mention or because of its physical presence in the universe of discourse, an entity can be referred to with a definite description which presupposes its existence, as happens with *zhe che* in (120). However, examples such as (104) tell us that definite expressions and other constituents whose content is presupposed need no necessarily be topical, but can also coincide with focal status. A further example to illustrate this point is given below from the BCC corpus (Beijing Language and Culture University Corpus Center), wherein the definite expression *wǒ de qiānbǐ* 我的铅笔 'my pencil', despite being presented as identifiable by

both speaker and hearer and presupposing the existence of the referent denoted, is found in sentence-final position as part of the utterance focus:

121. 小花，你用我的铅笔 了吗？

    Xiǎohuā, nǐ yòng wǒ de   qiānbǐ le ma?

    Xiaohua   2SG use   1SG POSS pencil   SFP SFP

    'Xiaohua, did you use my pencil?'   (BCC corpus)

Fourth, it has already been mentioned that the indirect relation between presupposition and givenness also holds in Chinese and that the topical status of a referent can increase the presupposing strength of an expression, while focal status has the opposite effect. This was illustrated by the difference in the strength with which the sentences in (103)-(104) are able to presuppose the existence of the referent *wo gege de nü pengyou*.

The foregoing section has argued that the tendency for the multiple layers of IS to overlap in specific positions inside the sentence holds for Chinese as it does for English and Italian. In addition, Chinese has been contended to show highly iconic correspondences between cognitive-functional principles and word order, especially regarding the left periphery of the sentence. In other words, the way in which Chinese structures the preverbal slot seems to reflect iconically a number of conceptualization processes (Morbiato, 2014; 2019). Among the scholars investigating Chinese word order from the cognitive-functional perspective, Tai (1985 and following works)'s seminal work identified some important principles, which were further investigated by Hu (1995), who also combined them with some of the informational-structural principles put forth by the Prague School.

Two of the most widely recognized principles are the principle of temporal sequence (PTS) and the whole-before-part principle (WBP), both of which could be seen as specific applications of the wider notion of diagrammatic iconicity of languages (Pierce, 1932).[84] According to the first principle, the preverbal constituents will represent a state which is temporally anterior to the state of affairs expressed by the verb:

(XI).   Principle of Temporal Sequence (PTS)

    The relative word order between syntactic units is determined by the temporal order of the states that they represent in the conceptual world.   (Tai 1985: 50).

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[84] According to Haiman (1980: 515), a diagram is "a systematic arrangement of signs, none of which necessarily resembles its referent, but whose relationships to each other mirror the relationships of their referents".

This can be observed in (122), where the different temporal expressions referring to the time of the action are placed before the action itself, iconically reflecting that the time at which the action started is anterior to the action itself:

122. 我晚上七点上课。

    Wǒ   wǎnshàng qī   diǎn   shàngkè.

    1SG   evening   seven o'clock have.class

    'I have class at 7.00 in the evening.'   (Morbiato, 2014: 212)

The second principle, re-elaborated by Ho (1993) based on Tai (1985)'s Principle of Temporal Scope, involves the relative order between constituents following a decreasing order:

(XII).   Whole Before Part Principle (WBP)

    Constituents representing a global scope (general or whole) should precede those that represent a smaller scope (particular or specific).   (Ho, 1993: 165)

This principle is particularly relevant for the relative order between framing elements. Applied to the example in (122), this second principle correctly predicts that the NP *wǎnshàng* 晚上'evening' will occur before the smaller conceptual unit indicating a specific point in time, *qī diǎn* 七点 'seven'.

    However, in cases such as (123a)-(123b), the WBP principle in itself is not sufficient to explain the respective orders of the two constituents, for both orders are grammatical and appear to be motivated on thematic grounds, i.e. depending on which one of the constituents is construed as being the aboutness topic of the sentence:

123.   a.这件大衣，领子式样很新颖。

        Zhè jiàn dàyī, lǐngzi shìyàng hěn xīnyǐng.

        This CLF coat   collar style   very new.and.original

        'As for this coat, the style of the collar is new and original.'

        b.领子式样，这件大衣很新颖。

        Lǐngzi shìyàng, zhè jiàn dàyī hěn xīnyǐng.

        Collar style   this CLF coat very new.and.original

        'As for the style of collars, the one of this coat is new and original.' (Loar, 2011: 389)

As a matter of fact, according to Hu (1995), the principles of IS detailed in this section are in agreement and – in the unmarked cases – overlap with the conceptual principles of PTS and WBP, the latter being understood by Hu "in terms of Ground-Figure and Background-Foreground arrangement in the information flow carried by the syntactic structure" (Hu, 1995: 27):

Development of Communication	→	
Conceptual Information Structure	Background	Foreground
Discourse Information Status	Given	New
PTS	First	Second

Table 6: Alignment of cognitive-functional principles of word order (Adapted from Hu, 1995: 241)

5.   Markedness in Chinese

Although the aforementioned categories of IS prototypically coincide in the unmarked structure of a Chinese sentence, a number of syntactically and prosodically marked phenomena can be identified. While these phenomena are found cross-linguistically, they nevertheless present a number of language-specific features. In the following two sections, first the syntactically- and then the prosodically-marked constructions relevant to the purposes of this thesis will be tackled.

5.1. Syntactically-marked constructions in Chinese

Among the syntactically-marked constructions available in Chinese, presentational sentences and left-hand topics can be considered cases of topic instantiations: in the former construction, new referents are introduced into the discourse as focal elements to be made available for successive reference as topics, while in the latter case, the referring expressions are directly established as topics of the current clauses.

5.1.1. Topicalizing strategies

Excluding presentational sentences, which are not relevant for the ongoing discourse, the major type of topic realization are left-hand topics. As a topic-prominent language, Chinese has been argued to display a rich inventory of types and functions (Li & Thompson, 1967). Loar (2011) groups Chinese topics into three categories: i) topics that are arguments of the verb; ii) topics that co-refer with an argument of the verb; iii) unlinked topics which bear no syntactic or semantic relation with the clause, but only a pragmatic one.

   The first type has been extensively discussed in the previous section, where it has been pointed out that under the unmarked IS articulation, the topic coincides with the subject of the clause (§ 3.6), although it needs not. Sentences containing such topics are termed *subject-predicate* sentences in Loar (2011: 392).

The second type includes what have been analysed as LDs in § 2, i.e. topics that are coreferential with a position inside the clause, be it an argument or an adjunct of the main verb. In Chinese, left dislocations can host A-topics, as shown in (124), but they can also host C-topics, as shown in (125). In the former case the topic NP can be resumed by a null, pronominal or demonstrative form, while in the latter case it behaves like English C-topics, disallowing resumption.

124. 作家王蒙，我以前见过[Ø]/[他]/[这个人]。

    Zuòjiā Wáng Méng, wǒ yǐqián jiàn-guò [Ø]/ [tā]/ [zhè-ge rén].

    Writer Wamg Meng 1SG before see-EXP [Ø]/ 3SG.M/this-CLF person

    'As for writer Wang Meng, I have seen him/this person before.'   (Loar, 2011: 387)

125. 上海，我已经去过了，可是天津，我还没去过。

    Shànghǎi, wǒ yǐjīng qù-guo le, kěshì Tiānjīn, wǒ hái méi qù-guo.

    Shanghai 1SG already go-EXP SFP but Tianjin 1SG still not go-EXP

    'I have already been to Shanghai, but Tianjin, I have not been there yet.'

    (Paul, 2015a: 212)

An object NP can also appear in the immediate preverbal position, in between the subject NP and the verb, resulting in a double topicalization. This sentence-second NP has been argued to have contrastive value and to share the syntactic features of C-topics, such as non-resumption (Shyu, 2014: 119):[85]

126. 我[这本书]看过[Ø]。

    Wǒ zhè běn shū kàn-guò

    1SG this CLF book read-EXP

    'I, this book, have read.'   (Shyu, 2014: 119)

Object NPs appearing in this position can also be marked by the disposal/causative marker *bǎ* 把, generally with resultative and highly transitive verbs.[86] For such constructions, it has been observed that IS plays a major role in that *ba*-marked objects are identifiable and accessible to the hearer, either from the physical environment, the previous context, or within a semantic frame (Iemmolo & Arcodia 2014: 317). Loar (2011: 403-404) extends the identifiability motivation to account for both sentence-

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[85] However, there are different views concerning the contrastive status and derivation of such topics. In Huang (2013: 97-98), it is argued that sentence-second topics are not necessarily contrastive nor necessarily given, i.e. they need not be pragmatically marked. The fact that they appear in a marked syntactic position is claimed to be the result of independent semantic and/or morphological factors.

[86] The status and the constraints on the use of these constructions are highly controversial in the literature. For a detailed description, see for instance Li (2006), Yang & van Bergen (2007).

initial and sentence-second position objects. According to Loar, an optional contrastive meaning can characterize both, depending on the context. For example, the sentence-second object in (127) is to be interpreted contrastively because the context suggests so:

127. 张三画画得好，歌唱得不怎么样。

Zhāngsān huà huà de hǎo, gē chang de bu zěnmeyang.

Zhangsan painting paint DE good song sing DE not how

'As for Zhang San, pictures he paints well, songs he sings just so so.'   (Loar, 2011: 406)

Included in the group of left-hand topics are also *Chinese style topics*, which were argued by Chafe (1976: 50) to have the function of setting a frame within which the predication expressed by the focus holds. The frame is typically argued to be temporal (128), spatial (129) or individual (130), but other less frequent types of frame are also possible.[87] Example (131) is a case of conditional frame:

128. 明天，训练在体育馆里进行。

Míngtiān xùnliàn zài tǐyùguǎn-lǐ jìnxíng.

Tomorrow training at gymnasium-in conduct

'Tomorrow, the training will be conducted in the gymnasium.'   (Loar, 2011: 388)

129. 山上，种满了梨树。

Shān-shang zhòng-mǎn-le líshù.

Mountain-on plant-full-PERF pear.tree

'The hill is planted with Pear trees.'   (Loar, 2011: 388)

130. 王老师北京人。

Wáng lǎoshī Běijīngrén.

Wang teacher Beijing-person

'TeacherWang was from Beijing.'   (Loar, 2011: 421)

131. 如果你给我钱的话，我最想买衣服。

Rúguǒ nǐ gěi wǒ qián dehuà, wǒ zui xiǎng mǎi yīfu.

If 2SG give 1SG money COND 1SG most wish buy clothes

'If you gave me the money, I would like to buy clothes.'   (Paul, 2015a: 209)

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[87] Although some deictic forms are available for expressing space and time, Chinese frame topics in the form of PPs tend to appear without a resumptive element (Cheung, 2015: 113), as was earlier observed for Italian.

A subtype of the latter category of topics is also known as *double-nominative* or *double-subject* construction (see § 4.1), for the sentence typically presents two NPs in preverbal position. The second NP is traditionally considered to be the minor subject of the predicate, together with which it forms a *clause predicate* (or a *subject-predicate predicate* in Chao, 1968: 118) relating in different ways to the main subject – the first NP (Chao, 1968; Tsao 1977; Chu, 1998, among others). The first and the second NPs can be tied by a *part-whole* relation, as in (132), or by a *possessive* relation (133), in which case the first NP is coreferential with and can be resumed by a covert or overt possessive determiner in the comment (Loar, 2011: 387):

132. 这件大衣，领子试样很新颖。

    Zhè jiàn dàyī, lǐngzi shìyàng hěn xīnyǐng.

    This CLF coat   collar style   very new.and.original

    'As for this coat, the style of the collar is new and original.'   (Loar, 2011: 389)

133. [这位病人]ᵢ，进来[Ø]ᵢ/[他的]ᵢ病情有好转。

    [Zhè wèi bìngrén]ᵢ, jìnlái [Ø]ᵢ/[tā   de]ᵢ bìngqíng   yǒu   hǎozhuǎn.

    This CLF patient   enter [Ø]/ 3SG   POSS patient-condition have improve

    As for the patient, his condition has recently turned for the better.'   (Loar, 2011: 387)

Included in the LD construction in Lambrecht (2001) is also the third type of left-hand topic identified in Loar (2011), i.e. topics which are both semantically and syntactically unlinked with the following clause. These have been referred to as *dangling topics* in order to stress their status of "loose" expressions, not subcategorized by the verb (Shi, 2000: 388).[88] A well-known example in the literature is (134), first appearing in Chao (1968: 125). Two further examples are (135) and (136):

134. 那回大火，幸亏消防队到得早。

    Nà   huí dàhuǒ, xìngkuī xiāofángduì dào   de zǎo.

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[88] Li & Thompson (1981) consider double-subject constructions and dangling topics to be of a different kind, while in other treatises they appear together as hanging or dangling topics, i.e. gapless topics (e.g. Her, 1991). In Shi (2000) they are both considered gapped topics. In fact, Shi (2000) argues against the gapless analysis for a number of topic constructions, granting them a gapped status. Although his analysis is not unchallenged, Shi (2000) put forth the idea that perhaps Chinese style topics need not be gapless. For example, Huang & Ting (2006) argue that the sentence-initial NP in (134) can be interpreted as an adverbial setting a temporal frame (possibly resumed by *nàcì* 那次 'that time' in Shi (2000: 393), while that in (135) is a case of preposition dropping. i.e. a hanging version of a PP frame topic – *zài jiàoxúe shàng* 在教学上 'in teaching'; finally, in (136) the sentence-initial NP is contended to be directly subcategorized by the tri-argumental verb *máfan* 麻烦 'bother', as in the following example:
我想麻烦你一件事。
Wǒ xiǎng máfan nǐ   yī jiàn shì'r.
1SG want   bother 2SG one CLF matter
'I want to bother you with something.' (Huang & Ting, 2006: 124).

That   CLF big-fire luckly   fire-brigade   arrive DE   early

'That big fire, fortunately the fire brigade arrived early.'   (Chao, 1968: 125)

135. 教学，他从不偷懒。

Jiàoxué,   tā   cóng   bù   tōulǎn.

Teaching   3SG never not be.lazy

'Teaching, he is never lazy.'   (Huang & Ting, 2006: 126)

136. 这件事情你不能光麻烦一个人。

Zhè jiàn shìqíng nǐ   bù   néng   guāng máfan yī-gè   rén.

This CLF matter   2SG not can   only   bother one-CLF person

'This matter, you can't just bother one person.'   (Li & Thompson, 1976: 479)

Whether *Chinese style topics* are indeed a marked or unmarked type of construction is still a matter of debate in Chinese linguistics.[89] While most scholars agree that at least those involving a framing function should be considered as belonging to a "basic" type of structure, not derived from a more canonical subject-predicate construction (Li & Thompson, 1981), recent corpus-based studies have argued that from the point of view of frequency, sentences containing such structures as hanging topics and double-subject constructions are in fact not as widespread as is generally assumed in the literature. According to Liu (2009)'s study on spoken Beijing Mandarin, only 5% of all the clauses in their corpus had a double subject pattern (Liu, 2009: 108). Similar findings in both written and spoken Chinese are described in Tao (awaiting publication: 5-7) – who suggests that the topic-prominence status of Chinese should be revisited in light of actual corpus-based data, which show that these structures are possible but not very common:

> First, as stated earlier, from a frequency standpoint, it is clear that topic constructions are not as prominent as otherwise implied. They are instead a rather small fraction of the clause/utterance types found in actual texts. In some cases, such as academic discourse and news reportage, they are hardly observed at all. This suggests that we need to pay attention to attested use as well as typological considerations. Second, can we still call Chinese a topic-prominent or topic-comment language given the rarity of topic constructions in discourse?   (Tao, awaiting publication: 6)

A further type of topical expression is right dislocation, which will be tackled in depth in Chapters 2 and 3. For the time being, suffice it to say that the expressions which can enter this construction are

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[89] The status and derivation of the gapped type of topics is no less controversial than that of the gapless topics. Since this volume is not concerned with the existence of a deep vs. superficial structure or with movement of constituents, I refer the interested reader to Xu (2006)'s chapter on the phenomenon of topicalization – broadly intended – in Asian languages.

believed to be much more varied and less well-understood than those of Indo-European languages. In the following example, a topical subject NP – not resumed by any form inside the clause – is produced at the end of the sentence together with the preverbal adverb *yòu* 又 'again':

137. 找什么，您又？

Zhǎo	shénme,	nín	yòu
Search	what	2SG.HON	again

'What are you looking for, again?'   (Tai & Hu, 1991: 82)

To sum up, regardless of the degree of markedness of specific types of topics, it would appear that from a functional point of view, the preverbal slot in Chinese has two main characteristics which emerge more markedly with respect to English and Italian: i) a tendency to host framing topics, and ii) a tendency for the topical elements to appear without case-marking, i.e. without prepositions. Conversely, new and focal information appears to be structurally tied to the verbal and post-verbal position. With the exception of the topic-promoting constructions which were not tackled here – and can only be employed under particular pragmatic and syntactic conditions (see e.g. Loar, 2011) – whenever a constituent whose unmarked position is sentence-initial needs to be focalized, an *in situ* marking option is available, either lexico-structural or simply prosodic.[90] As discussed in Chen et al. (2016: 737), the former type of marking always implies the use of the latter type, while the opposite is not true. The lexico-structural options for focus-marking will be briefly discussed in the following section, while the prosodic ones will be tackled in § 5.2.1.

5.1.2. Focalizing strategies

While the foregoing types of left-hand topics are chiefly marked by means of word order (but see also § 5.1.2 for their prosodic properties), instances of marked foci are more frequently signalled (also) through lexico-structural devices. One such device is the *shi* 是…*de* 的 construction, another highly debated issue in the grammar of Chinese. Generally contended to be a cleft construction, it is composed of the focus/emphatic marker *shi* and the particle *de*,[91] and can occur in different preverbal

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[90] Although these focus-marking devices are essentially lexical items, they involve particular structural constraints in the syntactic organization of the sentence. For this reason they are here labelled *lexico-structural*.

[91] Both *shi* and *de* have been analysed differently by different authors: *shi* is contended to be a copular element in Paris, (1979) and Paul & Whitman (2008), among others, while *de* is considered to be a clause nominalizer in Chao (1968) and Paris (1979, 1998), among others, or an assertive particle entailing reality and hence past tense/aspect marker in Teng (1979) and Simpson & Wu (2002), among other interpretations (Shyu, 2014: 110). In the current volume, *shi* is uniformly glossed as copula, while *de* is glossed as NMLZ (nominalizer) when it marks a narrow focus together with *shi*, but as SFP (sentence-final particle) whenever it is found in sentence-final position to express speaker attitude.

positions to signal a narrow focus (Shyu, 2014: 108-110), as one can observe in (138) and (139), where it is used to focalize the subject NP and a temporal adverbial respectively:

138. 是我在公园里找到你的狗的。

Shì wǒ zài gōngyuán-lǐ zhǎodào nǐ de gǒu de.

Be 1SG at park-in find 2SG POSS dog NMLZ

"It was I that found your dog in the park."

139. 他是去年来的。

Tā shì qùnián lái de.

3SG.M be last.year come NMLZ

"It was last year that he came." (Shyu, 2014: 108)

However, postverbal elements cannot be focalized using this construction, with a pseudo-cleft construction to be used instead. In (140), a pseudo-cleft is used to focalize the postverbal object *nǐ de gǒu* 你的狗 'your dog', which remains *in situ* (Shyu, 2014: 108):

140. 我在公园里找到的是你的狗。

Wǒ zài gōngyuán-lǐ zhǎodào de shì nǐ de gǒu.

1SG at park-in find REL be 2SG POSS dog

'What I found in the park is your dog.' (Shyu, 2014: 108)

The *bare shi* version of the construction is sometimes treated as having the same function as the *shi…de* construction.[92] However, it has been argued that, unlike the latter one, it cannot be considered a cleft proper but when it signals a narrow focus on the subject, additionally bearing prosodic prominence (Paul & Whitman, 2008: 413-414), as in (141):

141. 是阿 Q 喝了红酒。

Shì A-Q hē-le hóngjiǔ.

Be Akiu drink-PERF red-wine

'It's Akiu who drank red wine.' (Paul & Whitman, 2008: 423)

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[92] Paul & Whitman (2008) identify four *shi…de*-related constructions, two of which only involve the presence of *bare shi*. Except for the case of *shi* marking the subject NP and additionally receiving emphatic stress (e.g. 178), Paul and Whitman argue that *bare shi* cannot be considered a focus marker. As for the constructions containing both *shi* and *de*, the construction in which *shi…de* "conveys the speaker's certainty that the proposition holds in a given situation" (Paul & Whitman, 2008: 6), should also be distinguished from cleft *shi…de* proper (Paul & Whitman, 2008: 2). See also Chapter 2, § 4.1 on *de* used as SFP.

A second important lexico-structural focus marker is the *lián* 连…*dōu* 都/*yě* 也 construction, which is considered – not uncontroversially – to be a narrow focus marker (i.a. Paris, 1979, 1998; Badan & Del Gobbo, 2010; Shyu, 2014, Paul, 2015a; Pan, 2019, among others).[93] The construction can be used to mark both a constituent in sentence-initial and in sentence-medial position (Shyu, 2014: 112; Loar, 2011: 448). According to Loar (2011), when it is the object that is being focalized, this necessarily appears preverbally, i.e. in a marked position, in order to signal its status of narrow focus (Loar, 2011: 448). One example is provided in (179):

142. 张三连这本书都看过。

      Zhāngsān   lián   zhè běn shū   dōu kàn-guò.

      Zhangsan   even   this CLF book   all   read-EXP

      'Zhangsan has read even this book.'   (Shyu, 2014: 112)

However, when *lian* marks a sentence-initial constituent, this is argued to be a contrastive topic rather than a narrow focus both by Loar (2011: 447-448) and Shyu (2014: 119):[94]

143. 连这件事啊，他都写了报告。

      Lián   zhè jiàn shì   a,   tā   yě/dōu   xiě-le   bàogào.

      Even   this CLF matter SFP 3SG.M also/all   write-PERF report

      'Even about this matter, he wrote a report.'   (Loar, 2011: 448)

In both cases, however, the *lian* element can be omitted, as long as *dou/ye* are used at the right-end of the focal NP, as in (181). In such instances, however, a strong focal accent on the element preceding *dou/ye* is required to achieve the same *even* reading (Badan, 2008: 10):

144. 他什么汉字也/都不会写。

      Tā   shénme hànzì   yě/ dōu bú huì xiě.

      3SG.M any   character   also all   not can write

      'He can't write any character at all.'   (Paris, 1979: 62)

---

[93] Note, however, that some studies have analysed *lian*-marked sentence-initial constituents as contrastive topics rather than foci (e.g. Loar, 2011: 447-448; Shyu, 2014: 119; Chu, 1998; Zhang & Fang, 1996, 2020; Xu & D. Liu, 2007). In this body of literature it is pointed out that in order for a constituent to enter this construction, it must necessarily be a topic. Through the use of *lian*, such topic comes to represent an 'extreme instance' contrasting with some other entity (Loar, 2011: 447). However, the notion of topic adopted in these works in not a pragmatic but a syntactic one, since (142) can only be said to resemble a topic-comment construction formally, but not pragmatically: the sentence stress is located on the sentence-initial constituent, while the sentence-final segment is produced with reduced intonation, exactly as in (141).

[94] Note that it is possible to omit *lian* from the construction, in which case Loar (2011: 452) – following (Y. Zhang, 2002) and Xu & D. Liu (2007) – argues that *dou/ye* take over its contrastive function.

In addition to the above-mentioned devices, there are a number of adverbs which are known to interact with focus and are able to determine specific interpretations of the IS articulation of an utterance: in addition to the above-mentioned *dou* and *ye*, *jiù* 就'just' and *cái* 才 'only' are able to behave in such a fashion too. Among the many scholars who have addressed these adverbs, Hole (2004) identifies several different use types, among which a number of instances are related to narrow foci located on the left of the adverbs and bearing the main (focal) prominence.[95] Examples of such uses are given in (145) and (146) for *jiu* and *cai* respectively.

145. Context: Old Wang always arrives late for work. Sometimes he doesn't show up until 11 o'clock. Today was different:

他<u>七</u>点就在办公室了。

Tā QĪ-diǎn   jiù zài   bàngōngshì le.
3SG seven-o'clock just be.at office   SFP
'He was in his office at SEVEN o'clock already.'   (adapted from Hole, 2004: 98)

146. 小王<u>八</u>点才来。

Xiǎo Wáng BĀ-diǎn   cái   lái.
Little Wang eight-o'clock only   come
'Little Wang did not come until EIGHT o'clock./Little Wang came as late as EIGHT o'clock.'   (Hole, 2004: 9)

The above-mentioned IS articulation triggered (also) by the use of these adverbs also applies to complex sentences composed of two clauses which are produced under a unitary intonational contour. For example, in (147) below the left-hand subordinate clause is focal and bears the main prominence, whereas the right-hand main clause is deaccented and topical:

147. 除非<u>小王</u>来，我才去.

Chúfēi XIĀO WÁNG lái,   wǒ cái   qù.

---

[95] Among the most frequent uses identified by Hole (2004:31) are the *parametric* use and the *emphatic* use – both cutting cross the four adverbs –, the distributive use of *dou* and the *focusing* use of *jiu* and *ye*. According to the function performed, some of the adverbs may interact not only with a preceding, but also with a succeeding element. In addition, some of the use types are not tied to narrow focus realizations, but can extend over the whole utterance, as in the case of emphatic *ye* (Hole, 2014: 27). Moreover, a narrow semantic scope of the adverbs does not necessarily coincide with a narrow focus realization, as in the case of distributive *dou*: despite its semantic scope over the preceding element, an utterance such as '*shéi dōu xǐhuan xióngmāo* 谁都喜欢熊猫 'everybody likes pandas'' is generally described as having end-focus if pronounced without a focus intonation on the sentence-initial subject (Loar, 2011: 384). In fact, distributive *dou* itself and not the preceding NP is argued to be (slightly) accented in Sybesma (1996), Hole (2004) and Badan (2008). Whether this (slight) accent should be considered as a focus accent and whether it gives rise to a narrow focus instantiation on *dou* or on the preceding NP, or whether it corresponds to a broad focus, has not been yet fully clarified, to the best of my knowledge.

Only.if   Little   Wang   come   1SG   only   go

'Only if LITTLE WANG comes will I go.'   (Hole, 2004: 9)

Based on the functionalist pragmatic notion of topic discussed in § 2 and adopted here, whenever signalling a narrow focus being located on specific non-sentence-final constituents, all the above-mentioned focalizing strategies also involve the presence of topical material in sentence-final position: to give a few examples, the material following both the VPs following *jiu* and *cai* in (145) and (146) have topical status, similarly to the whole clause *wǒ cái qù* 我才去 'I will go' in (147).

5.2. Prosodic markedness in Chinese

I have so far only incidentally mentioned some of the prosodic features of the Chinese sentence. Nonetheless, the importance of intonation in Chinese should not be underestimated. When dealing with a tone language, one necessarily needs to define the notion of prosodic prominence against the background of the multifarious nature of intonation. In Chinese, the F0 is first and foremost employed in the expression of lexical tones, which are produced at the supra-segmental level to express lexical distinctions among syllables (Sun, 2006: 39). In addition, variation in the overall shape of the F0 applying to the utterance is employed to express different illocutionary types, i.e. to distinguish between declarative, interrogative, exclamative sentences, etc. (F. Liu & Xu, 2005: 84; F. Liu, 2009: 14-16). Being the F0 already involved in the expression of these two functions, it is easy to imagine why there are strong restrictions against adding pitch accents in order to fulfil the other functions attributed to intonation in Chinese languages (Y. Chen et al., 2016: 749) – including focus and topic marking, as well as boundary marking (Y. Xu, 2015: 494). Nonetheless, several studies have shown that these latter functions are indeed carried out by intonation, but the relevant parameters for Chinese are not (exactly) the same as for English and Italian. Since the earliest phonetic studies, it has been argued that when they are in the focal condition, lexical tones in Mandarin Chinese are produced with an expanded pitch range (e.g. Jin, 1996; Y. Xu, 1999; Y. Chen 2003; Y. Chen & Gussenhoven, 2008) – i.e. a greater difference between lowest and highest tonal pitch (Xu, 2015: 494) – a higher mean intensity (e.g. S. W. Chen et al., 2009) – i.e. loudness, measured in decibels – and a longer duration (e.g. Jin, 1996; Xu, 1999; Y. Chen, 2006). This led to Y. Xu & Xu (2005)'s proposal of a tri-partite division of the sentence intonation: the *pre-focal* area shows little or no influence, the *focal* area is characterized by pitch range expansion, while the *post-focal* area shows pitch range compression (Xu

& Xu, 2005: 186), known as *post-focus compression* (Xu & Xu, 2005; Xu, 2015).[96] Moreover, some of the studies have argued that focal information shows more distinct tonal contours and is less likely to receive co-articulatory influence from adjacent tones, i.e. it is more prominent (Chen, 2003; Chen & Gussenhoven, 2008), as described in Chen et al. (2016: 749).

As for the distinction between broad and narrow focus, some studies have pointed in the direction of a substantial similarity between sentence-final broad focus and narrow focus, although in the former an expansion in duration and pitch range can also characterize the preceding constituents (Jin, 1996). However, as discussed in Chen et al. (2016: 751), Chen and Gussenhoven (2008) found that when corrective focus is involved, the durational lengthening is not matched by pitch range expansion. On the other hand, Ouyang & Kaiser (2015)'s experimental study found that information under corrective focus is produced with significantly higher intensity ranges than informational focus (Ouyang & Kaiser, 2015: 68).

Although much remains to be done, the foregoing research seems to suggest that the strategy of prosodic prominence is available also in Mandarin Chinese for the purpose of focus marking, although different prosodic cues are involved with respect to the cases of Italian and English.

5.2.1. Focus

As a starting point, it has already been observed that the default position for focal information is the sentence-final position in Chinese, as it is in English and Italian (Loar, 2011; D. Liu & Xu, 1998; Chen et al., 2016, among others). Following the framework put forth in Quirk et al. (1985), Loar (2011) offers an interpretation of focus prosodic marking which is in line with the one offered in Lombardi Vallauri (2009a): in the unmarked condition, the prosodic prominence is located on the last appropriate syllable of the sentence, but the extension of the focus is contextually-determined: it can be as narrow as one single word (148) or as broad as to coincide with the entire clause (149), for "only our knowledge of the context can provide a clue as to how much of the information expressed by the sentence is really new to the hearer" (Loar, 2011: 373).[97]

148.   A:有什么活动吗？

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[96] Another experimental study conducted by Liu (2009) reached similar conclusions regarding the effect of focus on the F0 curve: "regardless of sentence type and lexical tone, the pitch range of the focused words is raised and expanded […], that of the post-focused words compressed and lowered, and that of the pre-focused words largely unaffected" (Liu, 2009: 24).
[97] Moreover, according to K. Li (2009, 2009b) when the focus is in its default sentence-final position, it does not consistently receive stress, making the sentence syntactically and prosodically compatible with an event-reporting one, as also observed for Italian in Lombardi Vallauri (2004).

'Is there any activity?

B:今天下午我们去海边野餐。

Jīntiān xiàwǔ   women qù hǎibiān yěcān.

Today afternoon 1PL   go seashore picnic

'We are going to the seashore to have a picnic this afternoon.'

149.   A:今天下午我们去海边做什么？

'What are we going to do at the seashore this afternoon?'

B:今天下午我们去海边野餐。

(Jīntiān xiàwǔ   wǒmen) qù hǎibiān yěcān.

Today   afternoon 1PL   go seashore picnic

'(This afternoon we're going to the seashore) to have a picnic.'   (Loar, 2011: 373)

Whenever the prominence falls in a marked position – i.e. non sentence-final – the result is a marked (narrow) focus. This may involve the subject, as discussed in Chen et al. (2016: 746-747) and Loar (2011: 376):

150.   A:谁今天下午去海边野餐？

'Who are going to the seashore to have a picnic this afternoon?'

B:二班的学生今天下午去海边野餐。

ÈR BĀN DE   XUÉSHENG jīntiān xiàwǔ   qù hǎibiān yěcān.

Twoclass ATTR student   today afternoon go seashore picnic

'THE STUDENTS OF CLASS TWO are going to the seashore to have a picnic this afternoon.'   (Loar, 2011: 376)

Moreover, according to Gao (1994) and K. Li (2009, 2009b), any constituent in the clause can be marked as a narrow focus by prosodic means, while remaining *in situ*. The following examples show respectively a subject NP (a), an object NP (b), an indefinite marker within the object NP (c), and a verb (d) being focalized only through prosodic prominence:

151. 张三吃了一个苹果。

a. ZHĀNSĀN chī-le   yī-gè   pínguǒ.

Zhangsan   eat-PERF one-CLF apple

'It is Zhangsan who has eaten an apple (not Lisi).'

b. Zhānsān   chī-le   yī-gè   PÍNGUǑ.

Zhangsan eat-PERF   one-CLF apple

'Zhangsan has eaten an apple (not a banana).'

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c. Zhānsān   chī-le   YĪ-GÈ   pínguǒ.

   Zhangsan eat-PERF   one-CLF apple

   'Zhangsan has eaten one apple (not two)'

d. Zhānsān   CHĪ-LE   yī-gè   pínguǒ.

   Zhangsan eat-PERF   one-CLF apple

   'Zhangsan has eaten an apple (not cut one)'

<div align="right">(Gao, 1994: 1, reported in Badan & Del Gobbo, 2010)</div>

Gao (1994) and Badan & Del Gobbo (2010) both argued that unlike what happens with Italian focus frontings, in Chinese a constituent cannot be moved in sentence-initial position to be focalized, unless a focus marker is present (Badan & Del Gobbo, 2010: 18).

Whether the type of prominence that marks narrow foci is qualitatively the same as the stress received by sentence-initial constituents to mark them as inactive/non-topical in event-central sentences (see § 3.6) – and thus part of a broad/sentence-focus sentence – and whether the latter type of stress can co-occur with a sentence-final prosodic prominence, as argued for English – and possibly for Italian – is yet to be established.

5.2.2. Topic

In fact, when it comes to the prosodic features of topical constituents, very little is known with respect to Mandarin Chinese, for the majority of contributions have focused on their syntactic and semantic properties. While no available study such as that in Frascarelli & Hinterhölzl (2007) and Frascarelli (2017), considering both the syntactic, discourse and prosodic features of topics, exists up to date for Chinese, hierarchical orderings of the different types of topics occurring at the left periphery are abundant in syntactic studies of Mandarin (e.g. Paul, 2005; Badan & Del Gobbo, 2010; Cheung, 2015). Among the many proposals, Badan & Del Gobbo (2010), adopting Rizzi (1997)'s Split CP hypothesis, offer the following relative order between topical constituents:

Aboutness Topic > HT > LD > *lian*-Focus > IP   (Badan & Del Gobbo, 2010: 21)

Badan & Del Gobbo (2919)'s Aboutness topic is meant to capture the instances of unlinked *Chinese style* topics, and in particular those holding a whole-part or a possession relation with an argument inside the clause. The category of HTs includes all types of bare NPs, which are argued to be necessarily resumed either by a pronominal or an epithet. Assumedly, what has been analysed as aboutness topic in Frascarelli (2017) would be included in this category whenever represented by an NP – or more correctly a DP – without prepositions. This can be inferred based on example (152),

where the first NP *wǒ de jiā rén* 我的家人 'my family' is argued to be an Aboutness Topic and the second NP *bāba* 爸爸'father' a HT:

152. 我的家人，爸爸，我昨天看见他了，妈妈，我还没看见她了。

Wǒ de jiārén, bàba, wǒ zuótiān kànjiàn tā le, māma, wǒ hái
1SG POSS family-people father 1SG yesterday see 3SG.M SFP mother 1SG yet

méi kànjiàn ta le.
not see 3SG.F SFP

'As for my family, as for my father, I saw him yesterday, as for my mother, I didn't see her yet.'

(Badan & Del Gobbo, 2010: 14)

In this example, one can also notice that topic NP *baba* contrasts with the third topic NP *māma* 妈妈 'mother', yet they are both resumed by a pronoun. On the other hand, LDs are contended to contain non-resumed topics, including framing PPs, but assumedly not time or place adverbials/NPs that have been analysed as limiting topics in Frascarelli (2017). An example is provided in (153), wherein the third topic of the sentence, the PP *cóng nà jiā yīnháng* 从那家银行 'from that bank' follows the Aboutness Topic and the HT and is not resumed by any form inside the clause:[98]

153. 我的家人，爸爸， 从那家银行，我已经替/为他接到很多钱了。

Wǒ de jiārén, bàba, cóng nà jiā yínháng, wǒ yǐjīng tì/wèi
1SG POSS family-people father from that CLF bank 1SG already for

tā jiē-dào hěn duō qián le.
3SG.M borrow very much money SFP

'As for my family, my father, from that bank, I already borrowed a lot of money for him.'

(Badan & Del Gobbo, 2010: 15)

Thus, an Aboutness-Topic *à la* Frascarelli (2017) would be considered a HT if resumed, or an LD if not resumed. The difference is illustrated in (154a)-(154b):

154. a. [张三]ᵢ，我看见[他]ᵢ 了。 (Hanging Topic)

[Zhāngsān]ᵢ, wǒ kànjiàn [ta]ᵢ le.
Zhangsan 1SG see 3SG.M SFP

'Zhangsan, I saw.'

b. [张三]i，我看见[Ø]i 了。 (Left Dislocation)

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[98] Moreover, according to Badan and Del Gobbo, multiple Aboutness Topics and LDs are possible, but not multiple HTs (Badan & Del Gobbo, 2010: 9).

[Zhāngsān]ᵢ, wǒ kànjiàn [Ø]ᵢ le.

Zhangsan 1SG see [Ø] SFP

'Zhangsan, I saw.' (Badan & Del Gobbo, 2010: 9)

Although the distinction between resumable and non-resumable topics is important – but needless to say, not unchallenged in the literature (cfr. Shyu, 2014: 106-107; Cheung 2008:111-113) – the only available information regarding the prosodic properties of these topics is that both HTs and LDs can be stressed phonologically to receive contrastive interpretation (Badan & Del Gobbo, 2010:21).

However, while not including them in a more structured IS model, a handful of contributions have addressed the prosodic properties of the different types of topics.

One important datum is found in B. Wang & Xu (2011), according to whom topic shifts and new turns are characterized by a large F0 raise in sentence-initial position and by a gradual drop afterwards which separates the topic from the focus. An explanation to this phenomenon in terms of contrast has been excluded by B. Wang and Xu, who argue that no acoustic cue has been found in support of a raising associated with contrastive topics (Xu, 2015: 496-497).

A second salient finding is offered in B. Wang & Fery (2010), whose study was conducted on preposed objects in the topic vs. focus condition. Their analysis suggests that the object NP did not show significant differences in the two conditions, but they seem to have a different effect on the subsequent constituents, with focus introducing a lower F0 maximum and a shorter silence after the object NP than topic. According to Chen et al. (2016) this evidence supports findings on non-Mandarin Chinese varieties suggesting that topic induces more local and that focus generates more global prosodic modifications (Chen et al., 2016: 752).

CHAPTER 2. SENTENCE-FINAL TOPICS AND PRAGMATIC MARKERS

1. Right dislocations

The discussion contained in the previous chapter already revealed that topical elements at the utterance right periphery are generally addressed only inasmuch as right dislocations are concerned, whereas the status and features of elements which remain *in situ* and are deaccented as a result of the focalization of a sentence-initial or sentence-internal element are generally disregarded in the literature. In fact, since I am not aware of any publication specifically addressing the latter, the discussion that will follow will mainly concern the former, duly pointing out eventual *passim* information on the latter.

The construction hitherto labelled as *right dislocation* (henceforth RD) has been referred to using several expressions, among which we find the concurrent *right detachment* (Vallduví, 1995), *trasposition* (Lu, 1980), *extraposition* (Jespersen, 1964), *afterthought* (Tomlin, 1986; Geluykens, 1987), *tail* (Dik, 1978; Vallduví, 1990; Aijmer, 1989), *appendix* (Cresti, 2000; Lombardi Vallauri, 2009a) and *antitopic* (Chafe, 1967; Lambrecht, 1994), among many others. Such different labellings hinge on different approaches to language analysis and on different classifications of the underlying function of this construction, an influential definition of which has been proposed in Simone (1997):

> J'appelle DD une structure caractérisée par certaines propriétés associées: (a) un syntagme plein (ou presque plein, en tous cas tonique, le constituant disloqué, CD) se trouve à la limite droite de la phrase, à droite du verbe; (b) le CD est coréférent à un clitique qui se trouve dans la phrase-racine (PhR), donc à sa gauche; (c) la PhR comporte tous ses arguments, donc le CD peut être éliminé sans dommage syntaxique. (Simone, 1997: 49).

According to this definition, RD is conceived as a construction in which a syntactically dispensable (fully-fledged) NP, coreferential with a resumptive pronominal form inside the clause, is produced at the right-hand boundary of the clause.[99] What makes this construction particularly interesting is its peculiar relation with both left dislocations (LDs) and inversions: unlike inversions, in RDs the postposed NP is topical, as suggested by the associated pronominal resumption, and the resulting sentence displays a (given)new-given order; conversely to LDs, as pointed out by Lambrecht (1981,

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[99] Note, however, that as Simone (1997: 49) himself points out, the presence of a coreferential pronoun in the main clause can only be expected with right dislocations proper, i.e. with constituents whose unmarked position is not sentence-final: "Il faudrait excludre des DD les cas où il n'y a pas d'annonce clitique associée au CD, comme les inversions de sujet" (Simone, 1997: 49). Other sentence-final *in situ* topical material need not – and generally is not – coreferential with a sentence-internal constituent.

1994, 2001), by the time the referent has been mentioned in its lexical form, it has already been anticipated by a pronoun in the main clause; in addition, as pointed out in Chapter 1, § 2.2.2, the construction is peculiar also from a prosodic point of view, for the right-dislocated constituent shows a low and flat F0 contour (Mereu & Trecci, 2004; Carella, 2015; Frascarelli, 2017), which sets it apart from both LDs and INVs.

The example in (1) taken form Lambrecht (2001) clearly shows the difference between subject inversion (1a), right dislocation (1b), and left dislocation (1c):

1. (a) Il est arrivé   deux   FEMMES.

   It is   arrived   two women

   'Two WOMEN arrived. / There arrived two WOMEN.'

   (b) Elles$_i$ sont ARRIVÉES, [les   deux   femmes]$_i$.

   They.F are arrived   the   two   women

   'They ARRIVED, the two women.'   (Lambrecht, 2001: 1054)

   (c) [Les   deux   femmes]$_i$, elles$_i$ sont arrivées.

   The   two   women   they.F   are   arrived

   'They ARRIVED, the two women.'

As one can observe from (187b), this kind of sentence structure is marked not only from a syntactic point of view (V-S order), but also pragmatic (focus-topic IS articulation) and prosodic (sentence-internal position of the main prominence).

In the following paragraphs, different functions and types of RDs will be illustrated by discussing the relevant literature.[100]

1.1. The afterthought account: repair and referential integration

Most of the earlier studies on IS tend to treat RDs as an *afterthought*, i.e. a piece of linguistic information that the speaker adds at the end of an utterance in order to "self-correct potentially defective texts" (Tomlin, 1986: 62) (Givón, 1976; Tomlin, 1986; Geluykens, 1987). Such defection in the text is associated either with the use of a pronominal form whose referent might result too difficult to retrieve for the hearer, or with the use of pronouns whose reference might be ambiguous,

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[100] In this volume, the term *right dislocation* and sometimes that of *right detachment*, abbreviated as RD, are used to refer both to the construction in which a linguistic expression appears in sentence-final position instead of occurring in its unmarked sentence-internal position, and to the linguistic expressions that appear in such constructions. In adopting the term right dislocation, however, no assumption is made on an underlying "movement" of constituents from one position to another. The choice is purely connected with the frequency of the term being used in the literature.

as in (2), where the speaker feels the need to clarify that *he* in fact refers to his uncle and not to his dad:

2. My dad was telling my uncle about how you had said you'd solve the financial problems of your business. It took a while to explain it, because [*he* didn't really understand what you planned to do, *my uncle*]. (Huddleston & Pullum, 2002: 1411)

However, the characterization of the phenomenon in terms of an afterthought has come in for criticism, accused of being too simplistic. The referential disambiguation, it is argued, cannot be the (only) function of these constructions, for in most cases unclear references or corrections are not required for the felicitous instantiation of an RD (e.g. Lambrecht, 1981, 1994, 2001; Ziv, 1994; Simone, 1997; Grosz & Ziv, 1998; Huddleston & Pullum, 2002; Ward & Birner, 2019). In (3), for instance, only one referent can be interpreted as coreferential with the postposed NP, *the biography of Lincoln*, and yet the RD is felicitous:

3. Have you read this biography of Lincoln? I just started reading it this morning, and already I'm up to chapter 5. [*It*'s fascinating, *this book*.] I never knew half of this stuff before.
(Huddleston & Pullum, 2002: 1411)

Furthermore, in cases like (4), a clarifying function can hardly be attributed to the dislocated constituent, which provides very little identifying information on the constituent:

4. I had to take my car in for service again. [*It*'s really in bad shape, *that car*.]
(Huddleston & Pullum, 2002: 1411)

Even more drastic is the approach adopted by those who clearly set apart RDs from afterthoughts. Ziv (1994) argues that while the latter bear intonational stress and represent a distinct intonational unit separated from that of the main clause by a recognizable pause, the former are prosodically integrated within the preceding clause. What is more, while RDs steadily occupy a sentence-final position, afterthoughts can be inserted as parentheticals in other positions in the sentence:

5. I met him, your brother, I mean, two weeks ago. (Ziv, 1994: 639)

Moreover, no coreferentiality constraint is required for the production of afterthoughts, especially in the case of a *repair*. As can be observed from the corrective statement in (6), the two referents *John* and *Bill* are not tied by an identity relation:

6. I met John yesterday, Bill, I mean. (Ziv, 1994: 639)

A similar theoretical approach is also adopted in more recent works such as Lambrecht (2001), on which Kalbertodt et al. (2015) draw for their experimental study involving punctuation, prosody and

discourse functions of the two constructions. The two figures represent the hypothesized prosodic realization of an RD and an afterthought in German: the former has a low flat profile and results integrated within the main clause, while the latter is prosodically detached and shows no pitch reduction.
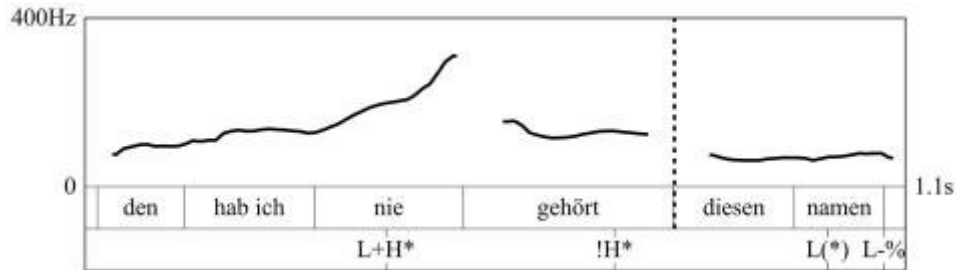

Figure 2: Tonal contour of a German RD (translation: "I've never heard it, this name") (Kalbertodt and al. 2015: 3)
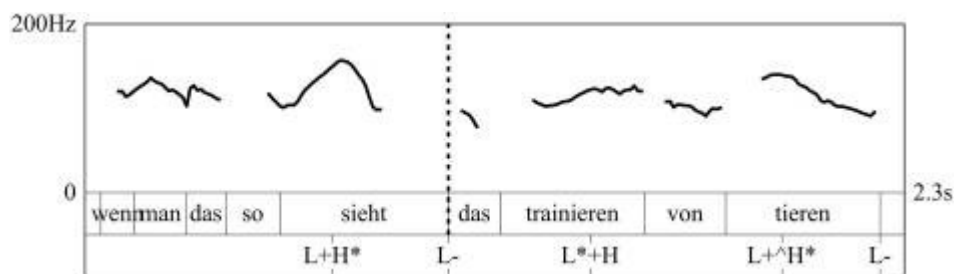

Figure 3: Tonal contour of a German afterthought (translation: "When you observe it, the training of animals")
(Kalbertodt and al. 2015: 3)

However, according to the experimental data of Kalbertodt et al. (2015)'s study, the actual prosodic realisations of the two constructions are much less distant one from another than Kalbertodt and others hypothesized at the beginning of the study. Their results are far from conclusive, with both RDs and afterthoughts showing a significant reduction of pitch range and an incisive role played by punctuation in shaping phrasing (boundary strength) and accentuation (prominence) (Kalbertodt and al., 2015: 9-11).

To sum up, even if the two phenomena can be theoretically set apart, there are factors pointing in the direction of at least a partial overlapping between the two, including the fact that some instances of RD can have a clarifying potential, in addition to their primary function. In fact, RDs and afterthoughts could be argued to be equivalent from the point of view of their information structural

role, i.e. they both represent right-hand topics, secondary information devoid of illocutionary force, which nonetheless fulfils different functions at the semantic and discourse levels.[101]

1.2. The dislocation account: topic continuity

Moving away from the idea of afterthoughts, a second line of studies have rejected the idea of RDs as repair mechanisms for potentially ambiguous or unclear referents in favour of an interpretation which conceives them as topical constructions (quasi-)specular to LDs. Already in her 1987 paper, Marianne Mithun identified in three genetically and geographically unrelated languages (Cayuga, Ngandi and Coos) the existence of sentence-final nominals that were produced with low pitch and softer volume, not simply to correct an earlier statement, but to "ensure that the hearer will be able to keep the reference straight" (Mithun, 1987: 314). This function will be later argued to be a cross-linguistically valid property of RDs.

A few years later, although somehow incorporating the idea of referential "integration", Lambrecht (1994) also argues that RDs cannot be explained in terms of mere afterthoughts, information added *a posteriori* at the end of an utterance, but they are in fact "a fully conventionalized grammatical construction which permits speakers to adhere to the Principle of the Separation of Reference and Role under specific discourse circumstances" (Lambrecht, 1994: 202-203):

(XIII).   Principle of the separation of reference and role (PSRR):
           Do not introduce a referent and talk about it in the same clause   (Lambrecht, 1994: 185)

In other words, this construction allows the speaker to use the preferred topic expression (unaccented pronouns) in the clause by making a split between the expression indicating the role (the pronoun used in its canonical position inside the clause) and that indicating the reference of the dislocated expression (the detached NP). This is exactly what happens in (7), where the topic referent is first expressed intra-clausally by means of the unaccented pronominal *he* and then resumed and lexically clarified by the NP *your brother*:

7. He is a nice GUY, your brother.   (Lambrecht, 1994: 203)

In using such constructions – for which Lambrecht uses the term *antitopic*, following Chafe (1976) – speakers request hearers to put the interpretation of the pronominal expression "on hold" until the end of the utterance, when its reference will be made explicit (Lambrecht, 1994: 203). Thus, although

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[101] I am indebted to one of the reviewers of this thesis for pointing out that the distinctions between afterthoughts and right dislocations are not at the information structure level, but rather concern their semantic features or discourse organization roles.

RDs could be seen as clarifying the reference of a pronominal form inside the clause, their use cannot be considered as motivated by corrective needs, but should be instead regarded as a conventionalized strategy of which both the hearer and the speaker have (implicit) awareness:

> A speaker who uses an antitopic construction is normally fully "aware" that the mere mention of the unmarked topic pronoun in the clause is insufficient for the hearer to understand who or what the proposition is about […] [Its use] involves a signal that the not-yet-active topic referent is going to be named at the end of the sentence. (Lambrecht, 1994: 203)

However, while some scholars have focused on the convergence of left- and right-hand topics from the information-structural or illocutionary point of view (e.g. Lombardi Vallauri, 2009), most of the studies have emphasized a division of labour between the functions LDs and RDs fulfil at the discourse level: while LD constructions are used to introduce a new topic (topic announcing or topic shift) or to express a contrast, RDs are instead used for topic continuity, i.e. to maintain an already ratified topic of conversation (Lambrecht, 2001: 1075).

The different discourse functions served by topics in LDs and RDs are also stressed in Frascarelli (2017) when commenting on the example in (8), where the constituent *il tempo* 'time' is first introduced as an aboutness topic in the left periphery of the first sentence, and then repeated in the right periphery of the second sentence "so as to maintain (and enhance the salience of) the relevant A-Topic" (Frascarelli, 2017: 496).[102]

8. Non è   questione che il tempo$_k$ non te   l$_k$'   ho
   NEG be.3SG point   that the time   NEG IO.CL.2SG DO.CL have.1SG

   dato, io te   l$_k$'   ho   dato, il tempo$_k$.
   given I IO.CL.2SG DO.CL have.1SG given the time

   'The point is not that I didn't give you time, I did give you time.'   (Frascarelli, 2017: 496)

Following Lambrecht (1994), Ziv (1994), Ziv & Grosz (1994) and Grosz & Ziv (1998) also argue that RDs are a planned construction serving a discourse-organizing function, for they "either introduce or reintroduce an evoked entity into the discourse for the purposes of future reference as a potential topic" (Ziv, 1994: 641). In their analysis, two aspects are particularly important for an accurate characterization of RDs: one is the motivation behind the use of RDs, i.e. that of making a topic available for future reference, which RDs clearly share with LDs; the other is the cognitive

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[102] However, as already pointed out in Chapter 1, § 2.2.2, Frascarelli & Hinterhölzl (2007) and Frascarelli (2017) argue that given topics, i.e. non-shifting and non-corrective topics, can be realized either in the left or in the right periphery of the sentence. They can be used for topic continuity or to mention a background constituent that has not been instantiated as an A-Topic in the previous context, both in the form of CLLD (clitic left dislocation) or CLRD (clitic right dislocation) (Frascarelli, 2017: 477).

status of the entities occurring in the RDs, which shows specific limitations compared to that of the entities in LDs. As results from the above quotation, the specific constraint on the activation status of the RD referents is what Ziv & Grosz call *evoked*, Lambrecht *highly accessible* and Frascarelli *familiar*.

1.2.1. Cognitive constraints on referents: RDs as *familiar* topics

Unlike LDs, whose main function is that of topic establishing or shifting, Lambrecht (1981, 1994, 2001) argues that for the use of RDs to be felicitous, the referents must be highly salient and highly accessible, i.e. they must have already been established as topics. Any violation of the constraint results in the infelicity of the utterance. An example from French is reported here to illustrate the different constraints applying to LD and RD referents:

9. Husband and wife at dinner table;

    H. looks at food on his plate:

    (a) H: Ça n'a pas de GOÛT, ce poulet.   (RD)

        'It has no taste, this chicken.'

    (b) # CE POULET, ça n'a pas de GOUT.   (LD)

10. (a) W: Le VEAU, c'est PIRE.   (LD)

        'Veal (it) is worse.'

    (b) ##C'est PIRE, le veau. (RD)   (Lambrecht, 2001: 1075)

According to Lambrecht (2001), only the RD in (9a) is felicitous because its referent *ce poulet* 'this chicken' has a high pragmatic salience in the discourse setting, while in (10) there is a change of topic with a contrastive value, therefore the contrasted referent *le veau* 'veal' can only be instantiated as LD and not as RD.[103]

Pretty much along the same lines, Ziv (1994) and Grosz & Ziv (1998) point out that referents should be either situationally- or textually-evoked (or *accessible*, in Chafe's terminology) in order to be

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[103] However, other scholars acknowledge the possibility of French RDs to express a (slight) contrast, in particular when strong pronouns are involved (De Cat, 2007; Detges & Waltereit, 2014). An example is provided by De Cat (2007: 525):
Maman$_i$ est   malade, **elle**$_i$.
Mum   is   ill   her
'MUM is ill.'
Moreover, one reviewer of this thesis has also pointed out that (9b) should be considered as totally acceptable, arguably since the referent against which *ce poulet* is contrasted is salient and clearly identifiable based on the situational context of utterance.

felicitously employed in RDs, i.e. the referents of prototypical RDs should be retrievable in the physical or textual context of utterance.

As for textually evoked referents, one should expect that the antecedents of the detached NPs do not occur in the immediately preceding linguistic context, since fully active referents can be directly recalled using unaccented pronominal forms. In these cases, the simple use of a pronoun or a definite description in the canonical position would be sufficient, and the use of an RD would be redundant (Grosz & Ziv, 1998: 11). If an RD were used with fully active referents, Grosz and Ziv argue, the hearer would probably interpret it as a signal that the referential entity is not the automatically accessible one (Ziv, 1994: 641).[104] The constraint on a minimal (textual) distance between the detached constituent and its antecedent is shown by the different acceptability status of (11) and (12). In Chafe (1987)'s terminology, *Jack* represents an active referent, currently lit in the interlocutors consciousnesses, while *this book* would be a referent that became accessible via deactivation:

11. A: Did you see Jack yesterday?

    B: #Yes. He is going to Europe, *Jack*.

12. A: I asked you to read this book for today.

    B: I know. 1 tried to very hard, but I was quite busy. Incidentally, it is much too difficult for me, *this book*.   (Ziv, 1994: 641).

Equally felicitous with RDs are situationally-accessible referents, which are by definition salient enough to become topical even though they have not been mentioned in the previous context. The utterance in (13) is only felicitous if the picture is to be found in the physical surroundings of the interlocutors (Ziv, 1994: 640):

13. Il   est   beau,   *ce   tableau*!

    It   is beautiful   that picture

    It's beautiful, that painting!   (Lambrecht, 1981: 93)

Once *ce tableau* 'that painting' has been introduced as a topic, it is available for further reference in the ensuing discourse, contributing to discourse reference coherence.

In addition, RDs can also contain semantically-accessible referents, entities engendered by *bridging* inferences.[105] In these cases, the referents of the RDs are not directly expressed in the

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[104] The only case in which the minimal distance constraint does not apply is when the dislocated NP is used attributively to predicate a property of the referent (see note 105).

[105] In Clark & Haviland (1977: 6), *bridging* is described as an inference arising from the *given-new contract* between the interlocutors: whenever the hearer cannot find a *direct antecedent* for a given referent, he seeks for "an *indirect* antecedent by building an inferential bridge from something he already knows". Clark (1977) describes four classes of bridging, one direct and three indirect. The direct bridging can involve *identity, pronominalization, epithets* or *set membership*. As for

previous context, but are inferable from the semantic frame activated by another entity in the preceding utterance. An example is given in (14), where the referent *Charlie Chaplin* is inferable from the frame activated by the mention of the movie *Modern Times* in the preceding utterance:

14. I saw Modern Times again yesterday.

    He is amazing, *(this) Charlie Chaplin*.   (Grosz & Ziv, 1998: 9)

One particular type of (direct) bridging inference is that triggered by the use of epithets, NPs used attributively to express or predicate emotive or descriptive content in addition to referring (Ziv, 1994; Ward & Birner, 1996). The use of epithets has an unclear status in the literature on RD, with most of the authors excluding them by default, and some based on criteria similar to those employed to exclude afterthoughts. Huddleston & Pullum (2002) argue that unlike RDs, epithets form a separate intonational unit from the rest of the sentence and are not used referentially, but rather express the speaker's attitude towards the antecedent referent. The examples provided in (15)-(16) are claimed to show the difference between the NP *that bastard next door*, which according to Ward and Birner is used referentially, and *the bastard*, which only represents a supplementary epithet.

15. *That bastard next door*, he's just won a million in the lottery.

16. He's taken my chair again, *the bastard*.   (Huddleston & Pullum, 2002: 1413)

In addition, Ward and Birner argue that epithets can occur clause-internally, just as afterthoughts, and that their antecedent can be any kind of referential NP, not just a pronoun:

17. Max_i, the $bastard_i$, has taken my chair again.   (Huddleston & Pullum, 2002: 1413)

However, this view is not totally unchallenged, as with afterthoughts, since a certain attitude of the speaker towards the antecedent cannot be completely excluded when using the topic NP *that bastard next door*, as cannot be completely discarded the possibility for *the bastard* in (202) to be used referentially to identify a person rather than to predicate a quality. Yet very few scholars have explicitly treated and analysed epithets as a type of RD. One exception are the works of Ziv (1994) and Grosz & Ziv (1998), in which an NP being used attributively does not exclude it from occurring in an RD construction. The following is an example of a felicitous RD where speaker B, in addition to referring to the interlocutor's dog, also predicates its being mangy (Grosz & Ziv, 1998: 9):

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the indirect bridging type, for which the implicature will supposedly require a greater cognitive effort by the hearer, the inference can be drawn by *association* or by *characterization* when dealing with nouns and adjectives, or by *reasons*, *causes*, *consequences* and *concurrence* when dealing with predicates. An exhaustive account of bridging is beyond the scope of this volume. For a detailed characterization of the phenomenon, see Clark (1977), Asher & Lascarides (1998). For the interaction of bridging reference with topic and focus see Matsui (1993).

18. A: I took my dog to the vet yesterday.

    B: He is getting unaffordable, *the mangy old beast*.   (Grosz & Ziv, 1998: 9)

A second exception is represented by the works of Villalba (2011) and Mayol & Villalba (2018), where the *evaluative epithet* is listed as one of the discourse functions of RD, in addition to topic continuation and activation: "the right-dislocate (re)introduces or continues a previously introduced referent […], but appending it with an epithet, which transmits the speaker's attitude toward the referent. Henceforth, omission of the dislocate would not yield to ungrammaticality, but it would entail the loss of the evaluative information" (Villalba, 2011: 1953). However, although extensive research has been done on bridging, including from the perspective of its intersection with LD (Matsui, 1993), the relation between bridging and RD has rarely been explored and many aspects remain unclear. Mayol & Villalba (2018), for instance, found that RDs are always preferred to LDs in Catalan – contrary to the general assumption of a greater cross-linguistic distribution of LDs – except for the case of epithets. Unlike other types of bridging included in their experiment, epithets' referents are directly inferred from a previous referent in the context, and thus the processing effort they demand for referent retrieval is assumed to be lower. Nonetheless, Catalan speakers surprisingly choose to code epithets at the left rather than the right periphery. Clearly, the cognitive cost of reference processing is not the only factor involved in the choice between LDs and RDs. Whichever the relevant factors might be remains to be confirmed (Mayol & Villalba, 2018: 207-208).

To conclude, in the literature on RDs, although the *familiar* status of the referents is claimed to be a distinctive factor – both in English and in Romance languages – by a number of authors (i.a. Lambrecht, 1981, 1994, 2001; Benincà et al, 1998; Cecchetto, 1999; Frascarelli & Hinterhölzl, 2007; Frascarelli, 2017; Villalba, 2011; Mayol & Villalba, 2018, Samek-Lodovici, 2015, López, 2016), this view is not totally unchallengeable: in many studies the givenness of the detached referents is assumed rather than discussed (cfr. Cecchetto, 1999; Samek-Lodovici, 2015; López, 2016); what is more, in a small number of articles it has been argued that new referents can sometimes be encoded directly as RDs (De Cat, 2007; Villalba, 2011), and even express emphasis "to the extent that the contrast can be expressed without the need for prosodic emphasis" (De Cat, 2007: 524). The following examples provided in De Cat (2007) contain an RD with a new referent and one encoding emphasis respectively:

19. Tu   sais   où   il   allait,   l'avion   que tu   as   vu   qui décollait*?*

    You   know   where   he   went   the-plane   that you haveseen that took-off

    'Do you know where the plane you saw taking off was going?'   (De Cat, 2007: 526)

20. Crocro$_i$, il$_i$ veut   une poire, lui$_i$ aussi.

Crocro   he   wants   a   pear   him too

'Crocro too wants a pear.'   (De Cat, 2007: 526)

The different opinions in the literature on the cognitive status of right-detached referents are in part due to a different classification of the constructions included in the category of RDs. As shall be seen in § 1.3 of this chapter, not only afterthoughts, epithets and hanging topics are generally excluded from the analyses, but also a number of other constructions at least partially coincidental with that of RD.

1.2.2. Syntactic properties: RDs as *bound(er)* topics

The syntactic classification and characterization of RD represent two of the most debated aspects of this construction.

1.2.2.1. Clause-external position

First, most of the studies consider RD constituents to occupy a right-peripheral position in the sentence or, as Lambrecht (2001) puts it, a *clause-external* position, as can be implied from his definition of dislocations:

> A dislocation construction (also called detachment construction) is a sentence structure in which a referential constituent which could function as an argument or adjunct within a predicate-argument structure occurs instead outside the boundaries of the clause containing the predicate, either to its left (left-dislocation, henceforth LD) or to its right (right-dislocation, henceforth RD).[106]   (Lambrecht, 2001: 1050)

From the above quotation one can see that both LD and RD constituents are believed not to take part in the argumental structure of the verb. As already claimed by Simone (1997), they are syntactically optional, although not disposable from a pragmatic point of view. The same position is taken in Frascarelli (2017 and previous works) for Italian, where both LDs and RDs are described as being merged in a clause-external position (the CP), whereas in the corresponding canonical clause-internal position an unaccented pronominal form is realized instead.[107]

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[106] Note that as pointed out by Lambrecht (2001) himself, the optionality of RDs cannot be described in terms of an *adjunct*, i.e. an argument not required by the valential structure of the verb.

[107] This is also the position adopted in Samek-Lodovici (2015) and Cardinaletti (2016). However, this claim is not uncontroversial in the literature. For example, A different position is taken in Ziv (1994), who argues that while "LDs may be regarded as instances of non-sentential discourse segments, probably of a processing-relevant nature", RDs display sentential characteristics instead (Ziv, 1994:632).

1.2.2.2. Coreferentiality

Second, as anticipated at the beginning of § 1 and repeatedly mentioned throughout the section, one criterion used to define RDs cross-linguistically is *coreferentiality* or coindexation, i.e. the resumption of the detached referent by a clitic inside the main clause, be it *overt* – formally realized – or *covert* – prosodically null (i.a. Berruto, 1986; Simone, 1997; Lambrecht, 1981, 1994, 2001; Frascarelli, 2007, 2017; De Cat, 2007; Villalba, 2011; Mayol & Villalba, 2018; López, 2016).

The coindexed pronominal in RD sentences can have various grammatical functions. The following examples taken from Lambrecht (2001) contain coreferential clitics serving respectively the functions of subject (21), direct object (22), and indirect object (23):

21. Han$_i$ bare lo, [*ambassadoren*]$_i$

    'He just laughed, the ambassador.' (Norwegian, Fretheim, 1995)

22. 'I read it$_i$ when I was a KID, [*this book*]$_i$. (English, Lambrecht, 2001)

23. Hi$_i$ ficarem   el   GANIVET,[*al   calaix*]$_i$.

    There   put.2PL.FUT   the   knife   in.the   drawer

    'We will put the KNIFE (there,) in the drawer.' (Catalan, Vallduví, 1995)

The example in (24) adapted from Samek-Lodovici (2006) contains two pronominal forms, the first coreferential with a locative adjunct and the second coreferential with a direct object, both right-detached:

24. Ce$_i$ li$_j$ abbiamo   messi NOI, [*i   libri*]$_j$, [*sotto il   letto*]$_i$.

    CL.LOC   CL.IO   have.PRS.1PL put   we   the   books   under the bed

    'WE put the books under the bed.' (Samek-Lodovici, 2006: 847)

However, as results from the data discussed in Frascarelli (2017), clitic resumption does not homogeneously characterize all the topics that can be right dislocated.

Regarding CLRDs (right dislocated G-Topics), clitic resumption is claimed to be obligatorily – whenever available – for all types of constituents. Although subject resumption is not an available option in standard Italian, in other varieties of Italian or in a language like French where clitic pronouns are available for subjects as well, we can easily find right dislocated subjects resumed by clitics:

25. Elle$_i$ ignore les   sujets   disloqués,   son   analyse$_i$.

    She   ignores the   subjects   dislocated   his   analysis

    'His analysis ignores dislocated subjects.' (De Cat, 2007: 510)

According to Frascarelli (2007, 2017) and Cardinaletti (2001, 2002), it is the compulsory nature of clitic resumption that sets CLRDs clearly apart from *marginalization*, i.e. the occurrence *in situ* of post-focal elements with reduced prosody (see Chapter 1, § 2.1.2). In (26) it is the focalization of the postverbal subject *lui* 'he' that causes the occurrence of the NP *la distinta* 'the deposit slip' in post-focal position and its consequent deaccentuation, thus no clitic resumption is needed. According to this analysis, if the sentence-final object were indeed right-detached, the corresponding sentence would be the one in (27) with clitic resumption:

26. Dovrebbe   avere   LUI [la   distinta].

    should.3SG have.INF he   the deposit.slip

    'He should have the deposit slip.'   (Frascarelli, 2017: 492)

27. Dovrebbe averla$_i$ LUI [la   distinta]$_i$.

    should.3SG have.INF.DO.CL.F he   the deposit.slip

    'He should have (it,) the deposit slip.'

The situation is different with right dislocated L-Topics, for which Carella (2015) argues that clitic resumption is statistically dispreferred, even when available.[108] The examples in (28) and (29) show that resumption is possible with space G-Topics, but infelicitous with space L-Topics:

28. [Io]$_{C\text{-Topic}}$ [a Casal de' Pazzi]$_{G\text{-Topic}}$ non ci   arrivo.

    I   to Casal de' Pazzi   not CL.LOC arrive.1SG

    'I am not going to Casal de' Pazzi quarter.'

29. [A Casal de' Pazzi]$_{Space}$ il   traffico (*ci)   sembra   scorrevole.

    At Casal de' Pazzi   the traffic   CL.LOC seem.3SG moving

    'At Casal de' Pazzi, the traffic flow seems good.'   (Frascarelli, 2017: 488)

Thus, although some types of right dislocated constituents do show (obligatory) clitic resumption, others do not. However, it appears evident that the coreferentiality constraint can only apply to right-hand topics which are detached, i.e. "moved" from their canonical position, and leave an overt or covert *trace* in their stead. Nonetheless, it cannot be regarded as a general characteristic of all right-hand topics, since, based on the definition of *topic* adopted in Chapter 1, not all right-hand topics are detached but can also occur *in-situ* – post-focally – as illustrated in (30):

30. Chi va a Roma?

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[108] However, Frascarelli (2017) argues that as a matter of fact, while clitics are available in Italian for space expressions, this is not the case with time and field frames (Frascarelli, 2017:17).

Who is going to Rome?

CARLO va a Roma.

'CARLO is going to Rome.' (Lombardi Vallauri, 2009b: 390)

This observation is further supported by the data in Cresti (2009)'s analysis of the IS of Italian utterances, where the construction termed *appendix* is very broadly defined as performing a function of textual integration of the focus. Cresti argues that this construction "may be compared with the after-thought, anti-topic, and post-fix units" (Cresti, 2018: 51), but her underlying definition of IS units is based on functional rather than formal criteria, thus a rather varied set of expressions are included in this category. In other words, Cresti (2018) is one of the few studies providing an account of all sorts of right-hand topics, not just RDs proper. Consequently, only 0.5% of the 423 verbal utterances containing an RD in Cresti's corpus were found to host an anaphoric (backward looking) relation with (an element in) the main clause (Cresti, 2009: 176).

1.2.2.3. Syntactic and grammatical functions

Despite the focus of attention being almost exclusively on dislocated NPs in the literature, a few accounts have addressed the issue of other types of constituents appearing in the RD construction, though generally in a marginal way: Frascarelli (2017) discusses time, space and field topics that can be right detached (see Chapter 1, § 2.2.2), while Lambrecht (2001) provides a list of the different syntactic functions covered by the RD constituents with relative examples from different languages. In addition to NPs and PPs, which are the most prototypical types of RD, adverbial phrases (AdvPs) and adjective phrases (APs) are also possible:

31. J' y_i ai passé de bonnes vacances, [*là-bas*]$_i$.

    I there have spent of good vacations over.there

    'I spent good VACATIONS there.'

32. Il a pas l'air d'être satisfait du tout. Il l_i'est tellement peu, [*satisfait*]$_i$, qu'il appuie sur la sonnerie.

    'He doesn't look satisfied at all. He is so LITTLE satisfied that he rings the bell.'

    (Lambrecht, 2001: 1062)

Moreover, non-finite verb-headed phrases (VPs) as (33), as well as different types of finite complement clauses, including a subject clause like that in (34), can also enter an RD construction :[109]

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[109] RDs containing VPs are also mentioned, for instance, in Samek-Lodovici (2015:14).

33. Everyone knows it$_i$'s not EASY, [*to speak French*]$_i$.

34. It$_i$'s a SHAME, [*that you're not coming tonight*]$_i$. (Lambrecht, 2001: 1063)

Interestingly, a number of expressions that do not qualify as phrases can also be found in right dislocated position, a feature that is frequently associated with RD in Chinese (Lee, 2009).[110] Dislocation of Nouns (Ns) instead of whole NPs can be found in both French (35) and Italian (36):

35. Je mets LAQUELLE$_i$ [*de robe*]i?

    I put.on which.one of dress

    'WHICH dress am I going to WEAR?'

36. Adesso faccio   scorrere il   TUO$_i$, [*di bagnetto*]$_i$.

    now   make.1SG.PRS run   the your of bath

    'Now I'll run YOUR bath.'   (Lambrecht, 2001: 1063)

Lambrecht (2001) further claims that a noun can also be extracted from a predicate NP. An example is provided in (37b), where the RD *commme appareil* is coreferential with the adjective *cher* instead of a pronominal element. The reconstructed canonical order is given in (37a):[111]

37. (a) C$_i$'est [un appareil CHER], [ça]$_i$.

        'That's an expensive CAMERA.'

     (b) C$_i$'est CHER$_j$, [ça]$_i$, [*comme appareil*]$_j$.   (Lambrecht, 2001: 1064)

Finally, RD constructions containing pronouns (PNs) and vocative phrases (VocPs), i.e. expressions used to recall the attention of the addressees, are cross-linguistically frequent.

38. (About cooking sweet potatoes.)

    They$_i$ take a long TIME, [*them*]$_i$.[112]   (Lambrecht, 2001: 1064)

39. May I help you$_i$, [*ma'am*]$_i$?   (Lambrecht, 2001: 1065)

It is interesting to notice that although the examples provided in Lambrecht (2001) throughout (31) – (39) are all RDs proper, i.e coreferential to a sentence-internal form, some of the translations provided in English cannot be said to contain RDs, strictly speaking, but simply *in-situ* right-hand topics which

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[110] Note that Lambrecht crucially argues that the clause-external nature of RDs implies the syntactic completeness of the clause, hence the well-formedness of the clause-internal NP constituent. This explains the use of the interrogative pronoun *laquelle* instead of *quelle* in the French example, as well as the use of the French preposition *de* and the Italian *di*, both specialized in setting a topic of the N-type (either in LD or RD position).

[111] Here as well, a noun has been separated by the adjective that modifies it, and the determiner *comme* has been added to it instead of the indefinite determiner *un* 'a'. As in the case of *de robe* and *di bagnetto* in (35) and (36), the resulting NP *comme appareil* cannot occur in the canonical position but only when dislocated.

[112] This is actually a case of right dislocated HT, since the subject pronoun and the coindexed dislocation do not have matching cases (Lambrecht, 2001; López, 2016).

are not resumed by any pronominal form (e.g. *satisfied* in (32) and *bath* in (36)). This observation clearly points to a functional equivalence of the two types of detached and non-detached sentence-final topics.

1.2.2.4. Locality and embeddability

An additional feature that has been observed in RDs is that they are positioned immediately after the clause containing the coindexed pronominal form.[113] While it is possible for LDs to appear at a certain distance and degree of embedding from the coindexed pronominal (40), this is not the case with RDs (41):

40. [*Mary*]$_i$, it's obvious that she$_i$'s going to be mad at her brother.

41. *That she$_i$'s going to be mad at her brother is obvious, [Mary]$_i$.   (Lambrecht, 2001: 1068)

As a matter of fact, as one can notice from (42)-(45), RDs are immediately adjoined not only when the coindexed pronominal is contained in a root-clause (42), but also in any type of subordinate clause, including relatives.[114] The examples show respectively a complement clause (43), a temporal adverbial (44), and a relative clause (45):

42. I wrote him$_i$ a letter last week, [John]$_i$.

43. I believe that I wrote him$_i$ a letter last week, [John].

44. When I wrote him$_i$ a letter last week, [John]$_i$, he was happy.

45. The letter which I wrote him$_i$ last week, [John]$_i$, got lost.   (Lambrecht, 2001: 1069)

Locality of (CL)RDs, not only with root clauses but also with subordinate clauses of any type, is also endorsed in Frascarelli (2017). What is more, Frascarelli argues, "a right-hand topic is itself in the scope of the sentence and is thus discourse-semantically restricted by it" (Frascarelli, 2017: 496).

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[113] The constraint on the locality of RDs is also known in the literature as the Right Roof constraint. This constraint does not appear to hold in verb-final languages such as Japanese and Turkish (Lambrecht, 2001: 1069).

[114] Different types of subordinate clauses are considered to represent more or less strong islands in syntax, with relative clauses as the strongest ones. While LDs are known to be island-sensitive, RDs are not affected by this constraint. In Frascarelli (2017), this is explained by the fact that (CL)RDs, as instances of G-Topics derived through IP-remnant movement, are not subject to any island, but result in being local and clause-bound (Frascarelli, 2017: 495). A pragmatic explanation of the impossibility of LDs to appear in subordinate clauses such as those in (42)-(45) is offered by Lambrecht and Givón (1976) in terms of the more general incompatibility of new topics to appear within subordinate clauses with (different degrees of) presuppositional strength, with a cline from the complement to the relative clause (Lambrecht, 2001: 1069). On the one hand, as Lambrecht (1981: 58) argues, "to the extent that topic can be defined as a discourse notion, its function must be seen as independent of the specific intra-sentential relationships that can hold between a main and an embedded clause"; on the other hand, this does not hold for RDs, due to "the presuppositional status of their referents in the discourse" (Lambrecht, 1981: 31).

1.2.2.5. Case marking

Finally, it has already been argued that in some cases left-hand topics can be represented by NPs with Ø case marking. This is what has been discussed in Chapter 1, § 2.1.1 as hanging topic (HT) or *nominativus pendens*, possibly a subtype of LD where the topic NP has loose (or null) syntactic link with the clause and is not preceded by the eventual preposition it would have had in the canonical sentence. The difference between a HT and a "regular" LD is provided in the example taken from Frascarelli (2017). While the LD version is not acceptable (46a), the one containing the HT is felicitous (46b):

46. (a) *A Luigi, Maria è   andata via   senza   parlargli.
          to   Luigi Maria be.3SG gone   away   without talk.INF-IO.CL

    (b) *Luigi*,   Maria è   andata via   senza   parlargli.
        Luigi   Maria be.3SG gone   away   without talk.INF-IO.CL
        'Maria went away without talking to Luigi.'   (Frascarelli, 2017: 482)

However, the topic need not be "hanging" if it appears in the right periphery:

47. ᵒᵏ Maria è   andata via   senza   parlargli,   *a Luigi*.
        Maria be.3SG gone   away   without talk.INF-IO.CL to Luigi

As a matter of fact, Lambrecht (2001) further argues that the topic can never be syntactically "disconnected" when occurring in RDs, as one can easily see when trying to eliminate the preposition of the PP *a Luigi*:

48. * Maria è   andata via   senza   parlargli,   *Luigi*.
        Maria be.3SG gone   away   without talk.INF-IO.CL Luigi

However, the status of HTs is still highly controversial in the literature, especially regarding the right periphery, on which comparatively much less research has been done. Unlike Lambrecht, López (2016) argues that in some languages, HTs can also occur in right dislocated position and, following De Cat (2007), gives the following example from French, where the right-detached NP *sa fille* is separated from its coindexed clause by the adjunct island *moi* 'me' – another right detached NP associated with the main clause subject *je* 'I',– which he takes to be a diagnostic for HTs (López, 2016: 410):

49. Je   connais l'   homme qui l'   a   emmennée, moi, sa   fille
    1SG   know   the man   who her has taken-away   me   his daughter
    'I know the man that took his daughter away.'   De Cat (2007: 495)

Interestingly, López (2016)'s category of HTs includes A-topics, i.e. those constructions serving a topic announcing function, which he parallels with that served by afterthoughts, where "the dislocated constituent is used to clarify the referent of an earlier pronoun" (López, 2016: 414). Although with a few caveats regarding the provisional nature of his hypothesis due to the lack of in-depth cross-linguistic research on RDs, he proposes the following division of labour between left and right periphery, H-type topics (HTs) and D-type topics (roughly equivalent to Frascarelli's G-Topics and C-topics):

H-type		D-type	
L	R	L	R
Topic promotion	Afterthought	Given+contrast	Given

Figure 4: Discourse functions of two types of LDs and RDs. (López, 2016: 416)

The last category of topics discussed in Lambrecht (2001) is that of *unlinked* topics, i.e. topics which – unlike (CL)RDs and unlike HTs – are not directly coindexed with a position inside the clause and which – therefore – cannot be resumed. This is the case of the *Chinese style topics* discussed in Chapter 1, § 3.1.1 and 5.1.1, of which another example is provided in (50). Unlinked topics are argued to be different from adjuncts too, which are simply optional arguments or complements of the verb, as in (24), and can be coindexed with an overt or null pronominal form inside the clause. Unlinked topics, as well, as argued in Lambrecht (2001), cannot appear in RDs, while adjuncts can (Lambrecht, 2001: 1071).

50. 那场火，幸亏消防队员来得。

[*Nà-chang huǒ*]xìngkuī xiāofang-duì lái de kuài.
That-CLF fire fortunate fire-brigade came DE quickly
'That fire, fortunately the fire-brigade came quickly' (Li & Thompson, 1981: 96)

Although not specifically mentioned in Frascarelli (2017), this type of unlinked topic could be arguably considered a type of L-Top, since Chafe (1976)'s well-known definition was specifically addressed to account for *Chinese style topics* as the one in (50). Nonetheless, it could also be considered a HT, for it is not preceded by any preposition or case-marking.

1.3. The interpersonal account: addressing the addressee

If the discourse-syntactic properties of RDs had already entered the research agenda forty years ago, much more recent are the studies investigating the (socio)pragmatic features connected with this construction. Boosted by the increased availability of large amounts of linguistic data, including samples of spoken language, the studies in this area have also increased in the past few years (Timmis, 2014: 304).

Aijmer (1989) certainly seems to represent an early exception (Durham, 2011; Timmis, 2014, 2015) and her work on RDs – which she calls *tails* – paved the way for later investigations of the *discourse functions* of the construction, by which she means not only the informational status of the dislocated structure but also "its social and interactive functions" (Aijmer, 1989: 138). In her study of English informal conversation, Aijmer found that more than half of the total number of dislocations were produced at the right periphery of the sentence and within these, most were found among discussions between intimate friends (Aijmer, 1989: 139). Although acknowledging that some RDs can also have a disambiguating function, she endorses the idea that their typical function in language is *phatic* rather than referential, i.e. they are "used as a grammaticalized device for creating an affective bond with the hearer" (Aijmer, 1989:150). Aijmer thus, not only argues that the RD constituent is syntactically dispensable – as do Simone (1997) and Lambrecht (2001) – but further claims that it is also redundant from the point of view of content and information value. According to Aijmer, these constructions frequently occur in specific types of predication where a certain amount of information is assumed to be shared among the interlocutors and where some kind of evaluation is involved. The function RD serves — especially in these cases – is chiefly interpersonal-oriented, for "it emphasizes the phatic character of the utterance and contributes to the intimacy between hearer and speaker" (Aijmer, 1989: 151). One particular example Aijmer discusses is given in (51), where the RD itself is an evaluative NP containing the speaker's judgement of the individual referred to in the predication, closely related to the epithet bridging relation described in § 1.2.1:

51. Yes he had a good sense of humour, *that bloke.*   (Aijmer, 1989:151)

An additional example is (52), in which the predication is "a spontaneous or emotional reaction on something (especially in the immediate context) or an emotionally coloured comment on a situation which is familiar to both the participants in the conversation" (Aijmer, 1989: 149).

52. Situation: A has told B about how he slammed his finger in a car door.

      B: Agonizing, *that*. Car doors are always a problem.   (Aijmer 1989:149)

This example, as noted earlier in differentiating afterthoughts from RDs, clearly shows that the right-detached constituent has very little – if any – disambiguating potential. Conversely, RDs are frequently made up only by expressions with a deictic or vague reference (Aijmer, 19898: 152).

Although very few authors have gone into so much detail when describing the *interpersonal* function of RDs, some have nonetheless pointed to its relevance in the felicitous use of the construction. In his pioneering analysis of French RD, Lambrecht (1981) pointed to "a link of cooperation or 'camaraderie'" between the speaker and the addressee and argued that "this level of personal interaction is probably relevant in many other cases of antitopic use" (Lambrecht, 1981: 98). Similarly, a hint at the assumed bond of solidarity between the interlocutors was given in Berruto (1986) with respect to Italian RDs.

However, only recently have some of the factors pinpointed by Aijmer (1989) been discussed in greater details, with a few interesting outcomes. Durham (2011), Timmis (2014) and Snell (2018) discuss the socio-pragmatic distribution of RD alongside some other (expanded) versions of the construction. In these studies, in addition to the expressions prototypically falling under the definition of RD as I identified it at the beginning of the chapter – i.e. as a right-detached constituent coreferential with a position inside the clause – other expressions with (more or less) different syntactic patterns identified in earlier works on English (i.a. Visser, 1963; Melchers, 1983) are also taken into account. Durham (2011) distinguishes between standard right dislocations, where a subject NP, pronoun or demonstrative is detached (53), expanded right dislocation in which an auxiliary verb – called *operator* – is added to the detached NP (54), and reverse right dislocation where the auxiliary appears before the NP in the detachment (55). In addition, Timmis (2014) recognizes an additional variant which also includes the adverb *so* in the detached part, *emphatic tags*, exclusively found in Irish English (56):

53. I was a little angel *me*
54. He stayed with this other woman *John did*
55. She got a great bargain *did her Mum*   (Durham, 2011: 6)
56. She's very pleased with it *so she is.*   (Timmis, 2014: 310)

As one can observe, the constructions in (53)-(56) appear to resemble, at least to some extent and especially when the detached expression contains a pronoun, instances of what are known as *question tags*, i.e. declarative sentences followed by an abbreviated question with a variable degree of prosodic integration (Mithun, 2012: 2166).[115] Below an example is provided from Keisanen (2006), where the

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[115] It is also worth noticing one particular study that has pointed to a common path of diachronic development of utterance tags and sentence-final pragmatic markers via the process of right dislocation (Yap et al., 2014). However, at least one important factor that sets RDs apart from questions tags is prosody, since the latter are produced in the majority of cases either with a rising intonation or with a falling intonation (Mithun, 2012: 2166), while the former generally have low and flat contours. The relation between pragmatic markers and right dislocations will be addressed in detail in a separate section.

expression *did she* in line three – formally resembling the reverse right dislocation in (55) – is presented as a tag (57), alongside with the more typical case of *isn't it* provided in (58):

57. 01 DIANE: But ^England didn't really start ^losing her `colonies=,

02 (0.7)

03 ^did she,

04 until `more like ^Second `World War?

58. 01 FRANK: it's a `royal ^mess,

02 `isn't it.

03 (0.5)

04 MELISSA: ^Yes it ^is.   (Keisanen, 2006: 21)

While question tags proper and RDs should be distinguished from one another due to their different syntactic structure and discourse functions, it is nonetheless worth taking into account the socio-pragmatic properties that RDs share with their expanded versions.

For example, Timmis (2014) found that the four variants of the RD construction have a different distribution with regards to evaluation in his corpus: while pronoun RDs were the most associated with evaluative comments and expanded right dislocations were the most connected with negative evaluations, the remaining two variants were both found to co-occur mainly with strong evaluations.

The ethnographic study conducted by Snell (2018) on a group of children in Teesside, north-east England, also showed a very specialized use of pronoun RDs, which "were used by children as a resource to signal their desire to align with some individuals (or objects or ideas) and or to distance themselves from others" (Snell, 2018: 24).

Finally, Carter (2004) describes both extended right dislocations, – which he calls *tails* – tags, and affectionate vocatives as "specifically interpersonal grammatical forms" whose ultimate functions is to "create conditions in which speakers feel they occupy shared worlds and viewpoints, in which the risks attendant on creativity are reduced and in which intimacy and convergence are actively co-produced. Such features are predominantly interpersonal, relationship-creating and relationship-reinforcing" (Carter, 2004: 107).

Although not expressed with the same intensity, this view is incidentally also suggested in Cresti (2009), who argues that the function of *appendix* is "to ensure mutual consent on the statement", viz. "to conclude the utterance in agreement with the interlocutor" (Cresti, 2009: 173).

To sum up, in the literature on RD, a wide array of elements was found to be detached at the right periphery of the clause. While in some cases the construction clearly serves a function tightly connected with the IS of the utterance, in others the motivations behind its use appear to be more of

an interpersonal-related kind. However, the discourse-organizing potential of the RDs and the relation-creating or relationship-reinforcing power – as Timmis (2014: 314) puts it – "are far from mutually exclusive: both considerations may be present in the same utterance". This is particularly appropriate to describe the use of epithets, vocatives or certain demonstratives, as previously assessed. Although a few attempts have been made to integrate the syntactic and socio-pragmatic features of RDs, as briefly discussed in this section, much more needs to be done, especially in languages other than English.

2. Chinese right dislocations

Chinese right dislocations, on a par with their Indo-European counterparts, have been referred to with an array of different labels across different authors, both in Chinese and non-Chinese language treatises. The most import labels used include *inversion* (J. Li, 1924; Chao, 1968; Tai & Hu 1991), *afterthought* (Chao, 1968; Y. Shi, 1985), *transposition* or *yìwèi* 易位 (Lu, 1980; Zhang & Fang, 1996; Liang, 2005, *left dislocation* (Packard, 1986), *right dislocation* (Guo, 1999; L. Cheung, 1997; (Luke & Zhang, 2007), *postposing* or *hòuzhì* 后置 (Bourgerie, 1998; Lu, 2000), *dislocation focus* (L. Cheung, 2005), *translocation* (Zhang & Fang, 2020), and *incremental sentences* (Luke, 2004; Lim, 2014), among others. On a par with what has been described for RD in Italian and English, the rich terminology employed to refer to these constructions "genuinely reflects fundamental differences in understanding, making the phenomenon one of the most intriguing and least well understood in Chinese grammar" (Luke, 2012: 339).

One crucial feature of Chinese RDs which ought to be mentioned immediately with respect to the languages analysed in the previous section is that they are almost exclusively found in spoken language, very rarely appearing in written or formal spoken Chinese. As Hu (1995: 225) points out, this is perhaps a reflection of the much less rigid word order displayed by informal Chinese.

2.1. The inversion account

It is thus not odd that the first mentions of Chinese right dislocations appeared together with other constructions involving non-canonical word order, the so-called *inversions*, i.e. the shift of position between subject and predicate, including the presentative constructions mentioned in Chapter 1, § 4.1.1. Although this phenomenon had been observed long before, Chao (1968) is among those contributing to its prominence as a future research topic. Chao noticed that sometimes it is possible that " after a minor sentence has been spoken, a subject is supplied as an afterthought" (Chao, 1968:

92). In addition, he also noticed that the sentence-final elements are produced in the "neutral tone" and with a faster tempo and – crucially – they can be "changed back into the straight order, with the subject repeated in the neutral tone as a redundant reminder" (Chao, 1968: 92). One example provided by Chao is (59), wherein the *inverted* subject can appear both in its canonical place and again with reduced prosody after the predicate, without affecting the intended meaning:

59. (黑猫)吃，黑猫。

   (Hēi   máo) chī, hēi   máo.

   Black   cat   eat black cat

   'The black cat eats the food, the black cat (does).'   (Chao, 1968: 92)

What Chao does not explicitly say, but can be inferred reading between the lines, is that the sentence in (59), wherein the subject with non-reduced prosody is present in sentence-initial position, is not really equivalent to the canonical order sentence, as in (60), wherein the intended meaning does not have a 'reminder' value:

60. 黑猫吃。

   Hēi   máo chī.

   Black   cat   eat

   'The black cat eats.'

A second important paper focusing the attention on the peculiar characteristics of Chinese RDs is Lu (1980). The term used by Lu (1980) to refer to this construction– *yiwei* – also intends to capture the variation in the respective order between two constituents. However, unlike Chao (1968), Lu (1980) argues the two "inverted" constituents can be put back into place without a change in the meaning conveyed by the sentence. In fact, according to Lu, a sentence as (61a) is equivalent to (62b) from a semantic (propositional) point of view (Lu, 1980: 28).

61. a. 来了吗，你哥哥？

      Lái-le   ma, nǐ   gēge?

      Come-PERF   SFP 2sg brother

      'Did he come, your brother?'

     b. 你哥哥来了吗？

      Nǐ   gēge   lái-le   ma?

      2SG brother   come-PERF   SFP

      'Did your brother come?'   (Lu, 1980: 28)

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However, Lu also points out that the use of such a construction is always motivated by an urgency to transmit a certain information first, thus the first part of the sentence always carries an emphatic flavour, while the second part has a slightly integrative or additive (*bǔchōng* 补充) function (Lu, 1980: 28). Importantly, Lu listed a number of "invertible" structures, to be borne in mind: i) *subject-predicate*, as in (61a); ii) *head-modifier*, mainly referring to the detachment of adverbs – either functional or sentential – as in (62a), and PPs, as in (62b); iii) *verb-complement*, referring to the postposition of nominal or clausal complements and as in (63a)-(63b); iv) *serial-verb*, as in (64).[116] Lu (1980) also highlights that in the latter three types of constructions, the subject NP is sometimes postposed together with the verb, as can be observed in (63):

62.   a. 快起来吧，八点了都。

       Kuài qǐlái ba, bā diǎn le dōu

       Quick get.up SFP eight hour SFP all

       'Hurry and get up, it's already eight o'clock.'   (Lu, 1980: 31)

     b. 你到底有什么意见啊，对这个计划？

       Nǐ dàodǐ yǒu shénme yìjiàn a, duì zhègè jìhuà?

       2sg after.all have what idea SFP towards this-CLF plan

       'What exactly do you have to say about this plan?'   (Lu, 1980: 32)

63.   a. 电影，他想看。

       Diànyǐng, tā xiǎng kàn.

       Movie 3SG.M want watch

       'A movie, she wants to watch.'   (Lu, 1980: 33)

     b. 他回来了，我听说。

       Tā huílái-le, wǒ tīng-shuō.

       3SG.M return-PERF 1SG hear-say

       'He came back, I heard.'   (Lu, 1980: 33)

64. 他准备去图书馆，拿了书包。

       Tā zhǔnbèi qù túshūguǎn, ná-le shūbāo.

       3sg.M prepare go library take-PERF back.pack

       'He took his schoolbag ready to go to the library.'   (Lu, 1980: 35)

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[116] A serial verb construction can be broadly defined as a succession of verbs, each of which may be considered as "describing an event, and the events named by the verbs are related in some way as parts of an overall event or states of affairs" (Loar, 2011: 3).

To sum up, in the first treatises of Chinese RDs, the construction was regarded as imposing a relative order on the constituents of a sentence, although the exact factors triggering their inversion was never properly addressed. Most of the authors including RDs among inversions clearly distinguished them from other types of word order variation phenomena such as NP preposing (65) or presentative NP postposing (66), but some omitted to do so.

65. 学生们功课做完了。

    Xuéshēngmen gōngkè   zuò-wán-le.

    Student-PL   homework do-finish-PERF

    'The students finished their homework.'

66. 台上坐着主席团。

    Tái-shàng zuò-zhe   zhǔxítuán.

    Stage-on   sit-DUR   presidium

    'The Presidium is sitting on the stage.'   (Lu, 1980: 37)

One of the reasons why Chinese RDs easily lend themselves to the inversion interpretation is connected with the syntax of this language, viz. its non-inflective and radical pro-drop nature (Y. Wu, 2005: 257). As mentioned, it is not infrequent in Chinese to encounter structures that are superficially identical when considered out of their utterance context (see Chapter 1, § 3.1).

2.2. The dislocation account

A different approach was undertaken by Packard (1986), who tried to suggest an analysis of RD in terms of *left dislocation*, a term he used to refer to a sort of focus fronting construction used to focalize whatever is to be found in the main part of the clause. Given the degree of structural complexity that can be associated to the right-hand part of the construction, Packard argued that RDs might represent "items left behind after operation of a movement rule which fronts new information to a position of focus in sentence-initial position" (Packard, 1986: 2). However, he soon dropped this hypothesis since, as we shall see, it cannot properly account for all types of RD constructions.[117]

Although not a viable analysis, Packard (1986)'s paper highlighted two points worthy of note, i.e. the heterogeneity and the structural complexity of the right-dislocated elements, which was already

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[117] Packard (1986)'s proposal was later picked up by scholars working on Cantonese right dislocations, arguing for a focalizing function of this construction (e.g. L. Cheung, 2005, 2009).

contended in Lu (1980), and the fact that the right-dislocated expressions, in contrast with the main clause, have the potential of being topical expressions.

The topical status of RD expressions was taken to be one of the three major patterns behind the frequent employment of the construction in spoken Beijing Mandarin by Tai & Hu (1991) – the other two being *repair* and *afterthought*, distinguishable thanks to the presence of a notable pause in the latter cases (Tai & Hu, 1991: 88-89). According to Tai and Hu, *inverted sentences*, as a highly recurrent construction in spoken discourse – diametrically opposed to its basically null presence in written and formal discourse, as already observed in Lu (1980: 28) – represents a resource that speakers can avail themselves of to cope with the limited utterance time and competing turns, in order to deliver the message efficiently (Tai & Hu, 1991: 85). Through word order variation, the speakers can foreground sentence-initial information – a process they call *thematization* – and postpose less salient information:

> Through thematization, a certain sentential constituent, instead of being at its usual position in formal Chinese, is placed at the sentence-initial position as the theme of a sentence.[…]inverted sentence occurs as a result of thematization in the conversational dialogue. (Tai & Hu, 1991: 83)

In the examples below, Tai & Hu (1991) argue that the occurrence of the constituents *zhè-gè* 这个 'this' and *nǐ xiǎng* 你想 'you think' in sentence-final position is due to the pressure imposed by the nature of oral conversation, as a way to give precedence to the illocutionary more important information (Tai & Hu, 1991: 84-85):

67. A: 有的孩子反而吃亏吃多了以后反而，反而能自己锻炼出来。

'There are some children who, just because they suffered a lot, have themselves developed the ability to survive.'

B: 啊，是这样。我有这感觉。。。唉，不可能，这个。

A, shì zhè yàng. Wǒ yǒu zhè gǎnjúe…Ai, bù kěkéng, zhè-gè.

INTJ be this way 3SG have this feeling INTJ not possible this-CLF

'That is true. I have the same feeling. This is impossible.'

(Adapted from Tai & Hu, 1991: 84)

68. A: 这是，这，这，相机是半傻不傻。

'This camera is semi-automatic.'

B: 半傻。

'(It is) semi-automatic.

A: 半傻不傻吧，你想。

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bàn   shà   bú shà   ba, nǐ xiǎng.

Half   automatic   not automatic   SFP   2SG   think

'(It is) semi-automatic, you know.'   (Adapted from Tai & Hu, 1991: 85)

Hu (1995) further details that in naturally-occurring, unplanned, spontaneous, and informal speech, the conceptual-based principles responsible for the ordering of the information structure – including the Principle of Communicative Dynamism, the Functional Sentence Perspective (Firbas, 1992) and the Principle of Temporal Sequence (Tai, 1993) – give way to real-time principles – such as the Principle of Coherence and Relevance (Sperber & Wilson, 1986) – "due to the immediate communicative requirements in terms of immediate communicative purposes" (Hu, 1995: 244). In other words, the communicative urgency connected to the pressure of spoken informal conversation wins over the unmarked topic-focus order, resulting in the placement of focus before everything else in the utterance (Hu, 1995: 242-245).

Another important work on Chinese RDs is i (1996)'s volume published in Mainland China and recently also published in an English translation version. Zhang & Fang (1996, 2020) consider *translocations* to be the right-hand equivalent of the Hallidayan *theme*:

> In our view, theme preceding rheme in narratives is a manifestation of the processibility principle in pragmatics; that is, beginning with something familiar to the listener before introducing new and important information is in line with the listener's psycho-cognitive processes and thus a reasonable manner of information organization in relaxed situations. In brief and compact dialogues, by contrast, the speaker is required to communicate important information to the listener within a brief period of time. In such cases the economy principle and the clarity principle turn out to be particularly important. The primary information then becomes the content that the speaker is eager to impart, and the secondary information will be backgrounded to an insignificant position. Thus arises the phenomenon of theme postposition.
>
> (Zhang & Fang, 2020: 33-34)

According to Zhang and Fang, theme postposition is a phenomenon occurring mainly in dialogic contexts and driven by the economy principle urging the speaker to anticipate the focal rhematic part on the one hand, and the clarity principle inducing the speaker to produce the thematic part in final position on the other hand. Importantly, Zhang and Fang argue, based on spoken Beijing Mandarin data, that RDs mainly occur in non-declarative utterances, with 48% of the postposed themes in their data occurring in interrogatives, only 17% in declaratives, and the other 34% occurring in exclamative, imperative or negative utterances (Zhang & Fang, 2020: 35). Non-declaratives, which are argued to be marked utterances, are more likely to incur in theme postposition because their main function, according to Zhang and Fang, is that of giving prominence or emphasizing the rheme (Zhang & Fang,

2020: 37). Following Halliday (1985)'s terminology, postposed themes can be ideational (propositional), as in (69), interpersonal, as in (70), or textual, as in (71). The first occurs in an interrogative, the second in an exclamative and the third in a declarative utterance:

69. 有录音机没有, 这儿？

Yǒu   lùyīnjī   méi yǒu   zhè'er?

Have   recorder not have   here

'Do you have a recorder here?'   (Zhang & Fang, 2020: 38)

70. 离你就下决心离，要么就不离，离了也别再娶，天下乌鸦一般黑, 我还告诉你!

Lí   nǐ jiù xià-juéxīn   lí,   yàome jiù bù lí,   lí-le   yě bié

Divorce 2SG just make-resolution divorce or   just not divorce divorce-PERF not

zài   qǔ,   tiānxià wūyā yībān hēi,   wǒ hái gàosù nǐ!

again marry world crow same black 1SG also tell   2SG

If you want to divorce, just be determined to do so; or you just stay married. If you divorce, don't marry again. All crows in the world are black, I can assure you.'

(Zhang & Fang, 2020: 43)

71. 不饿也得吃, 为了工作 。

Bú è   yě děi   chī, wèile gōngzuò.

Not hungry too must eat for   work

'Even if you are not hungry, you'll have to eat as well, for work's sake.'

(Zhang & Fang, 2020: 44)

It is important to notice that according to Zhang and Fang, the interpersonal theme in most cases can be "restored" to its sentence-initial or sentence-internal position, but in some cases it "can be regarded either as a temporary postposition or as a conventionalized sentence pattern" (Zhang & Fang, 2020: 43), as applied to (70). Moreover, textual themes, rather than being discourse conjunctions or connectors, constitute prepositional phrases or clauses conjoining "clauses together in terms of cause, purpose or condition" (Zhang & Fang, 2020: 44).

While Tai & Hu (1991), Hu (1995) and Zhang & Fang (1996, 2020) approached the information-structural features of the RD phenomenon from a chiefly functionalist point of view, most of the later accounts focused either on the syntactic or on the conversation-analytical related features of the construction. I shall start by discussing the former.

2.2.1. Syntactic properties of RDs

When compared to the RD construction in English, the Chinese construction immediately presents some striking peculiarities much of the research debate has focused on, both within and outside China. Lee (2013) argues that there are a number of structural problems that researchers must deal with when analysing Chinese RDs, especially from a comparative or a cross-linguistic perspective:

> […] the Chinese data (namely, Mandarin and Cantonese here) pose particular problems for any structural analysis of RD. In Western languages, the RD material is coreferential with the main clause, but this does not necessarily hold for Chinese. Chinese shows violations of this coreferentiality constraint, and pose other structural problems […]. In fact, some Chinese examples seem syntactically malformed, yet they can be acceptable to Chinese speakers. (Lee, 2013: 6)

As we can see from the above quotation, one issue that immediately catches the eye is coreferentiality violation.

2.2.1.1. Coreferentiality

As discussed in § 1.2.2.2, RD constituents representing G-Topics, i.e. formerly instantiated or highly salient topics are generally resumed, whenever a clitic or equivalent pronominal form is available, while the opposite is true for L-Topics, i.e. framing topics that are not compulsory arguments of the verb. As far as Chinese is concerned, on a specular relation with left-hand topics, both Mandarin and Cantonese do not behave uniformly with respect to cataphoric relations, i.e. they do not uniformly present pronominal coindexation.

Guo (1999)'s study on children's spoken Mandarin identified three types of coreferential forms that refer cataphorically to the right-detached expressions: *zero anaphora* – amounting to 39% of the RD occurrences in his corpus – *elaboration* – accounting for 22% of the cases – and *reduplication* – covering the remaining 39% (Guo, 1999: 1114). While the proportions relative to each type may be highly influenced by the peculiar nature of his corpus – task-oriented discourse among 7-year-old children – the finding is important from a descriptive point of view. A zero-anaphora RD, according to Guo, "provides some additional information about the identity of the referent" (Guo, 1999: 1111). An example is provided in (72), where Guo argues that the utterance would have been perfectly acceptable without the addition of an RD, for the referent was already clear from the context.

72. [Ø]ᵢ 都在哪儿呢，[我那个]ᵢ？

    [Ø]ᵢ Dōu zài   nǎ'er ne   wǒ nà-ge?

        All be.at   where SFP 1SG that-CLF

    'Where is it, that one of mine?'   (Guo, 1999: 1111).

The elaboration type of coindexation represents an elaboration in the RD expression of a more continuous – "briefer" in Guo (1999) – form in the main clause. An example is given in (73), wherein the demonstrative *zhè* 这 'this' refers cataphorically to the more discontinuous form *zhè yīnyuè* 这音乐 'this music':

73. [这]$_i$不是做操，[这音乐]$_i$。

    [Zhè]$_i$bú shì zuò-cāo,   [zhè yīnyuè]$_i$.

    This not be   do-exercise   this music

    'This is not (for) doing exercises, this music.'   (Guo, 1999: 1111)

However, a version of the elaboration type containing a personal pronoun in the main clause is possible, as in (74):

74. [它]$_i$再不服从，我就宰了[它]$_i$，[这个秤砣]$_i$。

    [Tā]$_i$ zài bù fúcóng, wǒ jiù zǎi-le   [tā]$_i$, [zhè-ge chèngtuó]$_i$.

    3SG.N   still not obey   1SG then kill-PERF 3SG.N this-CLF balance-weight

    'If it still doesn't obey me, then I'll kill it, this balance-weight.'   (Guo, 1999: 1113)

Finally, the reduplication type simply presents the same linguistic form both inside and at the right periphery of the main clause, with reduced prosody in the latter case. The expression can be a pronominal form (75), but also a full NP (76) (Guo, 1999: 1111-1112):

75. [你]$_i$没长眼睛啊，[你]$_i$？

    [Nǐ]$_i$ méi zhǎng yǎnjīng   a,   [nǐ]$_i$?

    2SG not grow   eyes   SFP 2SG

    'Don't you have eyes, you?'   (Guo, 1999: 1112)

76. [这剪刀]$_i$怎么两半了，[这剪刀]$_i$？

    [Zhè   jiǎndāo]$_i$ zěnme   liǎng bàn le, [zhè jiǎndāo]$_i$?

    This scissors how.come two   half SFP this scissors

    'How come this pair of scissors is broken, this pair of scissors?'   (Guo, 1999: 1111)

As one can also observe from the examples provided, most of the RD expressions in Guo (1999)'s corpus are NPs occurring sentence-initially – either subjects (72%) or preposed and *ba*-marked objects, viz. what he calls *topics* (16%). Guo (1999)'s data suggests that subjects – presumably functioning as G-Topics – are more likely to be resumed by elaborative or reduplicative forms, while the opposite is true for preverbal objects.

Postverbal objects are also found in this construction but not very commonly (2%), according to Guo (1999)'s data. The few occurrences in his corpus are elaborations (Guo, 1999: 1114), as in (74).

Adverbial forms are also rather infrequent in Guo's corpus (5% of the total amount of RDs), and they may or may not be resumed, but no overall information is available regarding their optional or required status in the argumental structure of the verb. In (77), the adverbial *zhèli* 这里 'here' is resumed by a more informative locative form, *shūbāo lǐ* 书包里 'in the bag',[118] while in (78) the adverbial *chā de shíhòu* 插的时候 'when (we) stick (it) in' assumedly gives a more detailed indication about the time initially referred to as *děng huǐ'r* 等会儿 ' in a little while':

77. [这里]ᵢ装着两个果果，[书包里]ᵢ。

    [Zhè-lǐ]ᵢ   zhǔang-zhe   liǎng-gè guǒguǒ, [shūbāo-lǐ]ᵢ.

    This-inside   contain-DUR   two-CLF fruit   bag-inside

    'Here there are two pieces of fruit, in the bag.'

78. [等会儿]ᵢ就弄出来了，[插的时候]ᵢ。

    [Děng huǐ'r]ᵢ   jiù nòng chū-lai-le,   [chā   de   shíhòu]ᵢ.

    Wait moment   just make exit-come-PERF   stick-in REL time

    'In a while it will (be made to) come out, when (we) stick (it) in.'   (Guo, 1999: 1113)

Finally, 5% of the total RDs are instances of vocatives, generally either presenting an elaborative or reduplicative relation with the coindexed form. An example is given in (79):

79. [李月]ᵢ，你怎么疯啊，[你]ᵢ？

    [Lǐ Yuè]ᵢ, nǐ   zěnme   fēng   a,   [nǐ]ᵢ?

    Li Yue   2SG how.come become.crazy   SFP 2SG

    'Li Yue, how come that you are so out of control, you?.'   (Guo, 1999: 1119)

However, whether in specific cases RD expressions are not resumed or cannot be resumed, and whether this only applies to some types or to the totality of items, is a different matter. To my knowledge, no other study on Mandarin Chinese has produced convincing results concerning the

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[118] Note that in Chinse *shūbāo lǐ* 书包里 'in the bag' does not prototypically qualify as a PP, for the element *lǐ* 里 'inside' is not technically a preposition, but something that has been analysed as a localizer (*fāngwèicí* 方位词) in traditional Chinese linguistics (e.g. Chao, 1968). These phrases containing a localizer have been argued to behave more like NPs than as PPs (Huang et al., 2009: 13). The equivalent PP form – *zài shūbāo lǐ* 在书包里'in the bag' – would contain the head-initial preposition *zai*. However, the status of prepositions and PPs is controversial in Chinese. For a discussion of the topic, see e.g. Djamouri et al. (2013) and Paul (2015b).

relation between coreferential form and syntactic role or discourse function of the right-detached expressions.

Finally, here too should be remined that *in-situ* sentence-final topics, which remain generally unaddressed in the literature on Mandarin Chinese, cannot be coindexed by definition, since no movement whatsoever is involved. An illustrative example is given below, wherein *búhuì tóngyì* 不会同意 'will not accept' is topicalized *in-situ* as a consequence of the main prominence falling on *duōbàn'er* 多半儿 'probably':

80. 呃, 她不会同 y- 'Yeah, she will not agree-'

    ^多半儿不会同意.

    DUŌBÀN'ER bú huì tóngyì.

    PROBABLY not will accept

    '[She] PROBABLY won't accept.'   (CallFriend/zho-m/5930)

2.2.1.2. Syntactic and grammatical function

Although most studies mainly focus on NP right dislocations, Guo (1999) has addressed both the issue of the syntactic function of the coindexed – overt or covert – form inside the clause discussed in the previous section, and the grammatical functions covered by the right-detached expressions in his corpus. As for the type of expressions found in RDs, many authors have pointed out their heterogeneity (Lu, 1980; Packard, 1986; Packard & Shi, 1986; Tai & Hu, 1991; Hu, 1995; Guo, 1999; Cheung, 2005, 2009; Wu, 2005; Lee, 2013, among others). In addition to NPs, prepositional phrases (PPs), pronouns (PNs) and vocative phrases (VocPs) are common, as they are in English and Italian. The following three examples contain respectively a right-detached PP, a PN and a VocP:

81. 你很客气，对我。

    Nǐ hěn kèqi, duì   wǒ.

    2sg very polite, towards 1SG

    'You're being so polite, to me.'   (Tai & Hu, 1991: 10)

82. 你还脱裤子啊，你？

    Nǐ   hái   tuō   kùzi a, nǐ

    2.SG even take-off pants SFP 2SG

    You are even going to take off your pants, you?'   (Guo, 1999: 1112)

83. 你也得收拾啊，我说，李艳。

Nǐ   yě děi   shōushí a,   wǒ shuō, Lǐ Yàn.

2SG   also must clean-up SFP 1SG say   Li Yan

'You also have to clean up, I say, Li Yan.'   (Guo, 1999: 1113)

In addition, adverbs (Advs) and adverbial phrases (AdvPs) are also commonly found in RDs, as shown in (84)- (85):

84. 他什么都不会，简直!

 Tā   shénme dōu bú huì,   jianzhi!
3SG.M   what   all not be.able.to simply
'He simply doesn't know how to do anything!'   (Wang, 2012: 77)

85. 你不要灰心，照我看。

Nǐ   bú yào huīxīn,   zhào   wǒ kàn.
2SG not need be.discouraged according.to 1SG see
'You don't have to get discouraged, in my opinion.'   (Tai & Hu, 1991: 101)

Arguably less common but still possible are VPs (86) and different types of verb-headed phrases and complement clauses, such as the subject clause in (87):

86. 都岔气了，笑得!

Dōu   chàqì-le,   xiào   de
All   interrupt-breath-PERF laugh DE
(I'm) all out of breath, (that much I) laughed/from laughing![119]   (Deng & Xu, 2007: 135)

87. 太有所谓了，有你没有你。

Tài yǒu suǒwèi le, yǒu nǐ   méi   nǐ .
Very have matter SFP have 2SG   not.have 2SG
'It matters so much, you being there or not.'   (Zhang & Fang, 2020: 77)

2.2.1.3. Multiple and partial constituents

It is not infrequent for contributions on Chinese RDs to open their argumentation by pointing out their "oddness" with respect to English. In addition to the coreferentiality issue, it is frequently pointed out

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[119] The preposed part represents the resultative complement of the postposed verb, which is followed by the structural particle *de* 得. The canonical structure of this resultative complement is V-*de*-result (Huang et al., 2009: 82).

that Chinese RDs host i) a wide variety of elements; ii) multiple constituents, and iii) partial constituents (e.g. Lee, 2013).

Contrary to what is assumed in most papers on Chinese RDs (i.a. Hu, 1995; Wu, 2005; Luke & Zhang, 2007; Lee, 2013; Luke, 2012), it has already been argued that the variety of elements found in RD constructions is well documented from a cross-linguistic perspective (see § 1.2.2.3).

Equally documented from a cross-linguistic perspective are RDs containing only partial constituents, i.e. expressions that do not qualify as constituents. In § 1.2.2.3 it has also been pointed out that these cases often exhibit highly-specialized and grammaticalized linguistic forms – such as the French preposition *comme* 'as' and the Italian *di* 'of' preceding a right-detached nominal element – wherein it would be impossible to fit the right-detached constituent into its canonical position (Lambrecht, 2001: 1063-1064). A similar observation was made by Tai & Hu (1991) and Hu (1995) concerning some highly grammaticalized RD constructions that cannot be "reinverted" because of the idiomatic meaning they have acquired in spoken Beijing Mandarin:

88. 几点了，都？

    Jǐ   diǎn-le,   dōu?
    How.many hours-PERF already
    'What time is it?   (Tai & Hu, 1991: 78)

Although Tai and Hu argue that utterances as (88) cannot be considered cases of *inverted sentences* on a par with (89), for instance, I believe that this is more likely evidence that idiosyncratic uses of the RD construction can in fact lead to the crystallization of highly idiomatic expressions.[120]

89. 哪有功夫啊，这都！

    Nǎ   yǒu   gōngfu ya,   zhè dōu!
    Where have time   SFP   this even
    'Where on earth can I find the time!'   (Tai & Hu, 1991: 97)

As argued in the same section (1.2.2.3), the right dislocation of multiple constituents is also possible across the languages. Hence, sentences such as those in (90) and (91) are again not a peculiar characteristic of Chinese RDs:

90. Hoi   saam go   wui   gwaa, keoi   gamjat.
    Open three CLF meeting SFP   3.SG.M   today

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[120] Evidence of this kind of process is well-documented in English, for example (Traugott & Dasher, 2002; Traugott 2016 on utterance tags and general extenders).

'He had three meetings today.' (L. Cheung, 2009: 201)

91. 折了，那不？

Shé-le, nà bù?

Broken-PERF that not

'That will break, won't (it)?' (Packard & Shi, 1986: 4)

However, it should also be pointed out that the latter two examples are discussed as instances of leftward focalization (e.g. Packard, 1986; L. Cheung, 2009), viz. as instances of *focus fronting* (FF) not limited to a single constituent. According to L. Cheung (2009), since Cantonese lacks sentential stress, which he calls Nuclear Stress (NS), Chinese – Mandarin and Cantonese – are argued to mark focus by moving the constituent or constituents that are part of the focus to what he calls Dislocation Focus Construction, viz. the left part of the utterance which can contain from a single constituent to a whole VP, with the exclusion of the subject and any adjoined adjunct clause (L. Cheung, 2009: 24-25). While I cannot speak for Cantonese, the Mandarin examples provided throughout this section do not clearly defy this view, i.e. in all the cases in which a canonical preverbal subject is found in an RD construction, it is resumed either with a pronominal or reduplicative form, which entails a clause-external status of the RD constituent and qualifies it as a different construction, as argued in another paper of L. Cheung (L. Cheung, 2015: 228).

However, a closer look at examples throughout the literature on Mandarin shows that it is possible to have preverbal adjuncts in the RD part, while also having a subject in the left-hand part, as in (92):

92. 我早就不放在心上了, 以前的事。

Wǒ zāo jiù bú fàng-zài-xin-shang-le, yǐqián de shì'er

1sg early just not take.to.heart-PERF before ATTR things

'I don't care about it anymore, the past.' (Zhou, 2008: 79)

Conversely, it is not possible to have elements representing the "most deeply embedded word" (Cheung, 2009: 25), i.e. focal, in the RD segment, since the latter has by definition a reduced prosody.[121]

Predictably enough, Cheung (2009)'s view on Mandarin and Cantonese – which is endorsed for Cantonese also by Law (2003) and T. Lee (2017), among others – is all but unchallenged in the literature on Mandarin, since most of the formal studies agree that focus fronting is only possible in

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[121] Note that prominence on the right-dislocated part would immediately render it focal, conveying an additional illocutionary force, hence a new information unit following (see for example Chafe, 1976).

Mandarin if signalled by a focus marker (see for instance Gao, 1994; Badan & Del Gobbo, 2010; Paul, 2015a).

Lee (2013: 14-15) argues that while Cheung (2009) is on the right track considering focus (as are Tai & Hu, 1991, and Hu, 1995), his analysis still does not explain why RD phrases are optional and mainly colloquial, in other words, if the RD construction were indeed the alternative way to mark the thematic structure of a sentence in a language lacking the possibility of using sentential stress, the question arises as to why this construction is never found in written varieties of Chinese. In addition, as argued in Chapter 1, § 4.2, Mandarin Chinese does have prosodic prominence, although the prosodic cues involved are lengthening, pitch range and intensity amplitude, rather than pitch accent.

2.2.1.4. Extra-clausality

The *inversion* account for Chinese RDs is somehow misleading if we take into account right-peripheral expressions that are resumed by a non-zero form. As discussed by Ward & Birner (2019), inversion generally imposes an information status-driven relative constraint on the order of two constituents, thus there is no place for resumption in such constructions. This is also argued in Guo (1999: 11):

> It might be more accurate to view the right-dislocated form as a copied form coreferential with the implicit subject of the main clause, rather than the subject of the main clause that has been moved to the end of the sentence.
> (Guo, 1999: 1111)

Guo (1999)'s definition is in line with the extra-clausal status of the right-detached constituents argued in 1.2.2.1 for English and Italian.

This view is also maintained in Lee (2013: 8), according to whom "they are extrasyntactic, in that they fall outside the main clause constituency, i.e., are not governed by the main clause", and in Lim (2014), who analyses Chinese RD within the broad category of *incremental sentences*. When referring to the zero-resumed RDs – his *insertables* – Lim argues that "one possible reason for the large numbers of NPs and pronominals seen as insertables might be due to the "pro-drop" status of the Chinese language, which allows for grammatical subject or topic to be omitted if the referent is clear from the conversational context" (Lim, 2014: 78).

Of the same opinion is Wu (2005: 252) who also argues – from the angle of dynamic syntax – that "there is no movement, leftward or rightward, occurring in this sort of structure".

A further factor often called upon to demonstrate the extra-clausality of Mandarin RDs is the fact that sentence-final particles cannot follow but must necessarily precede the right-detached expression (Lu, 1980; Packard 1986; Packard & Z. Shi, 1986; Tai & Hu 1991; Hu, 1995; Guo, 1999; Wu, 2005;

Cheung, 2009; Lee 2013, among others). The presence of sentence-final particles was frequent among the RD examples provided throughout § 2. One more is provided here for the reader's reference:

93. 找着了吗, 你的书?

Zhǎozháo-le ma, nǐ de shū?

Find-PERF SFP 2SG POSS book

'Did you find it, your book?' (Zhou, 2008: 80)

Nonetheless, if one adopts a broad pragmatic notion of *topic*, it is easy to observe that SFP marking is not a reliable criterion for ruling out right-hand topics clausality, since sentence-final particles can occur even after a topical non-detached constituent, as shown in (94), wherein (dōu) yòng (都)用 '(all) use' is followed by the SFP *ma* 嘛 despite its topical status:

94. 就是 computer 简直^高中生都都都 h- 都用嘛.

Jiùshì computer jiǎnzhí GĀOZHŌNG-SHĒNG dōu dōu h- dōu yòng ma

Just.be computer simply HIGH.SCHOOL-STUDENTS all all h- all use SFP

'Computers, even HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS can use them.' (CallFriend/zho-m/5784)

2.2.1.5.Case-marking, hanging topics and unlinked topics

Contrary to Lambrecht (2001:1071), according to Zhou (2008)'s contribution, unlinked topics can be found in the Mandarin RD construction. That is to say, the two most controversial examples in the literature on Chinese topics would appear to also have their RD version:

95. 幸亏消防队员来得快, 那场火。

Xìngkuī xiāofang-duì lái de kuài, nà-chǎng huǒ

Fortunate fire-brigade come DE quickly, that-CLF fire

'Fortunately the fire-brigade came quickly, [during] that fire.'

96. 树身大, 那些树木。

Shùshēn dà, nà-xiē shùmù.

Trunks big that-CLF trees

The(ir) trunks are big, those trees. Zhou (2008: 79)

This implies that not only adjunct phrases, but also constituents that are not directly coindexed with a position inside the clause, can be found at the right periphery of the clause. However, the possibility that RDs host hanging topics, viz. constituents which do not have the same case-marking of their

coreferential clause-internal counterparts, has not been addressed in the literature, at least as far as I can ascertain, nor have such cases emerged from any example provided in the literature. This certainly remains a task for future research.

2.2.2. Cognitive constraints on RD referents

Regarding the cognitive constraints on the RD construction, they tend to be taken for granted or completely disregarded in the literature. For example, Zhou (2010), while mentioning the possibility for unlinked topics to occur in the construction, also specifies that the utterance is not acceptable if the topic is new, i.e. RDs are not suitable for topic-shifting or contrast, since they cannot receive prosodic prominence.

> 所有能够充当常规话题的名词性成分都可以充当句末话题, 在语义角色上并不存在差异 [...] 跟"左向移位句"或"话题化结构"不同的是, 处于"句末话题"位置上的词汇形式一般不能重读, 因此不能用来指示"对比性话题" (contrastive topic) 或"话题转移" (topic shift)。
>
> All noun phrases that can act as regular topics can act as sentence-final topics, with no difference in semantic roles [...] Unlike "left dislocation" or "topicalization", lexemes used as sentence-final topics cannot have phonetic stress, and therefore cannot be used to indicate a "contrastive topic" or a "topic shift".
>
> (Zhou, 2010: 32-33)

According to him, this is a matter of accessibility:

> 只有话题所指是"活跃的" (active) 或"准活跃的" (quasi-active) 情况下, 暂时"把握"命题内容才容易实现。这也就解释了为什么几乎所有的"句末话题结构"都要求话题所指处于较高的可及状态 (highly accessible)。
>
> Tentative "grasping" of the propositional content is easy to achieve only if the topic referent is "active" or "quasi-active". This explains why almost all sentence-final topic constructions require the topic referent to be highly accessible.
>
> (Zhou, 2010: 33)

One of the examples provided by Zhou is (97a), wherein the utterance is unacceptable if the NP *zhè gè diànyǐng* 这个电影 is read with the same intonation it has at the left periphery (97b):

97. a. *看了不痛快，<u>这个电影</u>。

       Kàn-le   bù tóngkuài, <u>zhè-ge</u> <u>diànyǐng</u>.

       watch-PERF not happy   this-CLF movie

       'It's unpleasant to watch, this movie.'

    b.   <u>这个电影</u>， 看了不痛快。

       <u>Zhè-ge</u> <u>diànyǐng</u>, kàn-le   bù   tóngkuài.

This-CLF movie   watch-PERF   not   happy

'This movie, it's unpleasant to watch.'   (Zhou, 2010: 33)

A more detailed account is provided in Lee (2013), whose proposal hinges both on information-structural and syntactical considerations. In order to account for the lack of syntactical integrity sometimes observed in Chinese RDs (e.g. multiple partial constituents), Lee (2013) proposes an informational hierarchy – to account for both Mandarin and English data – in terms of which RDs are contended to acquire structural coherence. In other words, the elements found in the RD construction are not coherent in terms of syntactic constituency but are coherent in terms of information structure. The information in the RD, according to Lee, never consists of *primary focus* – viz. a constituent under narrow focus, either contrastive (his *special focus*) or not (his *new focus*) – but can consist of what he calls *secondary special focus* and *secondary new focus* (Lee, 2013: 39-40). Whenever the RD comprises more than one element, it follows the following hierarchy:

Topic>inferable>secondary new focus>secondary special focus>topic + inferable>topic + secondary new focus> topic + secondary special focus   (Lee, 2013: 40-41)

As can be observed from the hierarchy proposed, Lee (2013) argues that multiple RD constituents follow a topic-comment pattern. For example, he identifies (98) as having a topic + secondary special focus sequence in the RD part, with *Zhāngsān* 张三 'Zhangsan' being topic and *zhǐ jiè-le* 只借了 'only borrowed' being secondary special focus:

98. 那本小说吧，张三只借了。

    Nà-běn   xiǎoshuō ba, Zhāngsān   zhǐ   jiè-le.
    That-CLF   novel   SFP   Zhangsan   only   borrow-PERF
    'Zhangsan only borrowed the novel (and nothing else).'

                (Cheung, 2009: 213, quoted in Lee, 2013: 41).

To say it in Lombardi Vallauri (2009)'s words, only ancillary material that does not fulfil the illocutionary purpose of the utterance can be found in RDs. If the utterance is intended to have narrow or argument-focus, all the remaining material can be produced at the end of the utterance, if it is meant to have a predicate-focus, all the preverbal constituents can be right-detached, etc.

However, as Lee himself points out, his discussion is based on short and out-of-context examples, which makes it difficult to assess the real IS status of the referents involved in the RDs, which can only be assumed. At the end of the paper, Lee calls for research carried out on naturally-occurring data:

Most studies on RD have only examined isolated sentences apart from context, and as mentioned, more contextual analysis of RD phrases in natural corpora is needed. (Lee, 2013: 45)

2.3. The increment account: a conversation-analytic approach

One framework of analysis that has been rather productive in the study of Chinese RDs is that of Conversation Analysis (CA) (i.a. Schegloff, 1968; Schegloff and Sacks, 1973; Sacks, 1992). RD constructions have been addressed within this field from the macro point of view of their contribution to the turn-taking system in dialogical interactions. More specifically, RDs are seen as turn-constructional unit (TCU) continuations, fragments of information that are produced by the speaker after the possible completion of her/his turn, i.e. in a transition relevant place (TPR) (Lim, 2014: 3). They do not qualify as independent TCUs, but are tied to the prior TCU to different extents. Drawing on previous models of CA, Couper-Kuhlen & Ono (2007) propose a TCU model wherein zero-anaphoric and elaborative/reduplicative RDs are respectively identified with *insertables* – items that can be reinserted in a position inside the previous talk – and *replacements* – replacing a piece of information of the previous talk – both pertaining to the *add-on* type of continuations. They are distinguished from *non-add-ons*, syntactically and prosodically continuous fragments of talk, if a prosodic break – which "can mean anything from a change in pitch, loudness, tempo/rhythm to a registrable pause of silence after possible completion" (Lim, 2014: 11) – is identifiable between the *host* TCU and the *further talk* (Lim, 2014: 11-12; Luke & Zhang, 2007: 607-608).[122] According to Luke & Zhang (2007: 613), disregarding the possible prosodic break, all TCU continuations can be distinguished from new TCUs based on four factors: i) discontinuous syntax; ii) subordinate intonation; iii) retrospective orientation; iv) non-focus IS status. This suggests that they have all the characteristics of genuine topical information.

The retroactive orientation of these TCU-continuations is highly significant, since it implies that their function is not projected towards whatever follows in the conversation, rather they are meant to have some sort of influence on the preceding talk. As discussed in Lim (2014:), Schegloff (1996: 90) refers to this kind of retroactive alignment as *post-completion stance markers*.

Moreover, the importance of the CA approach to RDs lies in the identification of a number of functions played by TCU continuations at the level of real-time interaction between interlocutors and turn-taking organization. Four important functions have been suggested for Mandarin Chinese in Lim

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[122] Note that both *add-ons* and *non-add-ons* are characterized by subordinate intonation, hence topical and distinguishable from new TCUs.

(2014): i) clarifying or disambiguating; ii) modifying stances; iii) reformulating the sequential action; iv) securing recipient uptake.[123] While the clarifying and disambiguating function has long been attributed to *afterthoughts*, the other three categories are worthy of a more detailed explanation.

The latter three functions, as shall be seen in § 3, are connected to a particular category of elements that are typically found in sentence-final position on a cross-linguistic basis, i.e. pragmatic markers (Traugott, 1982; Schiffrin, 1987; Fraser, 1996, among others).

With the term *stances* the Lim intends to capture a range of phenomena that have been labelled in a variety of ways in the literature, including *subjectivity* (Lyons , 1981; Langacker, 1990; Traugott, 1995) , *evidentiality* (Chafe & Nichols, 1996; Willett, 1988), *evaluation* (Hunston & Thompson 2000) and *epistemicity* (Thompson & Mulac 1991), among others. On a very broad view, it is argued that the use of specific expressions is meant to intensify or downgrade a certain type of attitude of the speaker (Lim, 2014: 165-166):[124]

> By modifying stances, I mean to capture generically the multifaceted and diverse ways in which TCU-continuations may be able to downgrade/qualify or upgrade/intensify some aspect of the speaker's "attitudes, feelings, judgements, or commitment" [Biber & Finegan, 1989: 92] as reflected in the host-TCU.
> (Lim, 2014: 166)

As a downgrading example, Lim (2014) includes (99), wherein the time adverb *xiànzài* 现在 'now' "sets up a comparative time frame between Socrates University of 'the present' with that 'of the past'" (Lim, 2014: 170), insinuating that the speaker's assertion only applies to the present. By doing so, the speaker can retroactively mitigate a potentially face-threatening act, i.e. one that openly contradicted the interlocutor's choice of the university to transfer to:

99. Matt: 那那不算很好啊。

    Na   na   bu suan hen hao   a.

    That   that not count very   good SFP

    'Hmmm that's not considered a very good (school).'

    […]

---

[123] Although Lim mainly discusses the category of *increments*, the four macro-functions performed by TCU continuations are not necessarily carried out by topical or right-detached elements. Lim discusses TCU continuations as a functional category referring to formally different expressions, possibly including some focal elements with non-subordinate intonation (for instance, Ex. (7) in Lim, 2014: 56).

[124] On a broad view, stance may refer to all these categories, distinguishing between e.g. *epistemic stance* (Kärkkäinen, 2006; Hsieh, 2009) or *epistemological stance* (Mushin, 2001), *attitudinal stance* (Biber & Finegan, 1989), *intersubjective stance* (Martin & White, 2005), *evaluative stance* (Englebretson, 2007; Du Bois, 2007), etc. One such view is adopted in Du Bois (2007: 163), who defines it as "a public act by a social actor, achieved dialogically through overt communicative means, of simultaneously evaluating objects, positioning subjects (self and others), and aligning with other subjects, with respect to any salient dimension of the sociocultural field".

我觉得不-那个 Socrates 挺好的，现在。

wǒ juéde bù nà-gè　　Socrates tǐng hǎo　　de, xiànzài.

1SG feel not that-CLF Socrates quite good SFP now.

'I think, no… well… Socrates University is quite good, now.'

(Adapted from Lim, 2014: 167)

The opposite is true for example (100). Here the right-detached expression is a complex phrase made of the NP *jiā-lǐ rén* 家里人 'family members' followed by the universal quantifier *dōu* 都 'all'. The RD replaces the initial subject NP *wǒ* 我 'I' in order to extend the applicability of the focus to all the members of the speaker's family, and thus emphasize and intensify the forcefulness of his assertion (Lim, 2014: 191):

100. 然后我从小吃醋，家里人都。

Ránhòu wǒ cóng　　xiǎo chī　　cù,　　jiā-lǐ　　rén　　dōu.

Then 1SG from small eat vinegar home-in people all

So I've taken vinegar since young, everyone in my family. (Lim, 2014: 191)

As for the function of reformulating the sequential action, the speaker identifies different occurrences of RDs containing expressions that have the function of retrospectively modifying the logical relation between an action and previously instantiated actions (Lim, 2014: 220). This can be observed in example (101), wherein *érqiě shì* 而且是 'in addition' is a linking device used to position the speaker's action within the line of action previously instantiated, i.e. validating the interlocutor's purchase decision (Lim, 2014: 233-234):

101.　　Matt: 但是我觉得你那个是买得挺好的。

Dànshì wǒ　　juéde nǐ nà-gè　　shì mǎi de tǐng hǎo de.

But 1SG think 2SG that-CLF be buy DE quite good SFP

'But I think the one you bought is quite a good buy.'

[…]

Matt: 你比我早一年买，而且是。

Nǐ　　bǐ　　wǒ zǎo　　yī nián mǎi, érqiě　　shì.

2SG comp 1SG early one year buy, furthermore be

'You bought it a year earlier than me, as well.' (Lim, 2014: 228-229)

The last function identified in Lim (2014) is that of securing or pursuing the recipient's uptake. This transparent label refers to the use of right-peripheral expressions to solicit the interlocutor in taking the floor. This function, widely documented in the literature on TCU continuations, is exemplified in

(102), wherein The NP *nà nánhái* 那男孩 'that little boy' is produced after a considerable pause in order to solicit the interlocutor's contribution to the talk, which nevertheless does not arrive. In fact, the interlocutor only produces a series of acknowledgement backchannels (Lim, 2014: 56-57).

102.　　Lian:　[然后他还说他说=

　　　　　Ránhòu　tā　hái　shuō　tā　shuō

　　　　　[then　　3SG still　say　　3SG say

　　　　　'And then he also said… he said'

　　Chen: [mm

　　Lian:　他的小孩两岁才开始讲话。

　　　　　Tā　de　　háizi　liǎng　suì　cái　　kāishǐ jiáng-huà

　　　　　3SG POSS　child　two　　age　only　start　speak-word

　　　　　'His child only started speaking when he was two.'

　　Chen:mm

　　Lian: 那个男孩。

　　　　　Nà　　nán　　hái.

　　　　　That　male　child

　　　　　'That little boy.'　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　(Lim, 2014: 56)

Luke (2012) recognizes a set of similar functions for Cantonese incremental sentences, based on the analysis of a corpus of Cantonese conversations, namely *intensification*, *emphasis*, *backgrounding*, *qualification*, *clarification*, and *disambiguation*. Luke proposes to view focus fronting (Packard, 1986; Law, 2003; Cheung, 2009) and afterthoughts not as competing notions but as two ends of a continuum,

> These span a spectrum of possibilities, with focus-fronting at one end, afterthought at the other, and several options in between including, but not confined to, intensification, providing background information, qualification and clarification and disambiguation. In terms of information status, the increment may carry given, accessible, or new information, with various possible shades in between.
>
> (Luke, 2012: 346)

A similar view is endorsed in J. Lu (2000, 2004), wherein RDs are included together with focus frontings in the category of *increments*, seen as a regular syntactic structure in Chinese:

> 作为把主要信息提到句首或者把辅助信息搁到句末的句法手段(即语序手段), 传统所说的倒装、
>
> 易位、追补、重复等应该归入一个大类, 称为"延伸句"。大类之下又分两个主要的小类, 即"焦

点前置句"和"追补句"(后者取代"主位后置句")。我们认为，与其用"倒装"来形容句子前后两个部分的关系，不如采用动态的观点，在时间轴上把后续部分看作先行部分的" 线上延伸"。

> As a syntactic means of putting the main information at the beginning of a sentence, or of putting supplementary information at the end of a sentence (i.e. word order), what are traditionally called inversions, transpositions, extensions, repetitions, etc., should be grouped into a broad category called "incremental sentences". There are two main subcategories under this category, namely "focus fronting" and "extensions" (the latter replacing "subject postposing"). Rather than using the term "inversion" to describe the relationship between the two parts of a sentence, we believe that it is better to take a dynamic view and – on the timeline – consider the postposed part as an "on-line extension" of the preposed part.
>
> (Lu, 2004: 3)

This is most certainly an appealing theory, and one cannot help but wonder if these functional classifications correspond to a different coding in terms of linguistic (dis)continuity of the incremental expressions, coreferentiality, prosodic features, etc.

2.4. The interpersonal account

The previous section has already introduced us to the line of research trying to take into account the *interpersonal* functions of RDs. Halliday & Matthiessen (2004: 29) define the interpersonal (meta)function of language as a matter of "enacting our personal and social relationships with the other people around us". They see it as a mode of language operating in addition to and in complementation with the *ideational* mode – which includes events, participants, and circumstances – and the *textual* component – which has an enabling or facilitating function, for it "helps to build up sequences of discourse, organizing the discursive flow and creating cohesion and continuity as it moves along" (Halliday & Mathiessen, 2004: 30):

> The clause of the grammar is not only a figure, representing some process — some doing or happening, saying or sensing, being or having — with its various participants and circumstances; it is also a proposition, or a proposal, whereby we inform or question, give an order or make an offer, and express our appraisal of and attitude towards whoever we are addressing and what we are talking about.
>
> (Halliday & Mathiessen, 2004: 29).

Assumedly, the scope of the adjective *interpersonal* is a rather broad one, and – when applied to RDs – can potentially comprise an array of elements, stemming from the expressions overtly addressing the interlocutor to those only implicitly managing some aspects of the interaction between the interlocutors.

Among the first scholars to discuss the interpersonal functions of Chinese RDs is Bourgerie (1991) who argues that the right-peripheral slot in Mandarin Chinese is in the process of being grammaticalized for the expression of *modality*.[125] Bourgerie was among the first who noticed not only the frequent occurrence of modal expressions in the RD construction – including modal auxiliaries, adverbs or verbs – and the possible co-occurrence of these expressions with sentence-final particles (SFPs), but also that both types express modal meanings. An example is provided in (103), where modality is redundantly expressed through the SFP *ba* 吧 and through the postposed adverb *dàgai* 大概 'probably':

103. 走了吧，大概。

    Zǒu-le   ba, dàgài.

    Leave-PERF   SFP probably

    '(He) has probably left.'   (Bourgerie, 1998: 141)

Based on the observation that "there is a tendency for modal information to be carried in the post-sentential slot or slots", Bourgerie contends that "the postposed modal elements along with other utterance-final modal devices seem to suggest some degree of grammaticalization of the utterance-final slot for modality" (Bourgerie, 1998: 144). Unfortunately, however, no further deepening of this intuition has been carried out by Bourgerie, to the best of my knowledge.

Among the few others that have addressed RDs from the interpersonal perspective, Guo (1999) has further contended that the information management account cannot by itself account for the distributional features of Mandarin Chinese RDs, "and a satisfactory explanation has to be found in its interpersonal affective function" (Guo, 1999: 1125). More specifically, Guo claims that a possible developmental path of the RD construction could have its origin in the afterthought function, from which it developed into a syntactic device for IS management. Successively, the construction developed an emphatic value, and finally an intensifying function – associated with a strong negative evaluation – found in specific speech acts such as ridicules and reprimands and sometimes directives, which Guo describes as "fulfilling interpersonal oriented discourse functions" (Guo, 1991: 1122). Thus, the construction has shifted from an original propositional to an expressive/interpersonal

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[125] Modality can be broadly defined as the speaker's attitude toward the propositional content (*p*) of the utterance. Generally recognized modalities are the *epistemic*, which qualifies *p* in terms of the speaker's belief and commitment (Lyons, 1977: 800), and *deontic*, which is concerned with "the necessity or possibility of acts performed by morally responsible agents" (Lyons, 1997: 823). More controversial is the status of *dynamic* modality, referring to "ability or willingness, which comes from the individual concerned" (Palmer, 2001: 10). Alternative influential classifications of modality are found in Coates (1983), Bybee & Fleischman (1995), van der Auwera & Plungian (1998), among others. For a more recent account of modality, see. e.g. Nuyts & van der Auwera (2016), and for a description of the Chinese modal system, see e.g. Qi (2002) and Sparvoli (2012).

function (Guo, 1991: 1126). While Guo is probably on the right track concerning the interpersonal-oriented nature of RDs, his claim about the negative connotation of RDs has often been criticized as an overgeneralization based on data coming from a very specific target of speakers, i.e. 7-year-old children (e.g. Wu, 2005: 225; Lee 2013: 13).

Importantly, however, the interpersonal nature of some RDs has also emerged from a handful of studies investigating the relation between sentence-final particles (SFPs) and RDs in Asian languages – a task mainly undertaken by Yap and her research group. Yap et al. (2014), have suggested similar pathways in the emergence of Chinese SFPs (e.g. Mandarin *le*) and what they call *utterance tags*, viz. sentence-final *epistemic*, *evidential* and *attitudinal markers* (e.g. Mandarin *wo juede* 'I think'; Cantonese *jan4dei6 waa6* 'people say'; Mandarin *kongpa* 'probably'). According to Yap and others, there are "six major restructuring processes that contribute to the rise of sentence final particles – i.e. pragmatic markers at the right periphery – in Chinese" (Yap et al., 2014: 182). Among these, right dislocation, clausal integration, and the combination of right dislocation and clausal combination are of particular relevance for the ongoing discussion. If Yap and others are correct, this view implies not only that there is a strong affinity between RDs and SFPs, but that some of the existing SFPs in Mandarin and Cantonese have developed through a process of RD. As an example, Yap and other discuss the case of *búguò* 不过 'but', which is described as a "concessive connective [that] is being right-dislocated for pragmatic reasons and thus appears at the right-periphery of the subordinate clause to attenuate the epistemic claims of the prior speaker" (Yap et al., 2014: 202). This particular use can be observed in (104):

104.   A: 明天问问他。

　　　　　Míngtiān   wèn-wèn   tā.

　　　　　Tomorrow ask-ask   3SG

　　　　　'(We'll) just ask him tomorrow.'

　　　　B: 他不回来不过。

　　　　　Tā   bú   huì   lái   búguò.

　　　　　3SG not   will come   however

　　　　　'He won't be coming here though.'　　　　　　　　　　(Yap et al., 2014: 203)

The process leading to the formation of this *utterance tag*, according to Yap and others, includes an initial stage where two clauses – a main and a subordinate one– are adjoined by means of the concessive connective *buguo*, a second stage in which the main clause is elided, and a third and final stage wherein the sentence-initial *buguo* is right-detached in sentence-final position, bringing into existence an insubordinate – i.e. an independent – clause with an utterance tag (Yap et al., 2014: 17).

Stage 1 (bi-clausal concessive):	Main clause + *buguo* subordinate clause
Stage 2 (main-clause ellipsis)	*buguo* subordinate clause
Stage 3 (right-dislocation of concessive connective ⇒insubordinated clause with utterance tag)	Insubordinate clause *buguo*

Table 7: Stages in the development of Mandarin concessive buguo (Adapted from Yap et al., 2014: 204)

The previously mentioned studies by Lu (2000, 2004, 2005) also provide an account of RDs – mainly based on Cantonese data – relating them to sentence-tags. According to Lu, these two constructions, together with focus fronting, can all be subsumed under the label of incremental sentences, for all of them: i) are made of a preposed and a postposed part, ii) have the main information expressed in the preposed part and auxiliary information in the postposed part, and iii) bear stress on the preposed part and subordinate intonation on the postposed part (Lu, 2004: 3-4).[126]

From the perspective of cognitive grammar, Xi & Zhang (2008: 11) describe RD as a marked type of construction (in the sense of Givón, 1990) that the speakers use in a principled way, i.e. with a specific purpose in mind. Xi and Zhang identify four connected and possibly overlapping functions for the construction, all of which can be said to belong to the interpersonal sphere of language: i) mitigating function (*biǎodá miànzi nuǎnhuoyǔ góngnéng* 表达面子暖和语功能), ii) politeness function (*zhuībǔ lǐmào gōngnéng* 追补礼貌功能), iii) challenging function (*biǎodá zhìyí góngnéng* 表达质疑功能), and iv) discourse-constructional function (*biǎodá yǔpiān gōngnéng* 语篇建构功能).

More specifically, the mitigating function refers to expressions being used in sentence-final position to negate or reject what is being said by the interlocutor in an indirect and implicit way. In the following example, Xi and Zhang argue that in addition to emphasizing the information focus contained in the host clause (*kēshuì-le* 瞌睡了 'feel sleepy'), the son is also putting forth a strong individual opinion that the mother should take into consideration. However, the difference between (105a) and (105b) resides in the more indirect and mild way of the son rejecting the mother's request in the former case (Xi & Zhang, 2008: 11-12).

105. 母亲：今晚最好把作业做完。

'Mother: You better finish your homework tonight.'

儿子： a: 有点儿瞌睡了，我。

Son:	Yǒu	diǎn'er	kēshuì-le,	wo.
	Have	a.bit	sleepy-PERF,	1SG

---

[126] From the generative grammar angle, Tang (2015, 2016, 2018) also suggests a common syntactic derivation for SFPs, utterance tags, and incremental sentences.

'(I) feel a bit sleepy, me.'

b: 我有点儿瞌睡了。

Wǒ yǒu diǎn'er kēshuì-le.

1SG have a.bit sleepy.

'I feel a bit sleepy.' (Xi & Zhang, 2008: 11)

The politeness function is achieved by retrospectively integrating the utterance from the point of view respect and courtesy strategy by means of elements such as *máfan nín* 麻烦您 'would you mind' and *bùmán nǐshuō* 不瞒你说 'to tell you the truth', while the challenging function covers the use of interrogative items overtly addressing the interlocutor, such as *nǐ zhīdào* 你知道 'you know', *nǐ rénwei* 你认为 'you think', *nǐ yǐwéi* 你以为 'you thought', *nǐ cāicai-kàn* 你猜猜看 '(you) guess what', etc., whose function of questioning or even rejecting the interlocutor's utterance frequently overlaps with that of turn-yielding and response-inviting belonging to the fourth type. Other expressions belonging to the discourse-constructional type are *píng shénme* 凭什么 'why; on what grounds', *wèi shénme* 为什么 'why', *wèishá* 为啥 'why', etc., which emphasize the information focus, while also expressing an evaluation about it, such as unsatisfaction or determination to gain profit, as in (106):

106. 张启功：最后结果开会已经定了，我也没办法。

'Zhang Qigong: In the end it turns out that it has already been decided during the meeting, there's nothing I can do about it.'

宋建新：他一级我二级，凭什么？

Sòng Jiànxīn: Tā yī jí, wǒ èr jí, píng shénme?

Song Jianxin: 3SG one level 1SG two level based.on what

'Song Jianxin: He's first and I'm second, on what grounds?' (Xi & Zhang, 2008: 13)

Here the expressions occurring in the RD construction are not analysed in terms of their syntactic properties, but Xi and Zhang do make reference to a possible affinity between the expressions fulfilling a politeness function and pragmatic markers (Xi & Zhang, 2008: 12).

From the above an overall picture comparable to the one of § 1 has emerged, viz. the interpersonal account of RDs leads towards a functional convergence of different types of structures at the right periphery of the sentence: sentence-final particles, right-dislocations, sentence-tags and other pragmatic markers all seem to take part in the management of the relationship between the interlocutors in naturally occurring and online conversations.

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In the following two sections, I shall attempt to come to a deeper understanding of these other elements so closely connected with RDs.

3. Pragmatic markers

Since a tight connection has emerged between different kinds of postposed constituents, modal particles, utterance tags and pragmatic markers, we can but try and dig a bit further into their relationship.

The interpersonal function attributed to RDs has opened the path to another widely debated and extremely complex field of investigations, that of *pragmatic markers* or *discourse markers*.

Starting with Schourup (1982) and Schiffrin (1987), a new line of research has emerged which is concerned with elements at the periphery of speech units such as the conversational turn or the utterance (Traugott, 2015: 119). *Discourse markers* have been influentially defined as "sequentially dependent elements which bracket units of talk" (Schiffrin 1987: 31) – emphasizing their discourse-related functions. Also influential is Fraser (1990)'s definition of *discourse markers* as a sub-category of *pragmatic markers*. The latter group is concerned with "linguistically encoded information of sentence meaning [which] provides an indication of the direct, literal messages intended by the speaker" (Fraser, 1996: 167) , viz. with "signals of the speaker's communicative intentions" (Fraser, 1990: 386), while the former represent "a class of expressions, each of which signals how the speaker intends the basic message that follows to relate to the prior discourse" (Fraser, 1990: 387).

Nonetheless, at present, no universal agreement has been reached as to the most appropriate term for these elements, to the point that Dér (2010 : 5-10) identifies forty-two different labels in English. However, among the most frequent – in addition to *discourse/pragmatic markers* –are the terms *discourse particles* and *pragmatic particles* (Brinton, 2017: 3). In this volume, the term pragmatic markers (henceforth PMs) is preferred to discourse markers, since, as argued in Traugott (2015: 120), they assumedly represent a larger and more inclusive category. In addition, the *particle* variant has been excluded for three main reasons: i) its not always applicable association with short and monosyllabic items; ii) its association with specific items of Chinese grammar, such as *structural particles* and *sentence-final particles*, and iii) its emergent use in association with a restricted number of retrospective expressions (e.g. Haselow, 2012).

As Fraser (1999: 932) pointed out, the field of PMs has become a "growth industry in linguistics" in recent years, with a remarkably considerable corpus of related literature, more and more data from previously unaddressed languages and textual types becoming available, and with new lexical members being constantly recruited from other categories (Aijmer, 2014: 199-203). Moreover, the

characteristics, functions, and members of these categories are continuously being debated and updated with an ever-growing body of literature, which induced Fischer (2006: 1)'s remark that "it is almost impossible to find one's way through the jungle of publications".

3.1. Major approaches to PMs and related notions

A number of classifications have been proposed in the literature, each of which has proved to have both advantages and disadvantages in shaping the description of these elements. Among the most relevant are the studies taking a semantic/pragmatic approach (Fraser, 1990, 1996, 2009), a discourse-functional approach (Schiffrin, 1987; Aijmer, 1996), a relevance approach (Blakemore, 1987, 2002; (Ifantidou, 2001), and a diachronic approach (Brinton, 1996, 2017; Traugott, 1982, 2010; Traugott & Dasher, 2002).[127]

The pivotal features for the definition of PMs have been declined differently in each perspective of study. Fraser (1996) takes an extremely broad view, describing PMs as everything else in a sentence that cannot be considered as propositional meaning, i.e. as part of the "proposition, perhaps complex, which represents a state of the world which the speaker wishes to bring to the addressee's attention (Fraser, 1996: 167).[128] Here the crucial opposition is that between *propositional content* versus *procedural content*, which follows Blakemore (1987)'s initial distinction between conceptual and procedural meaning as equivalent to *truth-conditional* and *non-truth-conditional* respectively. In other words, while propositional content can be presented as either true or false, non-propositional content "do not contribute to the truth conditional content of the assertions of which they are part" (Asher, 2000: 31). This latter category comes to be identified in Fraser (1996) with the term *pragmatic*, since it subsumes different types of "linguistically encoded clues which signal the speaker's communicative intention" (Fraser, 1996: 168). The PMs are divided by Fraser in four major groups.

The first group is that of *basic markers*, signalling the illocutionary force of the sentence, viz. the type of action that the speaker performs by producing the statement (Lombardi Vallauri, 2009a: 16).[129] It includes *structural basic markers*, i.e. structural markers of illocutionary force, what Fraser

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[127] This is by no means intended to be an exhaustive list of the contributions on PMs. Rather, the following section will focus on a limited number of works and notions which are instrumental to a better understanding of the relationship between PMs and RDs.

[128] The concepts of *proposition* and *propositional meaning* have their roots in philosophy. In linguistics, a proposition is generally understood as the "sense of a declarative sentence, with all ambiguity, vagueness and deixis resolved, so that a definite truth value may be assigned" to it (Crystal, 2008: 392), viz. it can be either *true* or *false*. Drawing on Brunot (1922), Bally (1932) introduces the influential distinction between *modus* – the modality – and *dictum* – the propositional or representational content – of an utterance (Gosselin, 2015: 1).

[129] According to the theory of *speech acts* introduced in linguistics by Austin (1962) and perfected by Searle (1976), language is an instrument of action: whenever we utter a statement, we do not simply transmit information but we carry

calls *mood*,[130] *lexical basic markers – performative expressions* modifying the reality status of a proposition, and *pragmatic idioms* signalling the intended illocutionary force – and *hybrid lexical markers* in between the two types, such as sentence tags and indirect speech act markers (Fraser, 1996: 171-179). An example of each category is given throughout (107)-(109). (107) simply expresses a question at the structural level, (108) contains the standardized *please* conveying an indirect speech act, and (109) contains a positive tag question.

107. *Did* you see him?

108. Can you *please* help me?

109. John didn't see Mary, *did he*?   (Fraser, 1996: 172-177)

The second group is that of *commentary markers*, providing a comment on the basic message conveyed by the sentence. This includes lexical expressions which, according to Fraser have both a propositional meaning specifying an entire message, and a pragmatic meaning signalling that this message functions as a comment on some aspect of the basic message (Fraser, 1996: 179). The array of elements subsumed is wide, including speaker-oriented adverbs (110), epistemic markers (111), evidential markers (112), mitigation (113) and emphasis markers (114) (Fraser, 1996: 180):[131]

110. *Frankly*, you need to stop.

111. *Certainly*, Harry will go.

112. *Reportedly*, the game was postponed because of rain.

113. *If you don't mind*, bring it to me about 7 this evening.

114. *Where on earth* are my slippers?   (Fraser, 1996: 180-184).

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out an action such as asserting, asking, making a request, expressing a state of mind, etc. (Andorno, 2005: 62-63). Among the many types of illocutionary force that can be performed, the five major groups identified in Searle (1976) are *representatives* – representations of (various degrees of) the speaker's belief and commitment to something being the case – *expressives* – expressions of the speaker's psychological state about a state of affairs expressed in the proposition – *directives* – attempts to get the hearer to do something – *commissives* – attempts to commit the speaker to a future course of action – and *declarations* – alterations in the status or conditions of something in the real world by the sole means of successfully uttering the declaration (Searle 1979: 10-14). Despite the close correlation between illocutive and sentence types, the two concepts are not equivalent: a representative/affirmative sentence usually serves to state, just as an interrogative sentence serves to question, but this is not always the case. Potentially, an affirmative sentence can express any kind of act, as long as the content or context in which it is inserted allows it (Fava & Salvi, 1995: 49).

[130] According to Fraser, English has three basic syntactic types in terms of *mood*: declarative, imperative and interrogative. Despite the generalized use of this term in the English literature (e.g. Halliday), *mood* primarily refers to a *mode* of the verb in Romance languages – e.g. indicative, imperative, optative, etc. – and represents one of the chief means of expressing *modality*. However, neither mood nor modality should be conflated with illocution, for they are different – although overlapping – categories: as Pietrandrea (2002) suggests, following Venier (1991) and Cresti (2002), both modality and illocution express an attitude of the speaker, but with regards to different entities: the former towards the proposition, the latter towards the interlocutor (Pietrandrea, 2002: 14-16).

[131] The labels employed do not faithfully report the original ones, since they are not always coherent with more recent studies on illocution and modality.

Third, *parallel markers* convey an entire message in addition to the basic message of the sentence. This group includes what Fraser terms vocative markers (115), speaker displeasure markers (116) and solidarity markers (117) (Fraser, 1996: 185).

115. *Waiter*, please bring me another fork.

116. *John*. Come over here right now!

117. *My friend*, we simply have to get our act together and face this problem.

(Fraser, 1996: 185-186).

Finally, *discourse markers* specify how the basic message is related to the foregoing discourse. This category includes topic change markers (118), contrastive markers (119), elaborative markers (120), and inferential markers (121):

118. *Speaking of Marsha,* where is she these days?

119. Jane is here. *However*, she isn't going to stay.

120. I think you should cool off a little. *In other words*, sit down and wait a little bit.

121. A: Marsha is away for the weekend.

    B: *So*, she won't be available Saturday. (Fraser, 1996: 186-188)

A major difference between *discourse markers* and the remaining *pragmatic markers* is that the former do not have any sort of representational meaning, but are merely procedural, while the latter are a combination of both (Fraser, 1996: 170).

In Schiffrin (1987)'s approach, *discourse markers* are defined as "non-obligatory utterance-initial items that function in relation to ongoing talk and text" (Maschler & Schiffrin, 2015: 191). Schiffrin's original work was corpus-based rather than theory-driven, hence the accent is on talk in interaction. This category of elements includes members of different word classes – conjunctions (e.g., *and*, *but*, *or*), interjections (e.g., *oh*), adverbs (e.g., *now*, *then*), and lexicalized clauses (e.g., *y'know*, *I mean*) – which are grouped together because of their functional characteristics: syntactically detachable, frequent initial position, range of prosodic contours (pause and phonological reduction), operate at both local and global levels, operate on different planes of discourse (Schiffrin, 1987: 328). In particular, according to Schiffrin, DMs are able to give coherence to discourse acting on five planes, frequently at the same time: *ideational structure*, *action structure*, *exchange structure*, *participation framework* and *information states*. In addition, DMs are able to contextualize utterances by virtue of their indexical nature, i.e. they act as *deictics*, referring either backward or forward (Schiffrin, 1987: 322-325). As an example, Schiffrin (2015: 57) argues that the use of *but* in (122) acts at the intersection of four different planes: "prefaces an idea unit ('intermarriages are healthy'), displays a participation framework (nonaligned with Jack), realizes an action (a rebuttal during an argument),

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and seeks to establish Freda as a current speaker in an exchange (open a turn at talking)".[132]

122. Jack:　[The rabbis preach,　["Don't intermarry"

　　　Freda: [But I did-　　　　[But I did say those intermarriages that we have in this

　　　　country are healthy.　　　　　　　　　　　　　(Maschler & Schiffrin, 2015: 57)

The opposition between propositional and non-propositional acquires a different connotation in Blakemore (2002) under the framework of relevance theory developed by Sperber & Wilson (1986, 1995), which is essentially an information processing model. According to Sperber and Wilson (1995: 107-125), the degree of relevance of an utterance in a context is high if its contextual effect is large and if the effort to process it in this context is small. *Contextual effect* is achieved whenever new information is combined with old information and it can be of three types: *contextual implication* allowing the derivation of a contextual implication, *contextual contradiction* eliminating a false assumption, and *contextual strengthening* reinforcing a previous hypothesis (Sperber and Wilson 1995: 107-125).[133]

Although Blakemore (1987) suggested an overlap of the terms *conceptual* and *procedural* with *truth-conditional* and *non-truth conditional* respectively, Blakemore (2002) explains that this is actually not the case, and that procedural encoding, as opposed to conceptual encoding, should be intended as a cognitive notion. More specifically, it represents "information about the intended cognitive effect, or, in other words, constraints on the results of the pragmatic inferences involved in the recovery of implicit content" (Blakemore, 2002: 4). Accordingly, Blakemore (2002) classifies DMs into three classes, each producing a different cognitive effect, i.e. a different way "in which new information *P* yields an improvement to a person's representation of the world" (Blakemore, 2002: 61). Hence, DMs like *so* and *therefore* introduce contextual implications, *but* and *however* contradict or eliminate previous assumptions, *after all* and *besides* strengthen existing assumptions. However, Blakemore points out, not all the expressions that have been labelled as DMs impose constraints on implicit meaning – some do so on explicitures (e.g. *well*) – nor can all these expressions be considered

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[132] According to Redeker (1991: 1140), however, the only relevant distinction is that between the propositional function of language – ideational – from the socio-pragmatic functions of action and exchange, the first of which relates to the sequential organization of speech acts, and the second to the management of turn alternation in discourse. Redeker suggests restructuring Schiffrin (1987)'s five planes into ideational, rhetorical and sequential, which are "roughly equivalent to Schiffrin's ideational and action structures and an extended variant of her exchange structure" (Redeker, 1991: 1167).

[133] The notion of *contextual implication* is connected with, but does not coincide with, that of *conversational implicature*. The former notion is assumedly wider than the second, for it includes not only inferences triggered by the communicative behaviour of the speakers and the expectations connected with Grice (1975)'s Conversational Maxims (Andorno, 2005: 98), but also with explicit content or *explicitures* (Blakemore, 1997: 94).

procedural, for some encode constituents or conceptual representations (Blakemore, 2002: 184-185).[134]

Finally, Traugott (1982)'s diachronic approach to PMs mainly focuses on paths of semantic change and reanalysis, viz. the processes that lead words or stretches of talk to acquire different or additional meanings over time. Specifically, Traugott (1982) applied Halliday & Hassan (1976)'s synchronic distinction between the ideational, textual and interpersonal components of language – which she re-termed as propositional, textual and expressive – to the diachronic processes involved in language change, showing that a number of linguistic items which originated in the ideational component of language later developed meanings belonging to the textual and interpersonal levels (Traugott, 2010: 1). This process has been termed *grammaticalization*, since it is argued to involve *bleaching* – i.e. semantic loss – and phonological loss (e.g. Givon, 1979)), or alternatively *pragmaticalization*, since "in the process of grammaticalisation, certain semantic properties may be reduced, but they are replaced by pragmatic strengthening" (Traugott, 2009: 48-49).[135]

However, in the wake of the increased availability of new theoretic and corpus-based data, Traugott has shifted her attention towards subjectification and intersubjectification, another pivotal distinction in the definition of DMs (Traugott, 2009: 47). These two notions cutting across Halliday & Hassan, 1976)'s interpersonal component have gained a certain visibility since the seminal work of Benveniste (1966) on *sujet d'énoncé* – syntactic subject – and *sujet d'énonciation* – speaking subject – and Lyons (1977, 1982, 1994)'s contribution on *subjectification*. [136] Specifically, Traugott's notion of subjectification refers to "a pragmatic-semantic process whereby meanings become increasingly based in the speaker's subjective belief state/attitude toward the proposition, in other words, towards what the speaker is talking about" (Traugott, 1989: 35; Traugott, 2009: 31), while intersubjectification is conceived as the process leading to the formation of meanings providing "for the locutionary agent's expression of his or her awareness of the addressee's attitudes and beliefs, most especially

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[134] The imperfect relation between procedural and non-truth-conditional expressions is recognized also in Ifantidou (2001).
[135] Specifically, *grammaticalization* is defined in Traugott & Hopper (1993) as "the process whereby lexical items or phrases come through frequent use in certain highly constrained local contexts to be reanalysed as having syntactic and morphological functions, and, once grammaticalized, continue to develop new grammatical functions (Traugott, 2009: 32).
[136] The concept of subjectification was also developed, importantly, by Langacker (1985, 1990) from the point of view of cognitive grammar, as the extent to which an entity or situation is grounded in the speaker's perspective, i.e. it is construed objectively or subjectively. As if describing a *viewing arrangement*, Langacker (1990: 7) describes an entity construed objectively as "salient by virtue of being placed *onstage* as the focus of attention", while a subjectively-construed entity "is implicit and hence non-salient – to use the theater metaphor, it remains *offstage* in the audience". In a maximally objective representation, the conceptualizer (the "viewer" at the theatre) and the Ground (the speech event, its participants, and its immediate circumstances) are external to the predication, but the Ground itself, or some facets of it, can be included in the predication, either *onstage* – in a less objective representation – or *offstage*, being left more or less implicit, *unprofiled* – in a more subjective representation (Langacker, 1990: 9-11).

their 'face' or 'self-image' (Traugott, 2010: 3). In this view, a *subjective* marker or expression is "the prime semantic or pragmatic meaning of which is to index speaker attitude or viewpoint", while an intersubjective one encodes the "speaker's attention to addressee self-image" (Traugott, 2010: 2). These are considered to be graded notions positioned on a continuum going from objective, passing through subjective and landing on intersubjective meaning. Traugott & Dasher (2002: 23) argue that (maximally) objective expressions in language display the following features:

    (i) they are declarative, i.e. minimally marked with regard to modality;

    (ii) all participants in an event structure are expressed in surface structure;

    (iii) lexical items are minimally concerned with the interlocutors' perspective (i.e. minimally deictic);

    (iv) the Q[uantity]-heuristic predominates, i.e. contexts for meanings are provided so that interpretation is strongly determined, and what is not said is implied not to be the case.[137]

<div align="right">(Traugott & Dasher, 2002: 22-23)</div>

While (maximally) subjective expressions are characterized by the following:

    (i) overt spatial, and temporal deixis;

    (ii) explicit markers of SP/W attitude to what is said, including epistemic attitude to the proposition;

    (iii) explicit markers of SP/W attitude to the relationship between what precedes and what follows; i.e. to the discourse structure (many aspects of discourse deixis are included here)

    (iv) The R[elevance]-heuristic predominates.   (Traugott & Dasher, 2002: 23)

Finally, (maximally) intersubjective expressions are distinguished by: [138]

    (i) overt social deixis;

    (ii) explicit markers of SP/W attention to AD/R, e.g. hedges, politeness markers, and honorific titles;

    (iii) The R[elevance]-heuristic predominates, i.e. what is said implies more is meant.

<div align="right">(Traugott & Dasher, 2002: 23)</div>

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[137] Traugott & Dasher (2002) identify three principles governing the choice of expressions and their interpretation in written or spoken interactions, based on Grice (1975)'s *maxims* and Horn (1984)'s *principles*: the *Q[uantity]-heuristic* approximately corresponds to Grice' Quantity Maxim 1, the *M[anner] heuristic* approximates Grices's Manner Maxim, while the *R[elevance] heuristic* is a combination of Grice's Relevance and Quantity Maxim 2. The latter, also called *Principle of Informativeness* in Levinson (1983), is theorized as follows: "Say/write no more than you must, and mean more thereby." (Traugott & Dasher, 2002: 18-19).

[138] Other influential definitions of intersubjectivity were proposed, among others, by Verhagen (2005) and Nuyts (2001, (Nuyts 2016)). While Verhagen (2005) sees intersubjectivity as an inherent property of the Ground (Langacker, 1987; 1990) of any linguistic utterance – in the sense that it "comprises two conceptualizers, the first performing the role of being responsible for the utterance, the second that of interpreting it" (Verhagen, 2005: 6) – Nuyts (2016: 36) proposes that (inter)subjectivity be considered an independent category, cutting across that of modality and evidentiality, which can be defined "in terms of personal vs. shared responsibility" over what is being said. Drawing on this, Tantucci (2013 and following works) further distinguishes between an immediate form of intersubjectivity – involving a shared evaluation between speaker and hearer – and an extended type of intersubjectivity – also involving an additional hypothetical singular or plural member of society indirectly supporting the speaker's proposition (Tantucci, 2015: 7).

In Traugott (1995) an important relation between sentence position and grammaticalization is put forth which suggests a cline of DMs grammaticalization: a sentence-internal adverb with conceptual/ideational/representational meaning may develop into a sentence adverb scoping over the whole sentence and then a discourse marker with syntactic and positional freedom (Traugott, 1995: 13). Although it is not necessarily the case, this cline may also coincide with an intersubjectification cline, going from sentence-internal objective meaning, to sentence-initial subjective meaning, to sentence-final or increased structural freedom with intersubjective meaning (Traugott, 2012).[139]

Apparently overlapping with Traugott's classification of subjective vs. intersubjective is the functional classification recently proposed by Aijmer (2013), who takes a variational approach to pragmatic markers, *viz.* a pragmatic approach focusing on the variation in language use with regard to social, cultural, and regional factors (Aijmer, 2013: 2). PMs are grouped into two macro-categories, according to two overarching functions: *self*-reflexivity, which is defined as a speaker-centered function in Rühlemann (2019: 85), and *contextualization*, a hearer-based function, according to Aijmer. Self-reflexivity is associated with the speaker's metalinguistic awareness "of what type of interaction they are involved in, if something goes wrong in the process, and what their attitudes are" (Aijmer 2013: 4). As Aijmer puts it,

> The speaker's cognitive processes are hidden to observation. However, pragmatic markers (and other devices) can emerge as overt indicators of (or windows on) ongoing metalinguistic activity in the speaker's mind.
>
> (Aijmer, 2013: 4)

Aijmer's contextualization function is transparently related to the context of utterance and resembles Schiffrin (1976)'s definition of DMs, since she argues that PMs of this group "typically mark off segments in the discourse thus helping the hearer to understand how the stream of talk is organised" (Aijmer, 2013: 6). They include expressions used "to signal the transition to a new topic, activity, argument, stage in a narrative, a new speaker in a debate, the drawing-to-a-close of a telephone conversation, etc." (Aijmer, 2013: 6). While the Traugottian classification sees the elements marking the relation between parts of discourse as expressions of the speaker's subjectivity, in Aijmer (2013)'s view, these are seen as interpersonal and hearer-directed. In fact, Traugott & Dasher (2002: 155) argue that:

> DMs are clearly subjective and procedural in that they indicate SP/W's rhetorical, metatextual, stance towards the cohesiveness of the discourse being developed – elaboration of or counter-argument to what preceded, continuation of or change in topic, background, or foreground in narrative. In addition

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[139] Other factors involved in the development of DMs are: i) decategorialization, ii) bonding with the phrase, iii) phonological reduction, iv) generalization of meaning, and v) increase in pragmatic function (Traugott, 1997: 14).

they also often convey conviction, uncertainty, or unwillingness to take responsibility for the truth of what is said, etc. (Brinton 1996), and are in that broad sense modal.   (Traugott & Dasher, 2002: 155)

3.2. Formal features of PMs

Despite the difficulty in assigning these functionally-grouped expressions to a unitary world class, a number of formal features have nevertheless been pinpointed in association with PMs. These include positional, prosodic, lexical (e.g. collocations) and stylistic (e.g. text type) features (Aijmer, 2013: 6). However, as Aijmer (2013: 16) observes, "few studies look at the formal features in detail, probably because it is difficult to establish a clear link between form and what pragmatic markers are doing in communication". To set a few examples, PMs do not freely occur at any point in the utterance, but they have been argued to occur at specific structural points in the utterance or in the conversational turn, for they often coincide with the beginning/end of a conversational turn or with crucial points within the turn, where they may signal discourse restructuring or processing difficulties (Fischer, 2000). In addition, the function of one and same PM may vary according to its position in the utterance/turn. As an illustration, Degand and Fagard (2011) discuss the different functions that French *alors* may take on depending on its position in the clause, i.e. sentence-initial, medial or final. Although no one-to-one correspondence was identified, Degand and Fagard argue that "the semantic evolution of *alors* goes hand in hand with grammatical and functional changes leading to new discourse functions, *viz*. from sentence adverbial to discourse structuring marker. […] semantic meaning is driven by syntactic position changes which gradually evolve over time" (Degand & Fagard, 2011: 19), confirming, at least in part, Traugott (1997)'s cline of grammaticalization of PMs.

Crucially connected with their position in the utterance is also PM's backward- or forward-looking function – typically sentence-initial PMs are forward looking, while sentence-final PMs tend to be backward-looking (Haselow, 2016: 387). Moreover, their scope can be either local or global, and this might depend on their position in the turn, as well as their prosodic features. In a study on DMs in oral English, Crible (2019: 55) found that "high degree of syntactic integration and absence of co-occurring pauses was shown to be often associated with local scope, while DMs expressing a more global scope tend to occur outside the syntactic dependency structure, co-occur with pauses and introduce hierarchically larger and/or distant units".

The prosodic features of PMs have often been called upon as a criterion for their identification. As Brinton (2017: 4) reminds us, PMs may indeed undergo phonological reduction, i.e. they may be produced with a typical "comma" or parenthetical intonation involving prosodic independence and a downstep which is normally found after a comma (Samek-Lodovici, 2015: 139). This was believed

to go hand in hand with syntactic detachability, but recent studies show that prosodic break is not necessarily a cue to identifying sentence periphery, either left or right: some PMs can form their own intonational unit, i.e. be prosodically discontinuous or detached from the main clause, while others are prosodically continuous (i.a. Fischer, 2007; Dehé & Braun, 2013; Detges & Waltereit, 2014; Traugott, 2015). For example, Dehé & Wichmann (2010: 62-63) showed that English *I think* may or may not present phonological reduction, and may or may not be separated by a pause from the main clause. However, it would appear that more intersubjectified uses of the expression also coincide with unstressed phonological realization and prosodic integration with the main clause.

3.3. PMs at the right periphery

Among the "jungle" of publications concerning PMs, the great majority of contributions have focused on those occurring at the left periphery of the utterance, whereas their uses at the right periphery have been rarely addressed. It was not until very recently that PMs occurring in sentence-final position came into the limelight, due also to Traugott (2016)'s paper aiming to "turn the spotlight on RP and draw the broad outlines of the incremental development of different types of pragmatic markers in English at RP (RPPM types for short), building on what is known about pragmatic markers in this position" (Traugott, 2016: 27). While most of the PMs investigated in the literature can occur in different positions inside the clause (in Traugott, 1997, positional "freedom" is arguably one of the features of grammaticalized DMs), some expressions occur primarily at the right periphery. Traugott (2016: 29) identifies 5 types of PMs which can occur at the RP: i) epistemic adverbs (e.g. *surely* and *no doubt*), ii) comment clauses (e.g. *I think*, *y'know*, *see*), iii) retrospective contrastive final connectors (e.g. then, though, anyway, after all, actually), iv) general extenders (e.g. *and stuff* and *or something*), and v) question tags (e.g. isn't it). Among these, Traugott (2015: 120) argues that general extenders are procedural, for they may function as backward hedges, topic-closing or turn-yielding devices, as are question tags, which either convey speaker attitude (subjective), or seek assent (intersubjective), and do not occur in sentence-initial position, unlike other PMs.

Particularly useful is the account of these utterance-final PMs offered by Haselow (2012, 2016), who also adds vocatives to the five types identified by Traugott (2016). In Haselow (2016: 386), these elements are considered to be part of a language's *macrogrammar*, i.e. the component of grammar which "refers to relational functions outside microgrammatical (e.g. phrase-, clause- and sentence-internal) dependency relations, and is based on serialization principles that rest upon speech planning, processibility, textual coherence, speaker-listener relationship, and contextual embeddedness." Specifically, the elements belonging to macrogrammar are loosely connected to the

microgrammatical units of talk, *viz.* they have null or loose syntactic relation with the sentence and do not contribute to the propositional content of the sentence. However, they are indispensable from a pragmatic point of view, for they modify the illocutionary force of the sentence, and from a discourse-structural point of view, creating coherence relations (Haselow, 2016: 387). Nonetheless, the distribution of these macrogrammatical units show specific distributional patterns, as "many of these occur in particular temporal slots or "fields", depending on the moment at which the tasks they serve becomes relevant in the real-time emergence of a structural unit" (Haselow, 2016: 387). In other words, Haselow adopts a dynamic view of language as interaction, with temporal *slots* rather than static structural peripheries, which emerge "in incremental speech production allowing the speaker to produce linguistic elements that serve the expression of particular cognitive tasks relevant at the respective moment in utterance production" (Haselow, 2016: 387). For instance, while utterance-initial elements may attend to the speaker's needs to deal with turn-taking, getting the hearer's attention and opening projections and expectations on the upcoming content, utterance-final elements are concerned more with closing-up these projections and making adjustments to the speech that is emerging – in terms of illocutionary force, epistemic status, link or preciseness of equation with preceding discourse, as well as with turn-yielding.

More specifically, the six types of expressions found in the final slot share a few core properties:

(i) are used predominantly in spoken discourse;

(ii) are not potentially turn-constitutive as they are backwards-oriented and require a "host structure";

(iii) make no contribution to the propositional content of an utterance (but can modify it, e.g. in terms of epistemic certainty);

(iv) have procedural rather than conceptual meanings in the sense that they provide an interpretive cue;

(v) have various functions on the metatextual and interpersonal level;

(vi) are not integrated into the morphosyntactic dependency relations of the unit they follow;

(vii) are morphologically invariant and tend to be conventionalized units;

(viii) are functionally variant when produced at other points in time in utterance production or outside the specific construction. (Haselow, 2012: 391-392)

One property significantly distinguishes these expressions occurring at the RP from those discussed in previous studies on PMs, i.e. the capacity of retrospective PMs to modify the illocutionary force of the host utterance. According to Haselow (2016: 411), unlike other adverbs or other propositional elements which are produced to expand a unit of talk – i.e. increments – expressions in the final field modify the illocution of an utterance post-hoc, *viz.* after its completion, and "indicate how a structural unit is to be processed by the listener" (Haselow, 2016: 411).

Specifically, Haselow (2012, 2016) discusses *final particles* and *final intensifying adverbs*. The elements of the first group have been classified elsewhere as *conjuncts* (Quirk et al., 1985), *linking adverbials* (Biber et al., 1999) or *adverbial connectors* (Lenker, 2010). Haselow argues that, when used in final position, elements as *then*, *though*, *anyway*, *actually*, and *even* become markers of textual relations, Common Ground-managers, and indicators of subjective and intersubjective information.[140] They are used in unplanned speech to modify the link between two utterances in a completely unanticipated way, retrospectively, for they "mark the utterance they accompany as a non-initial, reactive turn to some preceding communicative exchange" (Haselow, 2012: 186), which may have been produced by the speaker itself or by her/his interlocutor. Taking final *then* as an example, Haselow (2012) contends that it represents a signal to add the proposition *p* it marks to the Common Ground, for *p* is presented as an inference based on an explicit or implicit utterance in the pretext – which is converted into a "hypothetical condition where the truth-value of the condition is already determined as true" (Haselow, 2012: 190). This can be observed from Figure 6, where speaker B's utterance is conjured as being implied based on speaker A's utterance, which in turns becomes an (unintended) conditional protasis:
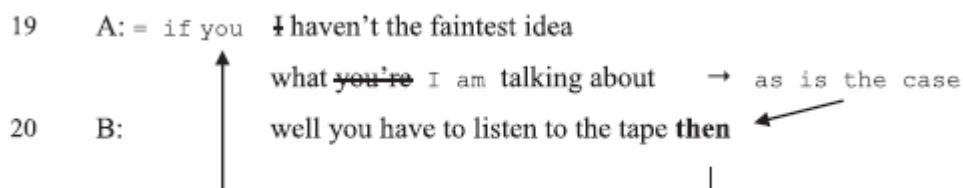
Figure 5: Final then used as a retrospective speech act modifier (Adapted from Haselow, 2012: 191)

On the one hand, the relationship between the two utterances is marked as a subjective assessment of the speaker, signalling that a prior assumption regarding an expected contribution or behaviour has not been meet: in (123) final *then* marks the utterance as new information inferred from a preceding utterance and requiring confirmation by the interlocutor.

123. B: my grandmother was really uhm helpful

    A: who was

      you told her all about it **then**   (Haselow, 2012: 191)

On the other hand, it is also used intersubjectively to manage the relationship between the speaker and the hearer – by either signalling the wish to remove dissimilarities or disagreement and

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[140] A concise definition of Common Ground is offered by von Fintel (2000: 1): "The common ground of a conversation at a particular time is the set of propositions that the participants in that conversation at that time mutually assume to be taken for granted and not subject to (further) discussion."

safeguarding the hearer's positive face (124) or by signalling impatience and lack of comprehensibility for the addressee's behaviour and imposing a threat on the hearer's negative face (125) (Haselow, 2012: 192).[141]

124. B: uhm I'll have a vodka and lemonade if you've got any

Z: well have vodka and lime **then**

125. A: do you actually quote any of the actual figures

E: yeah uh I think so

A: read it then   (Haselow, 2012: 191-192)

Final intensifying adverbs are discussed in Haselow (2016) as comprising two classes of elements that have been classified as intensifiers and emphasizers (Quirk et al., 1985). From a conversational analysis perspective, these elements qualify as TCU increments, for they are produced after a possible syntactic completion point. However, Haselow argues, "while this interpretation may be applicable to other 'postposed' elements, the data discussed here suggest that intensifying adverbs change their function in the final field and are thus not readily integratable into the preceding syntagma" (Haselow, 2016: 397). Unlike intensifying adverbs occupying their canonical position in the host clause, there are cases in which it is impossible to decide the constituent over which these final adverbs have scope, as happens in (126) with *absolutely*:

126. A: ↑ anyway if it's REAlly bad weather we'll just

(.) you know (.)

[stay in]

B: [stay in a-] for two or more days

A: [0]or watch two videos (.)[0]

---

absolutely

B: yeah   (Haselow, 2016: 397)

As can be observed from the preceding example, in spite of their integration within the illocutionary force of the host utterance, these elements can have relative syntactic and prosodic independence, i.e. they can be produced as a new intonation unit. While these cases are clearly distinguishable from RDs, other cases as (127) certainly do show a certain degree of overlapping:

127. A: I wouldn't mind see [ing that.

C: [no::,

B: ^{0}well^0 it's not THAT wonderful a film. (.)|

^{0}really^0.   (Haselow, 2016: 401)

As a matter of fact, Haselow (2016: 407) offers the following scale to account for the different degrees of prosodic detachability of intensifying adverbs:
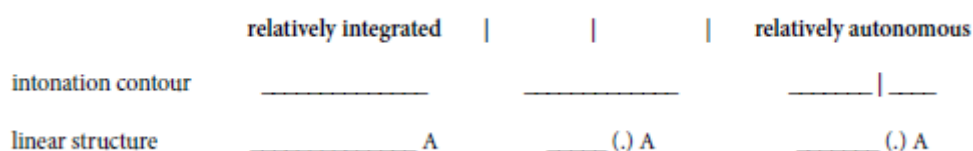
Figure 6: Degrees of prosodic integration of final intensifying adverbs (Adapted from Haselow, 2016: 407)

The ability to (retrospectively) modify the illocutionary force of an utterance raises the question as to what these elements really are. This issue has been extensively addressed in Degand et al. (2013)'s volume, specifically aimed at shedding light on the relationship between discourse markers and modal particles (MPs). Although not mainly concerned with the right periphery, some useful points discussed by Degand and others could bring us to a better understanding of the two types of expressions:

i) both are multifunctional linguistic expressions operating on the cognitive, expressive, social, and textual levels of language (Schiffrin, 2001: 54);

ii) MPs are believed to be a more restricted class with respect to DMs (Hansen, 1998);

iii) distinctions on functional grounds are hard to maintain (Traugott, 2015);

iv) DMs are not a homogeneous class from a formal point of view (Schiffrin, 1987);

v) MPs tend to be recognized as a specific world class, especially in Germanic languages (Aijmer, 1996);

vi) a diachronic link can be established between the two (Waltereit & Detges, 2007);

vii) the two have fuzzy boundaries and definitions.

One of the reasons contributing to the terminological and taxonomical fuzziness of the two classes is cross-linguistic variation. As mentioned, while some languages have a formally-identifiable class of modal particles, many do not. Nevertheless, to use Waltereit (2001:1392)'s words, "it seems difficult to conceive of the function of modal particles as being restricted to particular languages". Thus, from a cross-linguistic perspective, it is at a functional level that correspondences are to be sought. This, in turns, brings about the afore-mentioned fuzziness. As an illustration, Degand et al. (2013: 7) mention Fischer (2000: 27)'s observation that English tag questions have been found to be used as translation equivalents for German MPs (Kohler 1978; Fillmore 1981; Nehls 1989).

The functional fuzziness and the diversified structural/formal properties of these expressions clearly emerge also in one of the very the few contributions on final PMs addressing the issue from a cross-linguistic, typological perspective. Hancil et al. (2015)'s volume collects a number of works describing the functioning of PMs at the right periphery in a number of typologically diverse languages and summarizes some important features that characterize these expressions cross-linguistically. According to Hancil and others, five main types of what they term *final particles* (FPs) can be identified: FPs of the conjunction type, FPs of the conjunct/adverbial connector type, FPs of the adverbial type, FPs of the focus particle type, and FPs in Asian languages, the latter being regarded as a somehow different class of elements, fulfilling "pragmatic functions for which other means are used in European languages" (Hancil et al., 2015: 14).

FPs of the conjunction type are used, according to the studies quoted by Hancil and others, to signal turn-completion and to fulfil a turn-yielding function. They have systematic functions in interaction, guiding the interpretation of the unit they accompany as having an adversative, causal or additive link to an implied proposition, or modifying the utterance in terms of illocutionary force (Hancil et al., 2015: 11). Examples of the sort are English *but* (Thompson & Suzuki, 2012) and *so* (Haselow, 2013), Finnish *mutta* 'but' and *ja* 'and' (Koivisto, 2012), Japanese *kara* 'because' (Thompson & Suzuki, 2012), Korean *–(ta)nikka* 'because' (Rhee, 2012), etc. (Hancil et al., 2015: 10).

The elements of the conjunct/adverbial connector type often have ambiguous functions, which are described by Hancil and others in terms of a cline from a syntactic subordinator function to a textual or discourse linking function. Such elements include conjuncts as *if...then*, linking adverbs as French *alors* or English *then*, but also lexemes originating from temporal or deictic adverbs such as Russian *dak*, from deictic *tak* 'so, in that way' (Hancil et al., 2015: 12).

FPs of the adverbial type include English *actually*, *anyway* (Haselow, 2012) and French *déja* 'already' (Hansen, 2002), which, as already mentioned, are different from their propositional counterparts when occurring in final position in terms of absence of propositional content, relational

rather than conceptual meaning, and increased scope over two adjacent discourse units (Hancil et al, 2015: 12).

Focus particles are another recognized source of FPs, especially scalar ones such as English *even* (Haselow, 2012) or Cantonese *je* 'only, merely'. When used in final position, such elements no longer have scope over a specific (focal) constituent, but have the ability to signal that the propositional content of an utterance is noteworthy and unplanned, i.e. a *post-factum* realization (Hancil et al., 2015: 13).

Finally, FPs in Asian languages and in mixed European Asian background languages are a more homogeneous class and appear to occur with a higher frequency and a wider repertoire than those of European languages, although with different figures depending on the specific variety involved. Factors influencing the different distribution might include typological differences such as word order and tonal system. As already mentioned for Mandarin Chinese, a number of Mainland South-east Asian languages such as Khmer, Thai, Vietnamese and Burmese, as well as the other Sinitic languages, have a complex tonal system which to a – greater or lesser extent – restricts the availability of using pitch accents and intonation contours for the expression of an array of pragmatic meanings going from illocutionary force to speaker attitude. These meaning are assumedly taken over by alternative means of expression, including FPs.

The afore-mentioned Chinese SFPs (Chapter 1, § 3.1) are included in this category and will be described in the next section. However, some of the FPs belonging to the other four groups are arguably employed also in Chinese, in spite of the lack of documentation available, which will be sketched in § 4.2.

4. Chinese pragmatic markers

Research on Chinese pragmatic markers necessarily intersects with research on *sentence-final particles* (SFPs) or, as they are generally termed in the Chinese language literature, *yǔqìcí* 语气词 'modal words' or *yǔqì zhùcí* 语气助词 'auxiliary modal words', a rather well-defined class of words whose origin can be dated back to Classical Chinese (Dai, 2006).[142] Although no general agreement has been reached in the literature, SFPs naturally fit the description of PMs offered in the previous sections from a functional point of view, for they convey a "range of discourse sensitive meaning

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[142] The term *yǔqì* 语气 roughly covers the meanings of the two terms *mood* and *mode* in English, both referring to the category of the verbal conjugation that expresses the attitude of the subject towards the action or the state expressed by the verb (e.g. certainty, possibility, desire, etc.) (Accornero 2004: 1915).

relating to speaker attitude and "emotional coloring" (Matthews and Yip 1994), force of assertion, evidentiality and clause-type, along with various other semantic and pragmatic factors that are sometimes difficult to pin down" (Simpson 2014: 157).[143] However, a very recent trend of studies has also targeted a group of expressions formally more akin to that of the PMs and DMs studied in European languages such as *wǒ juéde* 我觉得 'I think' (Endo 2013; Lim 2011), *nǐ zhīdào* 你知道 'you know' (Tao, 2003), *nà* 那 'then' (Miracle, 1991), etc. In the following section, I shall first briefly introduce the features of SFPs and summarize the few existing studies on the remaining types.

4.1. Chinese SFPs

An extensive body of work has been devoted to the study of Chinese SFPs, as they appear to be "hallmarks of natural conversation" (Luke, 1990: 11) and, despite the frequency and variety of items increasing significantly in spoken – especially informal – discourse, a number of SFPs are also used in written language (i.a. Chao, 1968; Li & Thompson, 1981; Y. Liu et al., 2001; Qi, 2002).[144] This is particularly true for the limited subclass of SFPs that have been proved to (primarily) codify sentence-types rather than attitudes, such as the interrogative particle *ma* 吗. As mentioned in Chapter 1, § 3.1, these particles are sometimes found sentence-internally to mark topical elements and even other pragmatic markers (Zhang & Fang, 1994, 2020), but mainly occur in clause-final position, where they are particularly versatile in terms of the functions fulfilled (i.a. Chao, 1968; Li & Thompson, 1981; Chu, 1998; Lee-Wong, 1998; Y. Liu et al., 2001; Qi, 2002; Simpson, 2014; Shei; 2014). Although much stress has been put on the function these elements have in distinguishing between illocutionary- and sentence-types, the focus of research has more recently moved to their (inter)subjective meanings, as suggested by Lee-Wong (1998)'s definition.[145]

> These particles, which have been shown to affect modality rather than the proposition of the sentence by a number of linguists, are not exactly illocutionary specifiers, nor are they epistemic evaluators. They can, however, be described as mitigators in a context where face threat is implicit.

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[143] As mentioned, the relationship between MPs and DMs has been extensively discussed in Degand et al (2013)'s volume, mainly based on European languages data. As for Chinese and other Asian languages, the issue has been addressed in Hancil et al. (2015).

[144] The frequency and repertoire of SFPs changes significantly also according to the variety considered. For instance, while generally discussed Mandarin Chinese SFPs include from six to no more than a dozen items (Y. Liu et al., 2001; Qi, 2002), such varieties as Cantonese and Southern Min have been argued to display a remarkably higher number of items (B. Li, 2006; Lin, 2007, cited in Romagnoli & Lepadat, forthcoming; Simpson, 2014).

[145] Note that in spite of the structural split between lower and higher particles put forth in terms of the syntactic behaviour of SFPs (e.g. (M. Hu, 1981; Zhu, 1982; Paul, 2014; Simspon, 2014), they are nonetheless transversal elements, arguably affecting different levels of linguistic analysis at the same time. For a detailed discussion on the multifarious nature of SFPs with specific reference to *ma*, see Lepadat (2017).

Crucially, in Tantucci & Wang (2018: 68), SFPs are treated as intersubjective "operators of rapport-maintenance, as they are employed to overtly account for H[earer]'s potential reactions to S[peaker]'s utterance". Tantucci's notion of intersubjectivity drifts apart both from Langacker (1987, 1990)'s and from Traugott's approach (Traugott and Dasher, 2002; Traugott, 2009) to intersubjectivity, and moves closer to that of Nuyts (2001, 2012), which can be analysed at the intersection between semantics and pragmatics, bringing together intersubjectivity and evidentiality (Tantucci, 2015: 13). [146] According to Nuyts (2001: 393), subjectivity and intersubjectivity reflect a different assumption of responsibility over what is being said: while the former "involves the speaker's indication that (s)he alone knows (or has access to) the evidence and draws conclusions from it", the latter "involves his/her indication that the evidence is known to (or accessible by) a larger group of people who share the same conclusion based on it". In other words, Nuyts (2006: 14) adds, "it might be a matter of whether the modal judgement is common ground between the speaker and the hearer or others".

Drawing on this, Tantucci & Wang (2020: 101) clearly distinguish "meanings that are specifically aimed at addressing the Ad/r's potential reactions to what is said, from meanings that include a more or less general 3rdP, who conceptually functions as the social bearer of the utterance. The former are defined as immediate intersubjective (I-I) and diachronically precede further reanalysed functions encoding extended-intersubjectivity (E-I)".

In this view, SFPs are considered to represent at least an immediate type of intersubjectivity, but some uses may even imply more sophisticated forms of extended intersubjectivity. Taking *ba* as an example, previous studies have contended that its function is that of mitigating the illocutionary force of a speech act, either by expressing the speaker's uncertainty (Chu, 1998: 136) or by soliciting the hearer's agreement or acceptance (Li & Thompson, 1981: 307). In Tantucci (2017: 42), the particle is analysed as following a diachronic cline of increased intersubjective meanings, encouraging the

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[146] The classical model of evidentiality (Givon, 1982; Willett, 1988; Aikhenvald, 2004) hinges on the distinction between direct (witnessed by the speaker) and indirect (not directly witnessed by the speaker) types of evidence that the hearer has for his/her propositional content (Pietrandrea 2002: 23; Tantucci 2013: 211). Tantucci (2013 and following works) provides an account of evidentiality as the expression of "acquired knowledge", not necessarily bound to the expression of the source of knowledge or evidence (Tantucci, 2013: 214). Specifically, interpersonal evidentiality (IE) is introduced as "the evidential dimension marking the SP/W's statement as a form of intersubjective knowledge shared with a singular or plural, member(s) of society" (Tantucci, 2013: 218). The former case corresponds to the immediate type of IE, which is tied to the here-and-now of the communication act, whilst the latter type connecting the present dimension with "an assumed person or group of people who can potentially confirm the same knowledge" (Tantucci, 2013: 218), corresponds to the extended type of IE.

addressee "to engage in a co-action, either physical or epistemic".[147] From uses implying an immediate type of intersubjectivity as that in (128), in which the speaker physically invites the addressee to perform an action, the particle developed successively increasing degrees of extended intersubjectivity, as in (129), wherein "through the employment of 吧-ba s/he markedly expects 3rdP[arty] (i.e. any other reasonable mind beyond Ad/r) to support his/her assertion in the form of a co-action" (Tantucci, 2017: 49):

128. 胜英!拿小包袱下台去吧。

Shèng Yīng! Ná xiǎo bāofu xiàtái qù ba
Sheng Ying!take small bundle step-down-from-the-stage go SFP
'Sheng Ying!Come on, take that bundle and step down from the stage.'

129. 牲口有十来多头吧。

Shēngkǒu yǒu shí lái duō tóu ba
Livestock have ten come many CLF SFP
'We can say that there are more than ten animals (here).'   (Tantucci, 2017: 49)

Although Tantucci does not go into details with other SFPs, their pragmatic meanings are well-documented in the literature. Similarly to *ba*, the particle *a* has been argued to reduce the illocutionary force of the speech act it occurs with (Li & Thompson, 1981: 313), to express personal concern or involvement (Chu, 1998: 185), or function as a DM highlighting the relevance of the utterance it marks in the discourse context (Chu, 2002; B. Li, 2006: 57). However, *a* has been argued to have a more intimate or friendliness tone towards the addressee than *ba*, *viz.*, it frequently occurs in contexts with a small social distance between speaker and hearer and an informal setting (Lee-Wong, 1998: 395). In Shei (2014: 209), this use of the particle is described as *engagement*, since it conveys "the speaker's continued interest in participating in the discourse and that the hearer's appreciation of this attitude is valued":

130. 李进云： 可能稍微有点慢啊。稍微等一下啊。

Lǐ Jìnyún: kěnéng shāowéi yǒu diǎn màn a. Shāowéi děng yīxià a.
Li Jinyun possible slightly have a.bit slow SFP Slightly wait a.bit SFP
'Li Jinyun: It may take some time to happen. Please wait a moment.'   (Shei, 2014: 209)

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[147] Here the accent is on the diachronical change that the particle underwent starting from the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911) up to the present day, shifting from an attempt to induce a physical response to one of inducing an epistemic agreement on the part of the addressee, i.e. taking on increasing degrees of immediate/extended intersubjective functions (Tantucci, 2017: 51).

Conversely, *ma* has been argued to strengthen the speech act it occurs in by signalling that a certain state of affairs is "highly evident in nature" (Chappell & Peyraube, 2016: 323) and to safeguard the interlocutors' faces by marking a certain evaluation as information shared among the members of a society rather than the product of "the individual and subjective opinion of the verbalizer" (Lepadat, 2017: 265).[148]

131. 他们的城堡一般都是依在山坡高的地方而建。[…] A: 易守难攻嘛。

Tāmen	de	chéngbǎo	yībān	dōu	shì	yī	zài	shānpō	gāo	de	dìfāng
3PL	POSS	castle	normally	all	be	near	at	slope	high	POSS	place

ér jiàn.	Yì-shǒu-nán-gong	ma.
to build	easy-defend-difficult-attack	SFP

'Their castles are usually built on high slopes.' Easy to defend and hard to attack, of course.'

(Adapted from Lepadat, 2017: 258-259)

The SFP *ne* is described as signalling "response to expectation" in Li and Thompson (1981: 300), while Chu (2006: 7) distinguishes between the two functions of "necessity to look back" and "demand for continuation" as core meanings, from which other functions have developed, such as the ability to express a sense of "consultation" or opinion-seeking when occurring with cognition verbs (Li, 2004, cited in Chu, 2006: 19). This is exemplified in (132):

132. [...] 咱们攒足劲，找个机会施展下咱们的本领，什么夜袭队！非得让他们变成野鸡队，揍得他们野鸡不生蛋。

'Let's gather up all our strength and find a chance to show them our colors. God damn them night-raid squad! We're gonna beat the hell out of them and turn them into their own nightmare.'

你说呢？贾正。

Nǐ	shuō	ne,	Jiǎ	Zhèng?
2SG	say	SFP	Jia	Zheng

'What d'you say, Jia Zheng?'   (Li, 2004, cited in Chu, 2006: 19)

The particle *de* – which is to be distinguished from the homophonous and homographic attributive marker *de* in Modern Mandarin – has developed the function of conveying certainty (Chao 1968:

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[148] Whether interrogative *ma* 吗 and assertive *ma* 嘛 – and their graphic and phonetic variants *me* 么 (麼) (Chappell & Peyraube, 2016: 323) and *mo* 嚜 (Chu, 1998: 145), should be considered as a single particle is still a controversial issue. While they appear to be in complementary distribution and to derive diachronically from the same etymological source (Li, 2006: 28-36), modern dictionaries of Mandarin such as the *Xiàndài hànyǔ cídiǎn* (2016: 871) treat them as separate lexemes.

800), through the diachronic mediation of the *shi…de* cleft construction (Yap et al., 2010: 79-80). In addition, according to Yap et. al. (2010: 70), through the modulation of prosodic cues, in a sentence as (133), the particle "can carry the speaker's final prosody and thus capture a wide range of speaker moods, usually assertive, but sometimes also interrogative, skeptical, dubitative, hesitant, or even playful":

133. 他會來的 。

Tā   huì lái   de.

3SG   will come SFP

'He will come.'   (Yap et al., 2010: 70)

Finally, the SFP *le*, which also has to be distinguished from the homophonous and homographic perfective aspect marker *le*, is employed to signal a "currently relevant state" (Li & Thompson, 1981: 238) or "change of state"(Zhu 1982: 209). In Fang (2018: 602) the particle is discussed as a mirative marker signalling that a piece of information is newsworthy, unexpected or surprising for the speaker, the addressee, or for both the speaker and the addressee, as in (134).[149]

134. 火车快要开了。

Huǒchē kuài yào kāi   le

Train   fast will operate SFP

'The train is about to leave!'   (Fang, 2018: 601)

Table 8 summarizes the array of functions and research approaches taken to represent Chinese SFPs:

Speaker attitude	(Matthews and Yip, 1994)
Illocutionary force	(Simpson, 2014)
Sentence type distinctions	(Qi, 2002)
Evidentiality	(Simpson, 2014)
Politeness	(Lee Wong, 1998)
Discourse organization and relevance	(Chu, 1998; 20)
Information structure	(Qiang, 2011)
Intersubjectivity	(Tantucci, 2017)

Table 8: Functions of Chinese SFPs (Adapted from Lepadat, awaiting publication)

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[149] The reader must note that the particle *le* is arguably one of the most controversial points of Chinese grammar. The relative literature is vast but no agreement has been reached as to the exact functions and functionally distinct variants of the particle. The functions and reference listed in this section are not intended to be exhaustive nor entirely representative of the literature on SFPs, but are simply intended to point to the similarities between these and other PMs. For a detailed discussion of Mandarin SFPs, see e.g. Qi (2002).

The array of functions that Chinese SFPs take on is wide and potentially covers all the (inter)subjective meanings that the speaker may wish or need to express. Nonetheless, as previously mentioned, in oral discourse, it is possible to find a number of right-dislocated expressions conveying modality, among other meanings (Bourgerie, 1991). In addition, Yap et al. (2014:) showed that a few elements occurring in sentence-final position are in fact items subject to a process of grammaticalization, some of which first appeared in that position through the RD construction, and others through more complex processes involving clausal integration and main clause ellipsis.

4.2. Chinese final pragmatic markers (PMs)

The group of grammaticalized items that can occur in sentence final position in Modern Mandarin Chinese includes *wǒ juéde* 我觉得 'I think', *búguò* 不过 'however', *kǒnggpà* 恐怕 'probably; I'm afraid'. Yap and others argue that when occurring in sentence-initial or sentence-internal position, these items were and can still be used to express more subjective meanings, whereas their use at the right periphery is driven by pragmatic motivations (e.g. hedging, mitigative, adhortative) and thus imply more intersubjective meanings being expressed. For instance, when used in sentence-final position, *wo juede* does not simply represent an epistemic marker of (mid-)low certainty towards the truth of the proposition (Feng 2010: 188), as in (135a), but also a "disclaimer" with a hedging function on the part of the speaker (Yap et al., 2014: 180), as in (135b):[150]

135. a. 我覺得她會拋棄她的男朋友

Wǒ juéde tā huì pāoqì tā de nánpéngyou
1SG think 3SG.F will dump 3SG.F POSS boyfriend
'I think she will dump her boyfriend.'

   b. 她會拋棄她的男朋友，我覺得

tā huì pāoqì tā de nánpéngyou, wǒ juéde
3SG.F will dump 3SG.F POSS boyfriend 1SG think
'She will dump her boyfriend, I think.' (Yap et al., 2014: 180)

Apart from the works of Yap and her research group, very few have addressed the Chinese PMs occurring at the right periphery. While some studies have tackled sentence-initial or sentence-medial

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[150] Given the non-inflective nature of Chinese, it is almost impossible to distinguish between an element occurring in the RD position and one that has grammaticalized in that position based on syntactic properties alone. As to whether prosodical cues are involved in shaping a different profile of the two, this remains basically unaddressed in the literature I am aware of.

items (e.g. Feng, 2008, 2010, and following works) leaving the right periphery completely unaddressed, a number of works targeting specific or selected expressions contain *passim* information on PMs at the right periphery (e.g. B. Liu, 2009 on a number of items; Tao, 2003 on *(nǐ) zhīdào* 你知道 'you know'; Endo, 2013, and Lim, 2011 on *wo juede;* Biq, 2001 on *jiùshì(shuō)* 就是说 'that is to say'; A. Wu & Biq, 2011 on *zhēnshì* 真是 'really (is)' and *shízàishì* 实在是 'indeed (is)'; Zhou & Bao, 2014 on *fǎnzhèng* 反正 'anyway', Wang, 2018 on *ránhòu* 然后 'then'; F. Shi, 2019 on *jiùshìle* 就是了 'that's it/all').

However, a handful of recent papers have addressed the issue of the occurrence of adverbs and adverb-like conjuncts in sentence-final position, from a syntactic or pragmatic viewpoint, or even from both (Z. Yang, 2014; X. Wang , 2012; Song, 2018). The adverbs investigated by Song (2018) that have been found to occur in sentence-final position belong to different functional and syntactic types and are summarized in Table 9:[151]

Time/ aspect	*xiān* 先 'before', *yǐjīng* 已经 'already', *jiù* 就 'just', *kuài* 快 'almost', *cái* 才 'only', *mǎshàng* 马上 'immediately', *gānggāng* 刚刚 'just recently', *zài* 在 'be in the middle of doing something', *zhèng* 正 'just doing something', *zhèngzài* 正在 'be in the process of', *hūrán* 忽然 'suddenly'
Repetition	*yòu* 又 'again', *hái* 还 'in addition', *yě* 也 'also', *zài* 再 'again'
Domain	*dōu* 都 'all', *yīgòng* 一共 'altogether'
Modality	*hǎoxiàng* 好像 'it seems', *qíshí* 其实 'actually', *jiǎnzhí* 简直 'simply', *jūrán* 居然 'unexpectedly', *nándào* 难道 'is it possible that', *dàgài* 大概 'probably', *dàodǐ* 到底 'in the end', *zhōngyú* 终于 'finally', *háishì* 还是 'after all', *yuánlái* 原来 'as a matter of fact', *sìhū* 似乎 'seemingly', *yěxǔ* 也许 'perhaps', *zhǐhǎo* 只好 'have no choice but', *jiūjìng* 究竟 'actually; after all', *gēnběn* 根本 'at all', *dāngrán* 当然 'certainly', *dàyuè* 大约 'probably'

Table 9: Adverbs that can occur in RD/sentence-final position (Adapted from Song, 2018: 111)

As one can observe from Table 9, the majority of "right-detachable" adverbs belong to those traditionally called *yǔqì fùcì* 语气副词 'modal adverbs' in Chinese, pertaining to the semantic area

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[151] This list, however, as Song (2018: 111) warns, should not be considered as exhaustive.

of *qíngtài* 情态 'modality'. Moreover, Song argues, non-modal adverbs such as *jiu, cai, ,dou, hai, ye, you*, etc., can only occur in sentence-final position when thy express a "subjective evaluation" on the part of the speaker:

> 根据我们的观察，越是倾向于反映说话人（speaker)的态度或评价的副词越是容易后置，上述可后置的副词中语气副词最多便可以证明这一点。而在非语气副词中我们可以看出"就"、"才"、"都"、"还"、"也"、"又"、"还是"等基本都兼有表情态（modality)的用法，即主观评价功能。我们收集的语料中的副词一般都不是其基本义。

> According to our survey, adverbs that tend to reflect the attitude or evaluation of the speaker are more likely to be postponed, as evidenced by the fact that among the above-mentioned postponable adverbs, modal adverbs are the most frequent. Moreover, we can observe that non-modal adverbs such as *jiù, cái, dōu, hái, yě, yòu, háishì*, etc., are basically all used to express modality, i.e. their function is to express a subjective evaluation. In the corpus data we collected, [postposed] adverbs are generally not used with their basic meaning. (Song, 2018: 112-113)

This can be observed in example (136a-b): in (136a), the adverb *dou* is argued to express a subjective evaluation on the part of the speaker, and can therefore occur in sentence-final position, whereas in (136b), the same adverb only has scope over the subject NP *women*, with the original meaning of *all*, and can only occur sentence-internally (Song, 2018: 113):

136.   a. 年底了，希望这两天不要再有事了！累死了都！

      Nián   dǐ   le,   xīwàng   zhè   liǎng   tiān bú   huì   zài   yǒu   shì'er le!

      Year   end SFP   hope   these   two   days   not   will   again   have   things SFP

      Lèi-sǐ-le   dōu!

      Tired-dead-PERF   already

      'It's the end of the year, hopefully nothing else will come up these two days! I'm exhausted!

    *b. 陈奕迅的演唱会，我们去了都。

      Chén   Yìxùn de   yǎnchànghuì, wǒmen   qù-le   dōu.

      Chén   Yixun ATTR   concert   1PL   go-PERF   all

      'We all went to Eason Chan's concert.'   (Song, 2018: 113)

Although more exact classifications could be made among these generally "modal" items in terms of modality, evidentiality, and intersubjectivity, Song (2018)'s paper opens an interesting path of analysis for sentence-final adverbs both from the information-structural viewpoint and from that of pragmatic markers.

4.3. Left vs right periphery

From the above discussion it is not difficult to realize that most of the existing work on both IS and PMs has focused on the left periphery. One of the reasons for the relative lack of research into this area has to do with the fact that most of the expressions occurring in the final slot of talk are almost exclusively employed in oral and informal discourse. This has led, on the one hand, to the classification of related phenomena as performance errors, afterthoughts, etc., and thus not worthy of scientific investigation; on the other hand, the low availability and the high handling difficulty of oral data has made it relatively more difficult for researchers to access and investigate the afore-mentioned phenomena. Recent contributions, however, have endeavoured to take a more inclusive view, especially in the wake of the increased availability and prominence of spoken discourse data.

In conclusion of this chapter, it seems important to tackle Beeching & Detges (2014)'s volume, which specifically addresses both the left and the right peripheries of discourse – in terms of both information-structural elements and pragmatic markers – and the relationship between the two. Given the basic property of human language to unfold in time and to move from left to right (at least in Western languages), Beeching and Detges point out that "the left and right margin of discourse units and of the sentence similarly fulfil very different functions and therefore do not behave in a symmetrical fashion" (Beeching & Detges, 2014: 1). The peripheries – which may refer either to the sentence as argument structure and eventual adjuncts (e.g. the functionalist and generative linguistics contributions on information structure), to the level of discourse above the sentence level, or to discourse units such as the utterance or the turn (e.g. conversational analytic contributions on increments and PMs) – are dealt with in this volume from both a structural and a functional point of view, and the models included offer different views in terms of the (a)symmetry between the left and the right. Specifically, the three main periphery models discussed in the volume – the Japanese-based model proposed by Onodera, and the two French-based models proposed by Detges & Waltereit, and by Degand, all suggest that there is a strong though not categorical tendency for the two peripheries to host asymmetrical elements from a functional point of view:

> Whereas the left periphery seems to be the locus for the grammaticalization of information-structure and argument-structure phenomena such as word-order and agreement, the right periphery is involved in the rise of modal elements such as negative particles out of resumptive negation (Jespersen 1917, see also Dowty 2008), modal particles (Waltereit 2006b) or modalising right dislocation constructions (see, e.g., Morel 2007 for French). (Beeching & Detges, 2014: 11)

Beeching and Detges suggest, while LP is inherently *dialogual*, *viz.* mainly driven by the needs of two interacting speakers, the RP is more *dialogic*, driven by the needs of interacting viewpoints.

Hence the tendency for the former to host more discourse-oriented and subjective expressions, and for the latter to host more intersubjective expressions (Beeching & Detges, 2014: 3). A schematic overview of the types of expressions occurring at the two peripheries is provided in Table 10:

Left Periphery (LP)	Right Periphery (RP)
Dialogual	Dialogic
Turn-taking/attention-getting	Turn-yielding/end-marking
Link to previous discourse	Anticipation of forthcoming discourse
Response-marking	Response-inviting
Focalising, topicalising, framing	Modalising
Subjective	Intersubjective

Table 10: Linguistic items at the LP and RP (Adapted from Beeching & Detges, 2014: 11)

Particularly interesting is the model proposed by (Detges & Waltereit 2014), drawing on the French model by Morel (2007) and Danon-Boileau et al. (1991). Although specifically designed to account for the initial and final uses of the French strong pronouns (*moi*, *toi*, *lui*), it offers the advantage of including IS and illocutionary force into the picture. In Detges and Waltereit's view, the argument structure of the verb is what constitutes the *Rheme*, the only obligatory element of the utterance, while the *preamble* and the *post-script* (or post-rheme in Morel, 2007) are both optional. The preamble can be rather articulated and include different elements with anchoring, framing and coherence-related functions: binding elements with a phatic function, viewpoint elements expressing subjective evaluations, framing elements (time, space) and lexical topic expressions. According to this model, while "the various elements of the preamble are marked individually by a topic intonation", the post-script has a characteristic prosodic contour of its own (Detges & Waltereit, 2014: 24).

	Preamble				Rheme	P.S.
Binder	Viewpt.	Frame	Frame	Lexical topic		
Tu vois	*moi*	*hier*	*en classe*	*y avait un mec*	*qui me fait rire*	*quoi*
'See	I	yesterday	in school	there was a guy	who makes me laugh	you know'

Figure 7: Detges & Waltereit (2014)'s model of the French utterance (adapted from (Detges & Waltereit, 2014: 24).

While Detges & Waltereit (2014: 155) do not seem to envisage the possibility that the post-script be composed of multiple elements, this is accounted for in Degand's model, wherein (eventual) multiple components follow the clause-final>utterance-final>turn-final order.

Finally, Onodera (2014: 112)'s model conceives the two peripheries as (potentially) formally and functionally symmetrical: the propositional core of the utterance is made up of acts and events, which are embedded within successive layers of subjective and intersubjective items. The order in which they occur at the RP mirrors that in which they occur at LP.
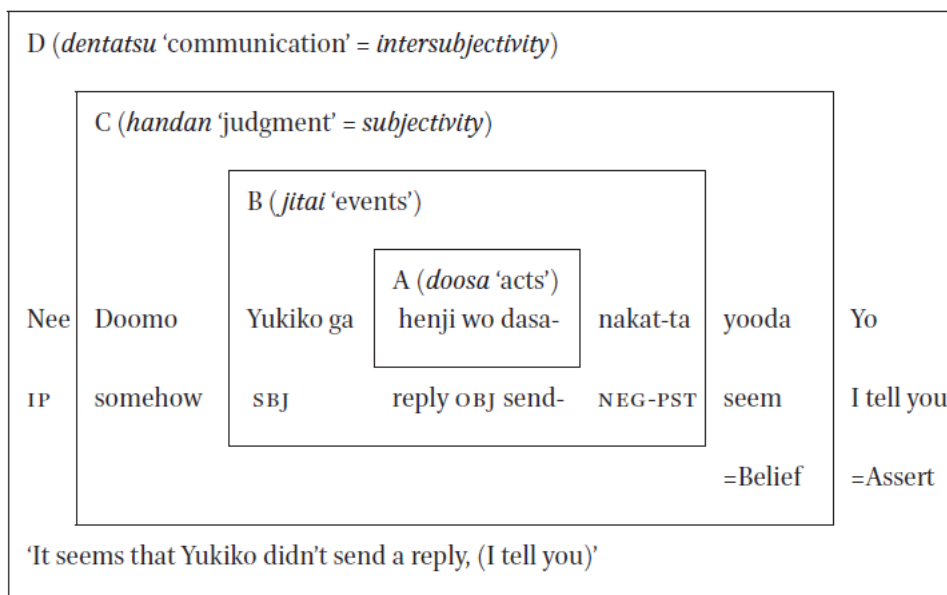
Figure 8: Shinzato (2007)'s layered structure model of the Japanese utterance (Adapted from Onodera, 2014: 112)

The theoretical models and data-based findings that emerged from this chapter suggest a significant affinity between RDs driven by informational-structural purposes and interactional needs, as well as a fuzziness between functionally and formally different types of elements occurring at the RP. Although a whole body of literature has investigated the RP from the informational-structural viewpoint and from the interactional-based perspective, they have usually done so independently from each other. The newly-emerged perspective of grammaticalization, although not specifically designed for such a purpose, has somehow managed to bring the two perspectives closer, resulting in an interesting cross-perspective "fertilization". It is in the wake of this new approach, although limited to a synchronic perspective, that the following chapter will address the analysis of RDs in spoken Mandarin Chinese.

CHAPTER 3. TOWARDS AN INTEGRATED ACCOUNT OF THE MANDARIN CHINESE SENTENCE-FINAL SLOT

1. Introduction and Research Questions

The previous two chapters of this volume tackled the sentence-final slot in spoken Mandarin from the point of view of information structure and pragmatic markers, and highlighted the close connection existing between the two: on the one hand, although sentence-final topics generally belong to the propositional content of the utterance, they often perform interpersonal-oriented functions, especially when it comes to certain types of right dislocations; on the other hand, while pragmatic markers are used to achieve discourse-related and interaction-oriented goals, it is not always possible to separate their procedural from their propositional content.

In spite of the affinities existing between the two elements, sentence-final topics and pragmatic markers have generally been addressed independently by two different lines of research (Traugott, 2015: 119). Nonetheless, as some authors have suggested, it is undeniable that an inclusive and holistic approach would lead to a much better comprehension of this field of inquiry (e.g. Lu, 2000; 2004; 2005; Luke, 2012; Lim, 2014; Zhang & Fang, 1996; 2020; Traugott, 2015; 2016).

The analysis conducted in this volume will endeavour to account for what shall be generically termed sentence-final expressions (SFEs), including both dislocated and non-dislocated topics occurring at the right periphery, some of which can represent more or less grammaticalized pragmatic markers. Looking both at the broader picture of their occurrence as a product of the communicative exchange they belong to and the narrower structure of the single utterance they refer to, I will try to account not only for what Lombardi Vallauri (2007: 188) calls *macropragmatica* 'macropragmatics', viz. the interaction-oriented level of pragmatics which includes speech acts and conversational implicatures, but also for what he calls *micropragmatica* 'micropragmatics', viz. the linguistic encoding of the cognitive-oriented level of pragmatics applying to the information structure of the utterance.

Because both these planes are fundamentally tied to the discourse coordinates, I believe that naturalistic language exchanges are particularly suited for the investigation, for they allow us to observe and thus to reconstruct more faithfully the interactional and cognitive dynamics leading to the production of a certain utterance or expression, when compared to elicited data. Moreover, spoken language offers a privileged view of both these planes, for it enables a more realistic observation of how the speakers' communicative needs during an ongoing conversation shape and forge the form of the language they use. As is known, oral naturalistic interactions differ consistently from written

discourse (i.a. Chafe & Tannen 1987; Halliday, 1989; Givón, 2002), as an effect of representing a different medium of communication and being characterized by different target addressees, different goals and, generally speaking, a different type of speaker mental organization and discourse planning. Not only are these differences visible at the level of the language register, i.e. formal vs. informal lexical choices, but differences between the former and the latter can also be observed in a number of morphological, syntactic and structural features.

This observation is especially important with reference to Chinese, a language in which more than others the written and the spoken were historically distinct and separated.[152] Despite the conspicuous changes introduced with the establishment of *pǔtōnghuà* 普通话 'common language' as the standard written language in 1955, which was *de facto* based on Northern colloquial varieties of Chinese, the divide between written and spoken varieties of Chinese remains so wide that the two are generally referred to by using distinct terms – *kǒuyú* 口语 'spoken language' and *shūmiànyǔ* 书面语 'written language' – and even taught separately in school (Norman, 1988; Chen, 2004b; Gajdoš, 2011). Out of the many differences between *kouyu* and *shumianyu*, those which are particularly interesting for this study include at least a different use of connectives and modifiers (Yao, 2015), a higher frequency of sentence-final particles (SFPs) in spoken language (Simpson, 2014), differences in personal reference expressions (C. Liu & et al., 2019), clause structuring (Tao, 1996), information flow and word order (Chui, 1994).

Generally speaking, naturalistic spoken conversations, less planned and more interaction-driven (Ochs, 1979), are presumed to reflect more closely the language-cognition interplay affecting the interlocutors' linguistic choices. It is my belief that through the observation of this type of linguistic interactions, the intersection between form and function becomes particularly evident and can thus be fruitfully analysed, for it is in this "online" or real-time interactions that sentence peripheries become ideal encounter places between different language planes (i.a. Schiffrin, 2001; Haselow, 2016, Traugott, 2016). In particular, as some have observed (e.g. Haselow, 2016), the sentence-final slot in spoken discourse becomes the last chance for the speaker to assess the appropriateness of her/his utterance before its reception on the part of the hearer. In other words, when approaching the end of his/her utterance, the speaker retrospectively evaluates whether the utterance was packaged in such a way that its content can be correctly decoded by the hearer, both from a functional and a formal point

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[152] The classical literary language in China (*wěnyán wén* 文言文) based its linguistic norms on Old Chinese (1st millenium BC) and represented the standard written language up until the official establishment of *pǔtōnghuà* 普通话 'common language' as the standard written Chinese in 1955. Initially known as *Guóyǔ* 国语 'National language', *puntonghua* is based on the 'vernacular literary language' (*báihuà wén* 白话文), a written form very close to the contemporaneous colloquial speech in Northern China (Chen, 2015a: 532-537).

of view. This includes both the structural, lexical and prosodic features of the linguistic string s/he has just produced, as well as discourse-oriented features such as coherence and politeness-oriented features related to face and rapport management. That is to say, as Detges & Waltereit (2014: 20) put it, the right periphery represents the speaker's last chance to re-negotiate both the rheme and the illocution before its final reception on the part of the interlocutor.

In the light of the above considerations, the current work intends to explore the right periphery of the utterance in spoken Mandarin Chinese with the aim of shedding light on the triggering factors and using conditions. In particular, this study will attempt to provide a holistic account of the sentence right periphery by exploring the main types of expressions occurring in this position and the discourse fragments containing them in terms of their syntactic, semantic, pragmatic and prosodic features. The analysis will rely specifically on data belonging to a corpus of telephonic conversations between friends which was chosen among the few corpora of spoken Mandarin Chinese freely available online.

The motivations behind this choice include the homogeneity in terms of the symmetric relationship holding between the interlocutors – i.e. one of equality in terms of relative power and social distance (Lee-Wong, 1998: 391) – which is believed to be one of the most "prolific" environments for the production of sentence-final expressions (Aijmer, 1989: 151). Unlike other existing works on the topic, this study will adopt not only qualitative descriptive categories, but also advanced quantitative techniques for the statistical modelling of the Mandarin Chinese right periphery.

Specifically, a data-driven analysis of the corpus will be carried out in order to provide an answer to three main research questions:

- What types of sentence-final expressions (SFEs) are used in Mandarin Chinese naturalistic symmetric interactions?
- What pragmatic function(s) can be identified for SFEs in Mandarin Chinese naturalistic symmetric interactions?
- How do SFEs interact with other linguistic dimensions in fulfilling these functions?

Although these research questions appear to be rather simple in nature, they are in fact quite complex and need to be broken down into multiple aspects. In particular, when replying to the first research question, I will take into account the information-structural, semantic and pragmatic properties of the SFEs; when looking at the second research question, I will take into account more specifically the utterances the SFEs occur in and their interpersonal, discourse and interaction-oriented features; the third research question will address the relationship between SFEs and other linguistic dimensions, including other overtly marked expressions of (inter)subjectivity, viz. sentence-final particles (SFPs).

2. Methodology

In order to reply to the above research questions, this study will use authentic oral linguistic data and will rely both on quantitative and qualitative techniques. Specifically, the quantitative techniques adopted fall under the domain of what is known as EDA (Tukey, 1970); Seltman, 2018) – exploratory data analysis techniques – and include multiple correspondence analyses such as conditional inference trees (CTs), which are particularly suited for categorical data – i.e. non-numerical nominal and ordinal variables (Levshina, 2015: 18, 384) – and appropriate when dealing with complex relationships among these (Levshina, 2015: 166-167). All statistical analyses are run in the opensource statistical analysis software RStudio (RStudio Team, 2020).

Additional tools used for the analyses performed in this study include the opensource software for phonetic analysis Praat (Boersma & Weenink, 2018) and the Microsoft Excel (2018) program.

2.1. Corpus description

The data employed for the exploration of the Mandarin sentence right periphery is taken from the Callfriend - Mainland Mandarin Corpus (Canavan & Zipperlen, 1996), a collection of unscripted telephone conversations among native speakers of Mandarin Chinese from Mainland China who were living in the USA during the 90s. [153] The corpus was originally collected through an LDC (Linguistic Data Consortium, University of Pennsylvania) project supervised by David Graff and is now available for free use from the Talk Bank repository (https://ca.talkbank.org/access/CallFriend/zho-m.html). The corpus comprises 60 conversations with a length varying between 5 and 30 min each, but only a total of 44 display both audio registrations and written transcriptions. These transcriptions were produced by Zhengyu Chi and Hua Gao under the supervision of Prof. Hongyin Tao at UCLA (University of California, Los Angeles). The total number of participants is 35, including males and females. Although the Talk Bank repository version of the corpus does not provide additional information on the speakers' age, education or (dialectal) linguistic background, some of this information was in some cases retrievable from the content of the conversations themselves.

In order to ensure an equal representativeness of speaker gender and interaction gender, 12 dyadic conversations were randomly selected from the corpus, 4 of which were female to female interactions, 4 were male to male and the remaining 4 were female to male interactions. Based on the conversations'

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[153] Both callers and callees involved in the telephone conversations are native speakers of one of the (regional) varieties of Mandarin Chinese used in Mainland China. However, since the speakers had been living in the USA for an unknown period of time at the time of recording, it is not far-fetched to imagine that the English-speaking environment might have had a certain influence on their language production in general and more specifically on the functions carried out by the utterance right periphery in their discourse. However, for reasons of time and opportunity, it is not possible to explore the issue further in this thesis.

contents, the speakers are all highly educated (Bachelor's degree or above) and their ages are estimated to range between 20 and 40. In total, the sample analysed for this study consists of approximatively 6 hours of conversation.

Conversation number	Conversation ID	Interaction gender	Length
1	CallFriend/zho-m/4447	female-female	30 min
2	CallFriend/zho-m/5906	female-female	30 min
3	CallFriend/zho-m/5930	female-female	30 min
4	CallFriend/zho-m/5949	female-female	30 min
5	CallFriend/zho-m/5195	female-male	30 min
6	CallFriend/zho-m/5975	female-male	30 min
7	CallFriend/zho-m/5982	female-male	30 min
8	CallFriend/zho-m/5542	female-male	22, 30 min
9	CallFriend/zho-m/4198	male-male	17 min
10	CallFriend/zho-m/5784	male-male	30 min
11	CallFriend/zho-m/5905	male-male	30 min
12	CallFriend/zho-m/5653	male-male	21 min

Table 11: Conversations used for data retrieval, CallFriend - Mainland Mandarin Corpus

2.2. Data retrieval

In order to retrieve the data for this study, the above conversations were listened to carefully and all the SFEs occurring naturally in the 12 interactions were identified manually, following Leech (1992)'s principle of total accountability. A second round of acoustic analysis was then carried out by means of the software Praat (Boersma & Weenink, 2018), the transcriptions were controlled and amended whenever needed (also with recourse to the help of native speakers) and only the utterances with clearly audible and unambiguous SFEs were maintained.[154] The resulting total amount of SFEs is 686.

The four criteria used to select the SFEs are listed in Table 12 below:

Criterion	Specification
Positional	utterance, sentence or clause-final position
Syntactic	dislocated or i*n-situ*

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[154] The quality of the audio recordings and their relative transcriptions is not uniform throughout the corpus. All the audio files contained in the corpus are of the type 2-channel ulaw, so that it is possible to separate the two channels corresponding to each speaker at the end of the line. However, while some of the conversations have optimal sound isolation, in others more or less distinct noise echoing the other channel are audible in the background, influencing the acoustic features' visualization in Praat. In other cases, since most SFEs are hardly salient from a prosodic point of view, the transcribers failed to recognize or simply disregarded them. Therefore, an analysis of SFEs based on the transcripts alone would have been fairly misleading.

Prosodic	reduced intonation
Pragmatic	devoid of illocutionary force

Table 12: Criteria used for data retrieval

The model adopted for the identification of the working units is Chafe (1987)'s *extended clause* concept, according to which an intonation unit coinciding with a clause (see Chapter 1, § 1.2) may be integrated by other intonation unit fragments consisting of clausal disfluences (e.g. false starts, afterthoughts) or serving as orientation for clauses (e.g. temporal, spatial, epistemic). Hence, according to the positional criterion, all the expressions occurring at the end of a simple clause, as in (1), or after a more complex sentence (2) were included in the selection.[155]

1. 特神, 那家伙![156]

   Tè shén, nà jiāhuo!

   Too smart that fellow

   'Extraordinary, that fellow!'   (CallFriend/zho-m/5975)

2. 呃不过, 不过大家都那个:分都低的话,也不影响, 我 觉得.

   È   búguò, búguo dàjiā   dōu nà-ge: fēn   dōu dī dehuà, yě bù yǐngxiǎng a,

   Mhm but but   everyone all   that-CLF score all low if,   also not influence   SFP

   wǒ juédé.

   1SG think

   'Yeah, but if everybody's score is low, it won't matter, I think.'   (CallFriend/zho-m/4447)

However, expressions occurring after a single non-focal phrase such as a sentence-initial topic were excluded. (3) is an example of a pragmatic marker (*nǐ zhīdao me* 你知道么 'you know') – occurring immediately after a topical fragment comprising the sentence subject and time frame – which was not included in the study:

3. 我当时, 你知道么, 我是想买一百的.

   Wǒ dāngshí, nǐ   zhīdao me, wǒ shì xiǎng mǎi yī-bǎi   de.

   1SG then   2SG know SFP 1SG be   want   buy one-hundred NMLZ

   'At that time, you know, I wanted to buy the one hundred one.'   (CallFriend/zho-m/5773)

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[155] Unless specifically wishing to distinguish between the end of a simple clause or a complex sentence, I will henceforth use *sentence-final* or *utterance-final* as generic terms referring to both cases.

[156] For the sake of coherence, all the dislocated SFEs will be separated from the main clause by means of a comma, regardless of their degree of prosodic integration. Whenever deemed necessary, the duration of the eventual pause between the clause and the SFE will be signalled in brackets.

Based on the syntactic criterion, both expressions whose unmarked position is sentence-final, and expressions which are not canonically produced in sentence-final position were considered. The latter include prototypical right dislocations, such as (1), but also more or less grammaticalized expressions occurring at the end of a clause or sentence, such as the epistemic marker *wǒ juéde* 我觉得 'I think' in (2),[157] while the former include object NPs as the one in (4), but also complex VPs such as the one in (5), which were prosodically deaccented as an effect of a narrow focalization of another element in the utterance. In (4), speaker A is trying to explain to B what the funniest film is in her opinion. After describing a few major events happening in the film, B still hasn't understood which movie A is talking about, so she produces an utterance with a narrow focus on *kàn* 看 'see' to express her puzzlement towards B not recalling that specific film. As one can observe from Figure 9, the object NP *zhè-ge* 这个 'this' is uttered in its unmarked postverbal position and is produced with a typical post-focal compression intonation (Xu & Xu, 2005; Xu, 2015).

4. Context: A is describing a movie to B:

A: 你^看过这个, 你在-你就^咱仨的时候你看过.

Nǐ   KÀN-guò zhè-ge,   nǐ   zài-   nǐ   jiù   ZÁN-SĀ   de   shíhou   nǐ   kàn-guo.
2SG see-EXP this-CLF 2SG be.at2 SG   just us-three   REL moment 2SG see-EXP.

'You've already seen it, you've seen it (that time) when it was the three of us.'

(CallFriend/zho-m/5975)

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[157] As one of the reviewers of this thesis insightfully suggests, it is important to highlight that at least in the case of expressions such as *wo juede* – but also as far as other more or less grammaticalized SFEs are concerned – markedness is subject to diachronic change and should be regarded as a matter of degree rather than an ontological category.
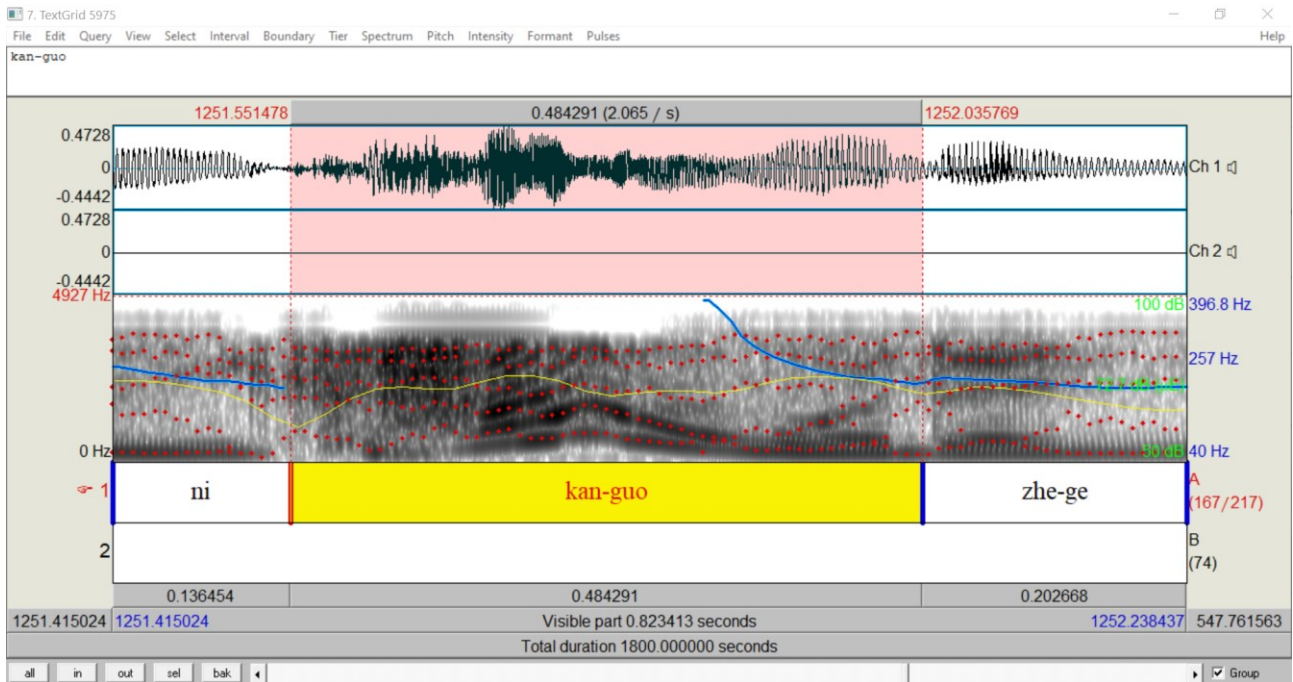
Figure 9: Intonation pattern of a topical postverbal object NP (Callfriend/zho-m/5975)

A similar post-focal compression can be observed in (5), wherein the focalized constituent is the subject NP in (quasi) sentence-initial position, with the consequent topicalization of the sentence-final VP, which also includes the SFP closing the utterance.

5. Context: A and B are talking about how the character representing the name of B's cousin is written.

A: 我以为是金子和银子的银了. "I thought it was the ying composed of [the radicals] "metal" and "silver.""

B: 噢, 不是. "Oh, it's not."

那个莹-^莹火虫的莹好象就是这样吧?

Nà-ge yíng- YÍNGHUŎCHÓNG de yíng hǎoxiàng shì zhè-yàng ba?

That-CLF ying- firefly ATTR ying seems be this-way SFP

'Apparently, (it is) the ying in YINGHUOCHONG (firefly) (that) is (written) like that.'

(CallFriend/zho-m/4447)
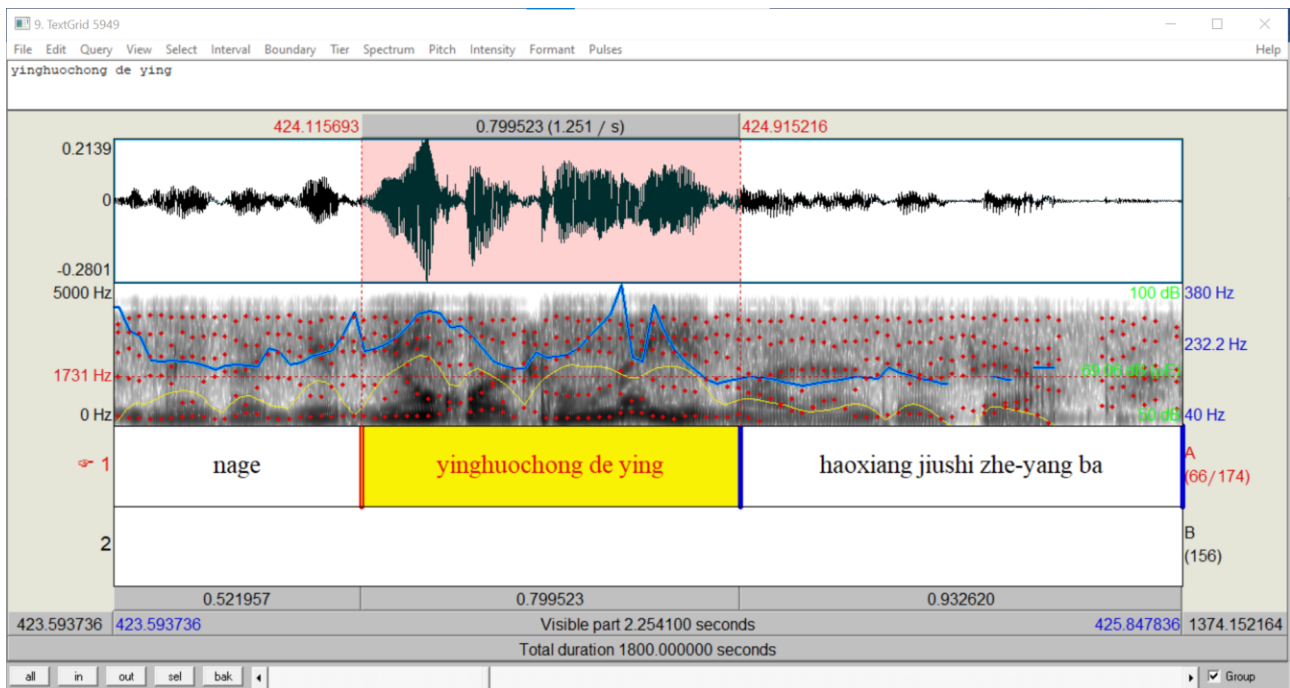
Figure 10: Intonation pattern of a topical sentence-final VP (Callfriend/zho-m/5949)

According to the third criterion, only expressions with reduced intonation such as those presented throughout (1)-(5) were included in the study. However, expressions with non-parenthetical – i.e. prominent – prosody as the one in (6) representing an independent focus were excluded from the study. In the latter case, the NP *one pound* (*yī bàng* 一磅) can be considered as realizing a speech act that is independent from the previous two: the first informs speaker A that B is talking about sea crabs, the second informs A of the price of sea crabs, whereas the third one specifies that the given price refers to a quantity of one pound.

6. A: 你们那是海蟹还是河蟹啊？ 'The ones you have there are sea crabs or river crabs?'

   B: 海蟹啊, 一块六到两块钱吧, 一磅.

   Hǎixiè   a,   yī-kuài-liù   dào   liǎng-kuài qián   ba, yī   bàng.
   Sea.crabs SFP one-CLF-six   arrive two-CLF   money   SFP one pound
   'Sea crabs! One dollar sixty up to two dollars, one pound.' (CallFriend/zho-m/5905)

The figure below shows a non-reduced and rather distinct tonal pattern observable for the expression *yi bang*.
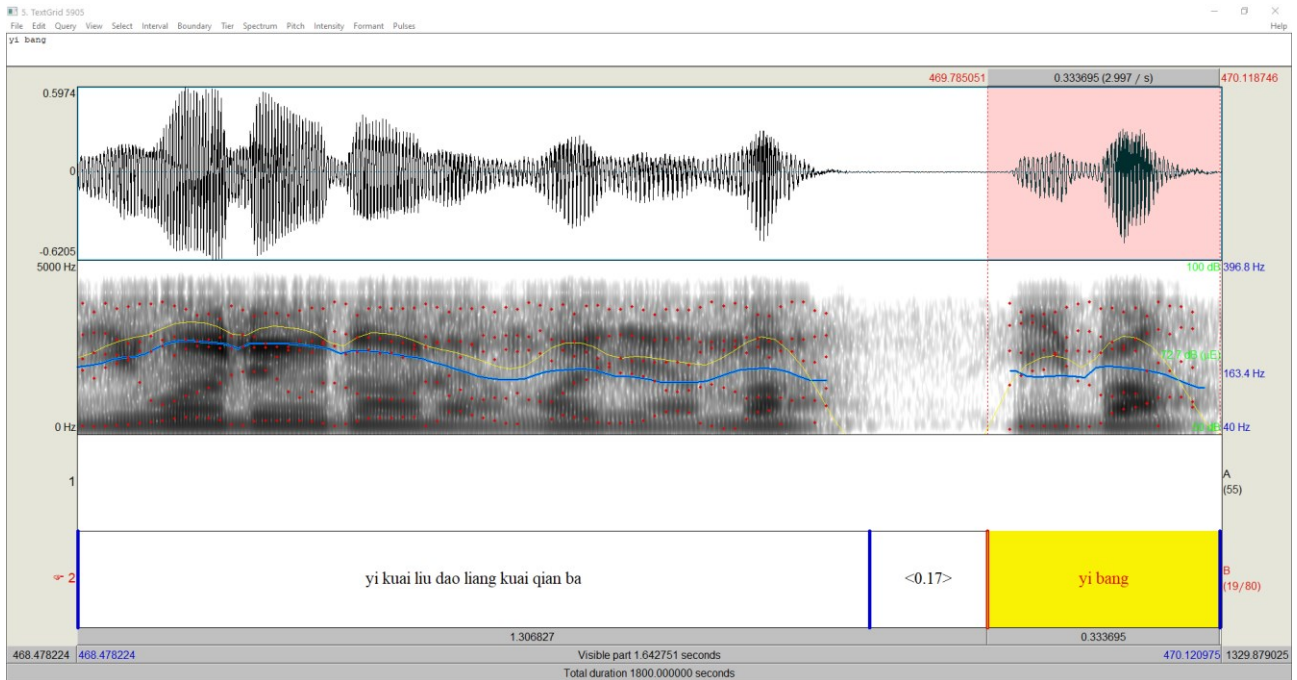
Figure 11: Intonation pattern of yi bang (Callfrienf/zho-m/5905)

In order to keep the sample size manageable, question tags and (partial) repetitions of verbs in sentence-final position as in (7), were excluded from the annotated sample.

7. A: 我知道你们肯定是去那玩去了.

       Wǒ zhīdào nǐmen kěndìng qù nà'r wán'r qù-le.

       1SG know 2PL surely go there have.fun go-PERF.

       'I know that you must have gone there to have fun.'   (CallFriend/zho-m/5195)

Finally, according to the last criterion, the sentence-final expressions included in the sample were devoid of illocutionary force, while elements such as the chunk in (8), although characterized by flat intonation, were excluded based on their independent informational status. In fact, such elements are very likely to convey an additional speech act with respect to the utterance they follow, be it fully interrogative or just rhetorical.[158]

8. 我当时就急了, 你知道吧?

       Wǒ dāngshí jiù jí-le, nǐ zhīdào ba.

       1SG then just hurry-PFV, 2SG know SFP

       'I was in a hurry then, you know?'   (CallFriend/zho-m/4447)

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[158] I am indebted to one of the reviewers of this thesis for pointing out this issue.

Lastly, utterances could contain either single or multiple SFEs. When deciding whether a stretch of talk in sentence-final position constituted a unitary expression or not, prosodic, syntactic and semantic contiguity was taken into account: unless separated by a pause or by a distinct prosodic break, contiguous elements were considered as a unitary chunk. As an illustration, an expression such as *kěnéng shì* 可能是 'maybe is' consisting of a modal adverb and a copula was considered as a single SFE, for it is widely recognized that at the current step of its grammaticalization process, the Mandarin copula *shì* 是 'be' can combine with adverbial elements to produce new emergent adverbial and conjunctive chunks (Dong, 2004; A. Wu & Biq, 2011); the same holds for expressions pre-modified by the multifunctional scalar adverb *jiù* 就 'just; exactly' which can function, among other things, as an upward or downward intensifier depending on the pragmatic context it intersects with, as a textual connective, or simply as a semantically empty filler (Biq, 2001; Huang, 2013). Examples of the latter type of expressions are *jiù kěnéng* 就可能 'maybe' and *jiù yǐjīng* 就已经 'already'. On the other hand, expressions such as *Běijīng xiànzài* 北京现在 'Beijing now' or *xiànzài nà-ge dìfang* 现在那个地方 'now that place' were considered instances of multiple SFEs (composed of *Beijing* and *xianzai,* and *xianzai* and *na-ge difang* respectively), based on the prosodic segmentation of the two components. The total 686 instances of SFEs retrieved from the selected conversations correspond to a total amount of 671 utterances.

2.3. Data annotation

After retrieving the total 686 occurrences of SFEs from the 12 conversations randomly selected from the CallFriend corpus, each occurrence was annotated based on a number of dimensions, some of which refer to the sentence containing the expression as a whole, and others specifically focusing on the SFEs. In the following section, the annotation criteria for all the variables used for statistical analysis will be explained in detail and examples will be given to illustrate the process. Since one particular annotation dimension posed significant difficulties of classification, a theoretical remark on the framework adopted for the annotation of the speech act is anticipated here.

A number of taxonomies and classification proposals have been put forth in the literature since Austin (1962) and Searle (1976)'s classical model of speech acts. Among these, some are specifically designed for the analysis of spoken interactions, such as Cresti (2000)'s model, which is based on the empirical observation of naturalistic spoken language and hinges on a definition of focus (or *comment*, in some of her writings) as realizing the illocutionary purpose of the utterance which was adopted as one of the guiding principles of this thesis (see Chapter 1, § 1.4.2). However, appealing as it may be from a theoretical point of view, when trying to apply the taxonomical model to the corpus data, I

have found it extremely difficult to distinguish between similar speech acts without relying exclusively on my subjective intuition. As an example, differences between speech acts such as "explanation" and "comment", "disapproval" and "dissent" or "disagreement" are only defined based on the (native) speaker's perception and thus hardly applicable and replicable in a more objective way. Equally difficult to apply to my data were the models developed by Stolcke et al. (2000) and Leech and Weisser (2014), both specifically designed for the automatic recognition and annotation of dialogues but based on English data. Moreover, the distribution of the sample data retrieved for analysis is such that the great majority of the speech acts fall under the category of representatives. Therefore, while a more fine-grained classification seemed appropriate for these acts, it appeared counterproductive when it came to other speech acts – at least from the point of view of statistical analysis.

Based on these considerations, I have chosen to annotate my data sample with recourse to the classical Searlian model, tailored and adapted to suit the characteristics of the corpus data itself. In other words, while adopting the generally recognized five macro-categories of speech acts – viz. representative or assertive, expressive, directive, commissive and declarative – the representative group was further divided into specific types. The subclassification is based specifically on Tantucci (2016)'s taxonomical proposal of constative speech acts, which distinguishes between assertive, evaluative and presentative speech acts beyond the generally assumed purpose of information-transmitting: an assertive speech act introduces or maintains a proposition (p) as a fact to be acknowledged by the addressee;[159] an evaluative act is intended to induce the addressee to consider the speaker's reasoning process about the truthfulness of p; finally, a presentative speech act is prototypically aimed at resulting trustworthy or reliable to the addressee. According to Tantucci, (factual) assertives do not allow the speaker to perform either a factual or an evaluational distancing, for s/he is fully committed to the truthfulness of the proposition and to her/his evaluation of it; evaluations only allow a factual distancing, whereas presentatives allow both types (Tantucci, 2016: 203-204).[160]

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[159] Utterances qualifying the state of affairs of a proposition as a fact, i.e. real or true, are concerned with "events that have occurred in real time, or are occurring at the time of speech" (Givón, 2001: 332). This notion has been referred to in the literature using different terms: *realis*, actuality, factivity, factuality and reality. In Tantucci (2016) the term employed to characterize assertions is "factual". However, as emerged from the discussion in § 1.4, presuppositions also involve presenting a content as true, but in a different way: in presuppositions the truth (or the falsity) of the content is assumed or taken for granted at the time of utterance; in assertions the truth of the content results from producing the utterance. In order to avoid terminological confusion also with factive expressions presupposing the truth of a proposition, I shall refer to these speech acts as *factual assertions* or simply *assertions*.

[160] According to Tantucci (2016), there are two forms of pragmatic *ascription* – i.e. commitment – involved in constative illocutionary speech acts: the S/W (speakers/writer) ascription towards her/his own evaluation and towards the factuality of the statement. Assertions are argued to imply both a factual and an evaluational ascription, i.e. they disallow the S/W's

The three types of representatives are adopted here and relabelled as assertion, opinion and presentation respectively, in order to avoid terminological overlapping with other types of non-epistemic evaluation.

After this necessary anticipation, the following sections will discuss the criteria used for data annotation.

2.3.1. Annotation dimensions

The dimensions taken into consideration for data annotation are listed below:

1. The semantico-pragmatic function of the SFEs;
2. The gender of the speaker producing the utterance;
3. The gender of the two interactants;
4. The sentence type;
5. The speech act realized by the utterance;
6. The expression of a positive or negative stance on the part of the speaker;
7. The construction of the utterance as a positive or negative evaluation about X;
8. The presence of SFPs (sentence-final particles);
9. Rapport orientation, i.e. the type of relationship holding between the interlocutors;
10. Face work, i.e. a propositional evaluation of the hearer's face.
11. The thematic structure of the utterance;
12. The activation status of the SFE;
13. The coreferential status of the SFE.

As an illustration, a sample row of utterance-related annotation is given in Table 13 for the utterance represented in (9): [161]

9. 我, 我不知道, 我觉得我是老了还是怎么回事,

   'I don't know, I think I am getting old or something like that,'

   至少我觉得我-/我没有你那么聪明, 现在.

---

factual and evaluational distancing. Therefore, a statement such as "It's raining" is not compatible with a continuation negating the truthfulness of *p* (*but I'm not sure) or the commitment of S/W toward her/his own judgement stance (*but I don't think so). Evaluations allow factual distancing, i.e. a statement such as "I think (that) it's raining" is compatible with a continuation taking the form of "but I'm not sure". Finally, presentative speech acts do not involve either evaluational or factual ascription of S/W, for (s)he merely informs the addressee of a piece of knowledge that s(he) "has markedly acquired somehow", including by means of direct evidence (Tantucci, 2016: 199-204).

[161] Redundant coding variables and variables that were not employed for quantitative analysis are omitted from the annotation row for space reasons.

Zhìshǎo	wǒ juéde	wǒ wǒ	méi-yǒu nǐ	name	cóngming	xiànzài

Zhìshǎo   wǒ juéde   wǒ wǒ   méi-yǒu nǐ   name   cóngming   xiànzài

At.least   1SG think   1SG 1SG   not-have 2SG so   smart   now

'At least I think I am not as smart as you are, now.'   (CallFriend/zho-m/5982)

pragmatic function	speaker gender	interaction gender	sentence type	speech act	evaluation	evaluative structure	SFP	rapport orientation	face work	thematic structure	referent activation	coreferent
frame	F	F-M	declarative	opinion	neg	yes	no	RE	FEA	TC	sit_accessible	no

Table 13: Sample row of utterance-related annotation

2.3.1.1. Pragmatic types of SFEs

To begin with, in order to handle the big amount of different tokens occurring in sentence-final position, the SFEs were grouped into eight different data-driven categories based on their semantico-pragmatic contribution with respect to the utterance they occur in. This grouping draws on Halliday (1994)'s taxonomy of interpersonal, textual and topical theme, reelaborating and expanding it to account for the complexity of the context-dependent data.[162] A description of the criteria for the classification into eight corpus-driven categories identified for this level can be found below in Table 14:

Tag	Pragmatic function	Example
Interpersonal		
Modal	The expression provides a modal frame for the predication. It can be a modal verb, auxiliary or adverb, but also a complement-taking verb that intersects formally with an overt or covert 1st person pronoun.[163]	*kěnéng* 可能'maybe', *zhēnde* 真的 'really', *děi* 得 must, *wǒ juéde* 我觉得 'I think', *juézhe* 觉着 '[I] think'
Evaluative	The expression contains a non-modal subjective evaluation of the state of affairs described in *p*. The speaker is not overtly indexed.	*jianzhi shì* 简直是 'simply is', *jiù(shi)* 就(是) 'exactly (is)', *jiù duì le* 就对了 'that's right/alright', *cái* 才 'only'.

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[162] More specifically, *evaluative* is a term borrowed from Chu (1998), who uses it to refer to adverbs such as *yě* 也 'also', *jiù(shì)* 就(是) 'exactly (is)', *dōu* 都 'all', *yòu* 又 'again', expressing "the speaker's opinion or attitude" (Chu, 1998: 90).
[163] Here the term "modal" is taken to include only those "traditional" categories generally acknowledged by the majority of scholars, i.e. epistemic, deontic and dynamic modality (Nuyts, 2016: 33). Other strictly-connected categories such as evidentiality and (inter)subjectivity are included elsewhere.

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Evidential	The expression provides an evidential frame for the predication. It can be a (Subj.+) verb, an adverb or any other type of evidential phrase.	*tā shuō* 他说 'he said', *hǎoxiàng* 好像 'apparently', *wǒ fāxiàn* 我发现 'I realized'.
Swear	The expression represents an intensifying swear or taboo word.	*tā mā de* 他妈的 'damn', *wǒ cào* 我操 'fuck'.
Textual		
Text	The expression (originally) specifies a textual relation between clauses. It can retain (part of) its original propositional meaning or be entirely procedural.	*fǎnzhèng* 反正 'anyway', *érqiě (shì)* 而且(是) 'in addition', *búguò* 不过 'but/however'.
Topical		
Frame	The expression provides a time, space, domain or other type of field within which the predication holds. It is used to limit the applicability of the sentence focus.	*jīnnián* 今年 'this year', *zài nà* 在那 'there', *nǐ yào nà yang de hua* 你要那样的话 'if you'll do like that'.
Referent	The expression represents the *aboutness* topic of the utterance, *viz.* the entity that the proposition is construed as being about, including topic shift cases, given or contrastive topics.	*nà di'r* 那地儿 'that place', *zhè-ge job* 这个 job 'this job', *gāngcái nà-ge* 刚才那个 'the one just now.
Other	The expression is a topical stretch from the pragmatic point of view that does not fit any of the above conditions.	*hěn jìn* 很近 'very close', *dōu méi you* 都没有 'don't/doesn't have', *ná de* 拿的 'pick up'

Table 14: Corpus-driven criteria for the annotation of the pragmatic function

Among Halliday (1994)'s category of interpersonal themes, a corpus-driven distinction was made between four types of expressions: *modal* expressions comprehending all "traditional" modal types, including those overtly indexing the speaker (presence of 1ST person pronoun), *evaluatives* such as focusing adverbs and other types of expressions that convey a covert non-modal subjective stance (Chu, 1998), evidential expressions providing an evidential frame for the utterance, and *swearing* or taboo words; the category of textual themes includes connectives and expressions used to organize coherently the different parts of discourse; finally, topical themes include both *frames*, aboutness *referential* topics, and topical elements which do not fit any of the above conditions, i.e. *other*.

2.3.1.2. Speaker and hearer gender

Since men and women have been argued to employ different types of SFPs in their speech, it appears significant to observe whether this also holds true as far as SFEs are concerned. The speaker gender has been labelled as either M(ale) or F(emale), whereas an additional dimension of annotation took into account the intersection between speaker and hearer gender, leading to three possible

combinations of interaction genders: female to female (F-F), male to male (M-M), and female to male (F-M).

2.3.1.3. Sentence type

The variable *sentence type* intuitively refers to the "mood" of the sentence and was based on both theoretical and context-driven criteria, as summarized in Table 15:

Tag	Annotation Criteria
Declarative	assertive intonation, generally falling towards the end;
	compatible with assertive SFPs, e.g. *a* 啊, *ba* 吧, *ne* 呢, *ma2* 嘛, etc.
Interrogative	interrogative intonation, generally characterized by a rise or a fall-rise towards the end;
	compatible with interrogative SFPs, e.g. *ma1* 吗, *a*, *ba*, *ne*;
	compatible with question tags, e.g. *shì-ba* 是吧 'isn't ?', *duì-bu-dui* 对不对 'right?';
	compatible with the V-not-V structure or interrogative pronouns such as *shénme* 什么 'what', *shéi* 谁 'who', etc.
Exclamative	exclamative intonation, generally characterized by a falling curve towards the end-boundary with different possible degrees of steepness, according to the focal stress position;
	compatible with exclamatory SFPs, e.g. *a*, *ma2*;
	compatible with exclamatory markers such as degree adverbs (*hǎo* 好 'very much', *zhēn* 真 'really', *duōme* 多么 'so', *name* 那么 'so', *zhème* 这么 'so') and wh-elements, e.g. *zěnme* 怎么 'how', *nǎ* 哪 'which; where' (Chen, 2007: 52; Shi & Huang, 2016: 62; Badan & Cheng 2015: 389-391).
Imperative	imperative intonation;
	compatible with deontic verbs or adverbs such as *kěyǐ* 可以 'can', *yīnggāi* 应该 'should' , *bìxū* 必须 'must', etc.

Table 15: Criteria for the annotation of sentence types

Declarative sentences are produced with assertive intonation, generally falling towards the end (Liu, 2009: 25), regardless of their illocutionary force, i.e. the speech act. They may be formally marked by the presence of assertive SFPs such as a *a* 啊, *ba* 吧, *ne* 呢, *ma2* 嘛, etc. (C. Huang & Shi 2016: 2016: 62). An example is given in (10) below:

10. B: 我怀疑这, 这是上帝对我的惩罚, 大概.

   Wǒ húaiyì zhè- zhè shì shàngdì duì wǒ de   chéngfá,   dàgài.

1SG doubt this this be God to 1SG ATTR punishment probably

'I'm wondering if this is God's punishment for me, perhaps.' (Callfriend/zho-m/5982)

Interrogative utterances are produced with an interrogative intonation, generally characterized by a rise or a fall-rise towards the end (F. Liu, 2009: 25).[164] They can intersect formally with interrogative SFPs such as *ma1* 吗 or *ne* 呢, question tags such as *shì-ba* 是吧 or *duì-bu-duì* 对不对, they can have a V-not-V structure or contain interrogative pronouns such as *shénme* 什么 'what', *shéi* 谁 'who', etc. In (11) the interrogative sentence contains the interrogative pronoun *shenme* and the SFP *ya* 呀:

11. B: 你现在正在学什么呀, 现在呀?

Nǐ xiànzài zhèngzài xué shénme ya, xiànzài ya?
2SG now ASP study what SFP now SFP
'What (exactly) are you studying, right now?' (Callfriend/zho-m/5906)

Exclamative utterances are produced with exclamatory intonation, generally characterized by a falling curve towards the end-boundary with different possible degrees of steepness, according to the focal stress position (H. Chen, 2007: 50-52), and can intersect formally with exclamatory markers such as degree adverbs (*hǎo* 好 'very much', *zhēn* 真 'really', *duōme* 多么, *name* 那么, *zhème* 这么), wh-elements such as *zěnme* 怎么 'how', *nǎ* 哪 'which' or exclamatory SFPs such as *a* 啊 or *ma* 嘛, among others (Chen, 2007: 52; Shi & Huang, 2016: 62; Badan & Cheng, 2015: 389-391).[165] The exclamation in (12) is marked through what Chen (2007:52) calls the *sǐ* 死 'die' pattern:

12. B: 我恨死了, 费城!

Wǒ hèn-sǐ le, Fèichéng!
1SG hate-die SFP Philadelphia
'I hate it, Philadelphia!' (Callfriend/zho-m/5906)

Rhetorical questions were annotated as either exclamative or assertive based on the intonation pattern of the utterance, presence of SFPs or other relevant markers. In the two examples below, (13) was considered exclamative based on the presence of *zěnme* and the SFE *wǒ cào* 我操 'fuck', whereas (14) was labelled declarative based on the presence of the SFE *wo juede* and the low F0 curve

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[164] Note, however, that the specific intonation pattern may vary according to the tones and their combination (F. Liu, 2009: 25-29).
[165] For a more extensive list of elements marking exclamative sentences in spoken (television) discourse, see for e.g. Chen (2007).

characterizing the post-focal fragment, in addition to the presence of the SFP *ma1*, which is known to occur in rhetorical questions with assertive value (Liu et al., 2011: 416).

13. A: 这怎么可能呢, 我操!   (exclamative)

      Zhè   shì zěnme kěnéng ne, wǒ cào!

      This   be   how   possible SFP 1SG fuck

      'How is this possible, fuck!'   (Callfriend/zho-m/5673)

14. B: 这学校能有排名吗, 我觉得.   (declarative)

      Zhè   xúexiào néng   yǒu   páimíng ma, wǒ juéde.

      This   school can   have   ranking SFP 1sg think

      'This school can hardly have a ranking, I think.'

Finally, imperative sentences represent an instruction for the hearer, generally in the form (*nǐ* 你 'you' +) VP. According to the forcefulness of the illocution, the utterance may contain deontic verbs or adverbs such as *kěyǐ* 可以 'can', *yīnggāi* 应该 'should', *bìxū* 必须 'must', etc. The prosodic properties of such utterances remain basically unexplored in the literature, therefore the annotation relies mostly on the utterance locutionary and illocutionary content. Example (15) is an imperative sentence expressing a suggestion which is not marked off by any deontic marker:

15. A: 你以后你让他给你写下来, 我操!

      Nǐ   yǐhòu nǐ ràng tā   xiě   xià-lái,   wǒ cào!

      2SG after   2SG let   3SG.M write down-come   1SG fuck

      'In the future you [should] let him write [it] down, fuck!'   (Callfriend/zho-m/5653)

2.3.1.4. Speech acts

The reason for wanting to include into the analysis both sentence types and speech acts is intuitively connected to the fact that the two are not synonymous and in many cases do not coincide. For instance, the declarative sentence type can be rather versatile and express not only assertive speech acts, but – whenever inserted in the appropriate context – also opinions, commissives, expressives, commands, etc. (Fava & Salvi, 1995:49). The following is an example of a declarative sentence conveying an expressive speech act taken form the CallFriend Corpus:

16. A: 我倒是真的很盼望同学们都出来现在, 热闹一点.

      Wǒ dàoshi   zhēnde   hěn pànwàng tóngxué-men dōu chū-lái,   xiànzài, rènào

      1SG actually really   very hope   classmate-PL all exit-come now   lively

yī-diǎn.

a-bit

'Actually, I really hope that to our classmates will join us abroad now, it would livn

things up a bit.' (CallFriend/zho-m/5982)

The annotation of the *speech act* variable, as anticipated, is chiefly based on corpus-driven criteria. In order to keep the annotation as objective as possible, a number of corpus-driven lexico-structural features were defined and adopted for the operationalization of the speech acts. The criteria for the representative speech acts are first discussed in detail below and summarized in Table 16.

Through a speech act labelled assertion, the speaker makes a statement about a certain state of affairs which is presented as true, i.e. as a fact (already occurred, occurring or yet to occur). The speaker is committed towards the truth of *p*. This can intersect formally with factual epistemic expressions such as *zhēnde* 真的/ *zhēn* 真 'really', *quèshí* 确实 'actually; indeed', 倒是 *dàoshì* 'actually; indeed', etc. and can be marked by assertive SFPs such as *ma2* 嘛, *ne* 呢, *o* 哦, *la* 啦, *a* 啊 and its variants *ya* 呀, *na* 哪, *wa* 哇. Such assertions do not allow factual and/or evaluational distancing.[166] Example (17) below is an illustration of an assertive speech act containing the adverb *zhen*, which has the purpose and the effect of strengthening the commitment of the speaker towards his own judgment stance, while also reinforcing her commitment towards the truth of the proposition:

17. B: 真是怪啊, 这种事情.

Zhēn shì guài a, zhè zhǒng shìqing.

Really be odd SFP this type thing.

'It's really odd, this thing.' (CallFriend/zho-m/5906)

Utterances labelled *opinions* are instances of the speaker evaluating a state of affairs in terms of the possibility of its occurrence. These intersect formally with the presence of epistemic modal expressions such as modal verbs and modal adverbs (e.g. *kěnéng* 可能 'maybe', *yīnggāi* 应该 'shuould', *dàgai* 大概 'probably', *suànshì* 算是 'count as', etc.) or matrix clauses with 1st person-subject (e.g. *wǒ juéde* 我觉得 'I think', *wǒ xiǎng* 我想 'I think', *wǒ gǎnjúe* 我感觉 'I feel') used to express the speaker's degree of (un)certainty about *p*. This can intersect formally with the SFP *ba* or

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[166] In Tantucci (2016)'s taxonomy of constative speech acts, factual epistemics are not explicitly mentioned. However, since such expressions disallow the speaker's factual and evaluational distancing, they have been included as markers of the assertive speech act. (e.g. It is indeed raining, *but I am not sure/ *but I don't think so). In fact, at least some of these factual expressions can be considered as instances of *verum focus operators*, i.e. elements "emphasizing the truth of a proposition" (Lohnstein, 2016: 290), on a par with the function performed by the stressed copula *shì* 是 'be' before the verb (Hole, 2012: 50-51).

question tags (e.g. *shì-ba* 是吧 'isn't ?', *duì-bu-duì* 对不对 'right?'). Such assertions allow factual but not evaluational distancing, as one can observe from example (18), wherein the speaker is not fully committed to the truth of her proposition, despite being committed to her own judgment, i.e. she presents the utterance as a product of her own reasoning process about the truth of *p*.

18. 可能-可能觉得-我老板可能就得撤了, 这个地方.

    Kěnéng- kěnéng juéde- wǒ lǎobǎn kěnéng děi chè le, zhè-ge dìfang.

    Maybe maybe think 1SG boss maybe must dismiss SFP this-CLF place

    'I think perhaps my boss will have to dismiss it, his place.'   (CallFriend/zho-m/5930)

The last type of representative speech act is *presentation*, by means of which the speaker presents a piece of information that (s)he somehow acquired. This intersect formally with the presence of evidential expressions, either specifying the source of knowledge or evidence (e.g. *tā shuō* 他/她 说 '(s)he said', *wǒ fāxiàn* 我发现 ' I discovered/realized') or not (e.g. *hǎoxiàng* 好像 'apparently'), and can be marked by any type of SFPs. Such assertions allow both evaluational and factual distancing, for the content of the proposition is simply presented as information that the speaker somehow acquired. This type of speech act can only intersect with epistemic expressions that are non-performative – i.e. not involving the speaker's own subjective evaluation (Tantucci & Wang, 2018: 61; Nuyts, 2016). In (19), the speaker first makes an assertion, which would imply both factual and evaluational ascription. However, by appending the SFE *wǒ tīng tā de yīsi shì shuō* 我听她的意思 是说 'I think she meant to say (based on what I heard)' at the end of her utterance, the illocution is modified and the information is (retrospectively) presented as something she inferred from what someone else said.

19. 他们俩也没- 没办婚礼啊, 我听她的意思是说.

    Tāmen-liǎ yě méi-méi bàn hūnlǐ a, wǒ tīng tā de yīsi shì shuō.

    3PL-CLF also not not perform wedding SFP 1SG listen 3SG ATTR meaning is say

    'The two of them also did not have a wedding party, I think she meant to say.'

    (CallFriend/zho-m/5195)

In the great majority of cases the production of the SFE had no influence in determining the speech act conveyed by the utterance; however, a limited number of SFEs such as evidential and modal expressions can modify the illocutionary force of the utterance, as in example (19), where an assertion is retrospectively converted into a presentative speech act. Since the purpose of this study is to observe the type of contextual environment that triggers the use of SFEs, I have chosen to annotate the speech act carried out by the utterance without the contribution of the SFEs, which are discussed qualitatively

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whenever needed. In other words, for the purpose of this study, it was more interesting to assess whether evidentials or modals occurred at the end of assertive speech acts to reduce the speaker's commitment towards the asserted propositions, rather than tautologically noticing the occurrence of evidentials in presentative constructions and that of modals in opinions (which might be annotated as such specifically because of the presence of these evidential or modal expressions).

The criteria used for the annotation of the three representative speech acts are summarized in Table 16:

Representatives		
Tag	Corpus-driven annotation criteria	
Assertion	S(peaker) makes a statement about a person, thing or state of affairs	yes
	p contains non-factual epistemic expressions[167]	no
	p can be marked by the SFP *ba* and q-tags	no
	p contains evidential expressions	no
	allows factual distancing (p, but I am not sure)	no
	allows evaluational distancing (p, but I don't think so)	no
Opinion	S makes a statement about a person, thing or state of affairs	yes
	p contains non-factual epistemic expressions	yes
	p can be marked by the SFP *ba* and q-tags	yes
	p contains evidential expressions	no
	allows factual distancing (p, but I am not sure)	yes
	allows evaluational distancing (p, but I don't think so)	no
Presentation	S makes a statement about a person, thing or state of affairs	yes
	p contains non-factual epistemic expressions	non-performative
	p can be marked by the SFP *ba* and q-tags	non-performative
	p contains evidential expressions	yes
	allows factual distancing (p, but I am not sure)	yes
	allows evaluational distancing (p, but I don't think so)	yes

Table 16: Corpus-driven criteria for the annotation of representative speech acts

Through a directive speech act, the speaker makes a positive or negative request for carrying out a task to the hearer. For this typology, three types of speech act have been identified based on the data sample: *requests*, *questions* and *rhetorical questions*. The label *request* specifically refers to the task of carrying out an action, a *question* applies to a request to the hearer to provide a verbal answer, while a rhetorical question evaluates a state of affairs rather than requesting a verbal or physical

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[167] Here non-factual is used in its literal sense to refer to expressions which do not present p as necessarily true, i.e. as a fact. In this sense, it is not synonymous with *counterfactual*, i.e. it does not presuppose the falsity of p, but it rather indicates that S is not fully committed to the truth of p.

reaction. *Request* is used as an umbrella term for speech acts with various degrees of forcefulness, including suggestions, advices, commands, orders, etc. This speech act can intersect formally with performative deontic modals (e.g. *bìxū* 必须 'must', *yīnggāi* 应该 'should', *bié* 别/ *búyào* 不要 'do not', etc.) and/or SFPs such as such as *ba* 吧 and *bei* 呗, which prompt the addressee to engage in a certain physical action. Example (20) shows an instance of advice realized without any formal deontic marking:

20. 我觉得它贵啊, 但是如果石京觉得 n-住那个还成的话,

    'I believe it is expensive, but if Shijing thinks it's ok to live there,'

    那你就住那个呗, 先.

    Nà   nǐ   jiù zhù nà-ge   bei xiān.

    Then 2SG just live that-CLF SFP first

    'Then just live there for the time being.'   (CallFriend/zho-m/4389)

A question represents a request on the part of the speaker to the hearer to provide a piece of information s/he assumedly does not now (yet). This intersects formally with a question mark, a V-not-V structure, interrogative SFPs (e.g. *ma1* 吗, *a* 啊, *ba* 吧, *ne* 呢) or interrogative pronouns (e.g. *shénme* 什么 'what', *shéi* 谁 'who'). In (21), the question is marked off by the interrogative expression *zěnme-yàng* 怎么样 'how about' and by a question mark. In this case too, the SFE *xiànzài* 先在 'now' does not impact on the illocutionary force of the utterance:

21. 啊,你那个开车怎么样, 现在?

    A, nǐ nà-ge   kāichē   zěnme-yàng, xiànzài?

    Ah 2SG that-CLF drive   how.about   now

    'Ah, how is it going with driving, now?   (CallFriend/zho-m/4198)

A *rhetorical question* was introduced as a speech act to include all those utterances with interrogative forms whose ultimate illocutionary purpose is to convey a message rather than to question the interlocutor. This corresponds to the speaker formulating a question (s)he does not expect the hearer to actually reply to (i.e. a rhetorical question), a negative-interrogative question or a question containing a strong bias towards a positive or negative reply. Rhetorical questions can intersect formally with negative interrogative forms (e.g. *bújiù* 不就 'not just'/*búshì* 不是 'not be'…*ma1* 吗 /*ma2* 嘛) or expressions as rhetorical *zěnme* 怎么 'how' and *nǎ* 哪 'which; where'. An example is provided in (22), which has an interrogative form conveying an exclamatory intention rather than a true question on the part of the speaker:

22. 抽什么疯儿啊, 你?

    Chōu   shénme fēng'r a,   nǐ?

    Take.out what   crazy SFP 2SG

    'What's wrong with you?'   (CallFriend/zho-m/5975)

The criteria employed to identify the three different types of directive speech act are summarized in Table 17:

Directives	
Tag	Corpus-driven annotation criteria
Request	S makes a positive or negative request to H
	compatible with performative deontic modals
	compatible with imperative SFPs (e.g. *ba* 吧, *bei* 呗)
Question	S requests H to provide a piece of information (s)he assumedly does not know yet.
	P formally intersects with a question mark, V-not-V structure, interrogative SFPs or interrogative pronouns.
	Compatible with question tags (e.g. *shì-ba* 是吧 'isn't?', *duì-bu-duì* 对不对 'right?')
Rhetorical question	S formulates a question (s)he does not expect H to reply to (i.e. a rhetorical question), a negative-interrogative question or a question strongly biased towards a positive or negative reply.
	Compatible with negative interrogative forms (e.g. *bújiù* 不就/*búshì* 不是 'not just' …*ma1* 吗/*ma2* 嘛).
	compatible with expressions such as rhetorical *zěnme* 怎么 'how' and *nǎ* 哪 'which; where'.

Table 17: Corpus-driven criteria for the annotation of directive speech acts

An expressive speech act is uttered by the speaker to express her/his own psychological state (feeling, emotion or wish). This intersects formally with verbal, adjectival or nominal predicates coding psychological states (e.g. *juéde* 觉得 'think; feel', *gǎnjúe* 感觉 'think; feel'), but also with volition/boulomaic modal expressions (e.g. *xīwàng* 希望 'hope', *pànwàng* 盼望 'long for', *xiang* 想 'wish'). Such acts are also formally compatible with assertive and exclamative SFPs such as *de* 的, *le* 了, *la* 啦, *ma2*. An example is given in (23), wherein the speaker markedly expresses his dislike towards the city of Philadelphia through the psychological verb *hèn* 恨 'hate'. In addition, one can also observe that through the production of the chunk *nǐ zhīdào ba* 你知道吧 'you know', the speaker tries to reach an empathic alignment of views with the hearer:

23. B: 我恨死啦, 费城, 你知道吧?

    Wǒ hèn sǐ   la, Fèichéng,   nǐ zhīdào   ba?

    1SG hate die SFP Philadelphia 2SG know   SFP

'I really hate it, Philadelphia, you know?' (CallFriend/zho-m/5906)

Table 18 summarizes the annotation criteria for expressive speech acts:

Tag	Corpus-driven annotation criteria
Expressive	S expresses her/his own psychological state (feeling, emotion or wish).
	compatible with predicates coding psychological states (e.g. *juéde* 觉得 'feel', *gǎnjúe* 感觉 'feel').
	compatible with volition modal expressions (e.g. *xīwàng* 希望, *pànwàng* 盼望, *xiang* 想).
	compatible with assertive and exclamative SFPs (e.g. *de* 的, *le* 了, *la* 啦, *ma2*).

Table 18: Corpus-driven criteria for the annotation of expressive speech acts

Finally, through a commissive speech act the speaker commits herself/himself towards a future state of events. This intersects formally with futurity markers (e.g. *huì* 会 'will') or agreement markers indicating acceptance of a proposal (e.g. *kěyǐ* 可以 'it's ok') and is compatible with assertive or exclamative SFPs (e.g. *a*). An example is provided below in (24), wherein the only available clue to identify the intention of carrying out a future course of action is the presence of the time expression (next) *winter*.

24. 我 winter 去你 lab, 我操.

    Wǒ winter qù nǐ   lab, wǒ cào.

    3SG winter go   2SG lab 1SG fuck

    'I'll go to your lab this winter, fuck. (CallFriend/zho-m/5784)

The criteria used for the annotation are summarized in Table 19 below:

Tag	Corpus-driven annotation criteria
Commit (commissive)	S commits self to a future state of events.
	intersect with futurity markers (e.g. *huì* 会 'will') or agreement markers indicating acceptance of a proposal (e.g. *kěyǐ* 可以 'it's ok').
	compatible with assertive and exclamative SFPs (e.g. *a* 啊).

Table 19: Corpus-driven criteria for the annotation of commissive speech acts

Because no declarative speech act was found in the sample data in correlation to the use of SFEs, these were disregarded from the annotation and discussion.

2.3.1.5. Evaluation

The variable labelled *evaluation* refers to the speaker expressing an evaluative stance – which may be either positive or negative. The criteria adopted to measure this particular linguistic dimension are

based on those employed in Timmis (2015) and were designed to detect linguistically explicit features conveying such an evaluation. An utterance was considered to contain an evaluative stance on the part of the speaker whenever the utterance contained intensifiers (e.g. *zhén/zhēnde* 真/真的 'really', *tài* 太 'too'), superlatives (e.g. *zuì* 最 'the most'), strongly evaluative adjectives (e.g. *nánshòu* 难受 'unwell', *shén* 神 'smart') nouns (e.g. *chéngfá* 惩罚 'punishment', *wèntí* 问题 'problem'), verbs (e.g. *hèn* 恨 'hate', *xǐhuan* 喜欢 'like') or adverbs (e.g. *suíbiàn* 随便 'as one pleases') whose meaning is inherently positive or negative or acquires positive or negative connotation in the given context. The three modalities of this dimension are *pos* (positive), *neg* (negative), or *no* (absent).

Table 20 summarizes the explicit linguistic features used to identify an utterance containing an evaluation:

Annotation criteria	Examples
intensifiers	*zhén/zhēnde* 真/真的 'really', *tài* 太 'too'
superlatives	*zuì* 最 'the most'
evaluative adjectives	*nánshòu* 难受 'unwell', *shén* 神 'smart'
evaluative nouns	*chéngfá* 惩罚 'punishment', *wèntí* 问题 'problem'
evaluative verbs	*hèn* 恨 'hate', *xǐhuan* 喜欢 'like'
evaluative adverbs	*suíbiàn* 随便 'as one pleases'

Table 20: Corpus-driven criteria for the annotation of evaluative stance (Adapted from Timmis, 2015: 318)

In the majority of the cases, positive and negative evaluation could be easily discerned based on the inherent semantics of the evaluation expressions. To give a few examples, the words *cōngmíng* 聪明 'clever', *búcuò* 不错 'not bad', *piàoliang* 漂亮 'beautiful', *hǎo* 好 'good', *fāngbian* 方便 'comfortable', can be said to have an inherent positive connotation in most of the communicative situations, while words such as *nánshòu* 难受 'uncomfortable', *fùdān* 负担 'burden', *lǎn* 懒 'lazy', (*hài*)*pà* (害)怕 'fear', *lèi* 累 'tired' convey a negative connotation. However, for a number of expressions, the distinction between positive and negative evaluation is highly context-dependent. As an example, the adjective *gāo* 高 'tall; high', may acquire either a positive or negative value depending on the context it is inserted in: if associated with a verb like *kǎo* 考 'take an exam; score', as illustrated in (25), the conveyed evaluation is positive; when referring to a noun like *shēnghuó(fèi)* 生活(费) 'living (expenses)', as in (26), a negative interpretation arises instead:

25. 嗯, 你这个裸考这么高啊, 我操!

    Ǹg, nǐ zhè-ge luǒ   kǎo zhème gāo a,   wǒ cào.

    Oh   2SG this-CLF naked   exam so   high SFP 1SG fuck

'Oh, you got such a high score on this examination without preparing, fuck!'

<div align="right">(CallFriend/zho-m/5784)</div>

26. 我们这儿是全国生活最高的, Washington.

Wǒmen	zhè'r	shì	quán	guó	shēnghuó	zuì	gāo	de,	Washington.
1PL	here	be	whole	country	living	most	high	NMLZ	Washington

'We have the highest living expenses in the country, [in] Washington.'

<div align="right">(CallFriend/zho-m/5906)</div>

Other grey areas are represented by cases of mockery, impoliteness or even sarcasm, wherein the distinction between positive and negative evaluation is less straigthforward. In the following example, the evaluative phrase *yǒu yìsi* 有意思 'be funny; interesting', which generally bears a positive connotation, acquires a negative meaning in the context of a mockery: speaker B is mocking A by telling him that he is funny, meaning to intend that he is not funny at all. To this, A replies by attributing the same adjective back to B, conveying an equally negative piece of evaluation.[168]

27. B: 你现在还挺有意思的哈? '[You think] you're being really funny huh?'

Zh-^你才有意思呢.

Zh-	Nǐ	cái	yǒu	yìsi	ne.
	2SG	only	have	interest	SFP

'YOU are the funny one.'

<div align="right">(CallFriend/zho-m/5905)</div>

Intimately connected but not overlapping with the preceding dimension is the one labelled *evaluative structure*, which refers to the utterance being construed in the form (1st pers. subj.) (+ cognition/perception verb) (X) (be) good/bad. Since different authors have argued that referential right dislocations might be connected with specific types of predications involving some sort of evaluation (i.a. Aijmer, 1989; Lambrecht, 1981; Ziv, 1994), this dimension was added to assess the validity of this correlation. Evaluative structures formally intersect with the presence of a positive or negative evaluation on the part of the speaker. An example of an evaluative structure conveying a positive evaluation is given below in (28), while (29) contains a negative evaluative structure:

28. 很 好 啊, 那 个 录像机.

Hěn hǎo a, nà-ge lùxiānjī.

Very good   SFP, that-CLF video.recorder.

'It's very good, that video recorder.'   (CallFriend/zho-m/5982)

29. 明大化学系很臭的, 我操.

Míngdà   huàxuéxì   hěn chòu de, wǒ cào.

Minnesota.University   chemistry.department   very smelly SFP, 1SG fuck

'The Chemistry Department of Minnesota University is very bad, fuck.'

(CallFriend/zho-m/5784)

2.3.1.1. Intersubjectivity

Looking back at the sample row of annotation at the beginning of § 2.3.1, the eighth variable refers to the presence of sentence-final particles (SFPs). These include, among others, both the particles *le* 了 and *de* 的 performing (inter)subjective functions (see Chapter 2, § 4.1), as well as question tags performing *ba* 吧-equivalent functions.[169]

Moreover, SFPs could occur in two positions within the utterance: (i) between the utterance focus and the SFE, marking the dislocated status of the latter, as in (30); (ii) after the SFEs, mostly in narrow focus instances, as in (31).

30. 叶正义, 他写作业呢, 在.

Yè Zhèngyì, tā   xiě   zuòyè   ne, zài.

Ye Zhengyi 3SG.M write   homework SFP ASP

'Ye Zhenyi, he ['s] doing his homework, is.'   (CallFriend/zho-m/5784)

31. 就是 computer 简直^高中生都都都 h- 都用嘛.

Jiùshì   computer jiǎnzhí GĀOZHŌNG-SHĒNG   dōu dōu h- dōu yòng ma

Just.be   computer simply   HIGH.SCHOOL-STUDENTS   all   all h- all   use   SFP

'Computers, even HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS can use them.'   (CallFriend/zho-m/5784)

However, the two can also co-exist, as shown in (32). Thus, in order to render the levels of this annotation dimension mutually exclusive, only the former position was taken into account, i.e. the one exemplified in (30), wherein the SFE occurs between the utterance focus and the SFE.

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[169] Note, however, that since the modalities of each dimension are intended to be mutually exclusive, question tags occurring after the SFE were disregarded here and only those preceding the SFEs were taken into account. If multiple SFPs were present, the one with a wider syntactic scope was taken into consideration (for a detailed account of the syntactic scope of SFPs see e.g. Li, 2006; Paul, 2014; Pan, 2019).

32. 我觉得, 不-那个:^阿^拉^巴^马挺好的, 现在啊.

> Wǒ   juéde, bù- nà-ge: Ālābāmǎ   tǐng   hǎo   de,   xiànzài   a.
>
> 1SG   think not- that-CLF Alabama   rather good   now   SFP
>
> 'But I think Alabama University is pretty good, now.'   (CallFriend/zho-m/5195)

Two further dimensions concerning intersubjectivity are *rapport orientation* and *face work*. These are both borrowed and adapted from Tantucci & Wang (2018) in order to explore the connection between the use of SFEs and the management of politeness and face in discourse.[170] Because the purpose of the study is to uncover the factors triggering the use of SFEs, both dimensions have been annotated without taking into consideration the SFE, but only focusing on the sentence portion preceding them.

As far as rapport orientation is concerned, instances of rapport enhancement (RE) refer to the speaker attempting to improve his/her rapport with the hearer, thus (s)he says something that might result advantageous or beneficial for the addressee, as happens in example (33), wherein speaker B gives A a piece of advice about how to solve an important problem:

33. Context: A explains to B that someone fraudulently withdrew 2500 dollars from her and her husband's bank account and that they are now looking for someone to help them solve this issue.

> B: Yeah. 找一个-找一个律师, 我觉得.
>
> Yeah. Zhǎo   yī-ge-   zhǎo   yī-ge   lǜshī,   wǒ   juéde.
>
> Yeah   search one-CLF search one-CLF lawyer,   1SG think
>
> 'Yeah, (you should) look for a lawyer, I think.'   (CallFriend/zho-m/4227)

The rapport management orientation refers to the speaker overtly codifying her/his awareness of the hearer's potential reaction to the utterance. This intersects formally with presence of clause-periphery intersubjective markers (sentence-final particles such as *a* 啊, *ma1* 吗, *ma2* 嘛, *ne* 呢, *le* 了, *de* 的, etc.) and peripheral periphrastic strategies (e.g. agreement markers such as *duì* 对 'right', *ǹg* 嗯 'm-hm', *ò* 哦, yeah, *wǒ gàosu nǐ* 我告诉你 'let me tell you') either in the single utterance or in the longer

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[170] Tantucci & Wang (2018)'s study investigates the relationship between different dimensions of what they call "illocutional concurrences". Specifically, their study tests the connection between modalised evaluations – utterances expressing a modal stance – and usage-based instantiations of face. By combining Brown & Levinson (1987)'s concept of face-threatening act and Spencer-Oatey (2008)'s broader concept of rapport orientation holding between interactants, they set up a number of criteria to identify the relationship between overtly coded propositional face work, i.e. "whether FTAs or FEAs result from the very evaluation that the speaker makes about the Addressee" and "overt signs of rapport-management in interaction" (Tantucci & Wang, 2018: 65).

stretch of talk to which the SFE refers to. SFEs themselves are naturally disregarded when annotating this dimension. An example is given in (34) below:

34. 我觉得太-我告诉你-太没劲儿了嘛, 现在.

    Wǒ juéde tài- wǒ gàosu nǐ- tài méi   jìng'r le   ma, xianzai.

    1SG think too 1SG tell   2sg too not.have spirit SFP SFP now

    'I'm telling you, I feel so bored, now.'   (CallFriend/zho-m/5906)

Rapport neglect was used to label utterances produced by the speaker without any overt element of rapport enhancement or management. This generally intersects with the speaker being focused on her/himself, as one can observe from example (35):

35. 我怀疑这, 这是上帝对我的惩罚, 大概. 'I'm wondering if this is God's punishment for me, perhaps.'

    搞得我心里很难受, 今年.

    Gǎo-de   wǒ xín-lǐ   hěn   nánshòu, jīnnián.

    Make-DE 1SG hearth-in very   unwell   this.year

    'It made me feel very bad, this year.'   (CallFriend/zho-m/5982)

Finally, rapport challenging refers to cases in which the speaker utters something that is disadvantageous to the hearer, including giving an overt order, accusing or exerting some form of power over the hearer, as well as producing a dispreferred conversational move such as a refusal, interrupting or contradicting the hearer.[171] In (36) A reprimands B for not paying attention to what she is saying:

36. A: 哎, 我跟你说那, 你那牙怎么回事儿, 最后?

    Āi,   wǒ gēn nǐ shuō na, nǐ na yá   zěnme-huí-shì'r, zuìhoù?

    Hey, 1SG with 2SG say SFP 2sg that tooth how-CLF-thing   finally

    'Hey, I'm asking you, what happened to your tooth, in the end?'

                                          (CallFriend/zho-m/5975)

Specifically, the four types of rapport orientation are mutuated from Spencer-Oatey (2008) and operationalized in Tantucci & Wang (2018) – with specific reference to Mandarin Chinese – in the following way:

Tag	Corpus-driven annotation criteria

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[171] Only cases in which one interlocutor's utterance forcefully caused the other to interrupt her/his own utterance were considered as interruption.

RE (rapport enhancement)	S makes the attempt to improve his/her rapport with H.
	S says something that is advantageous for H (e.g. proposes something that may be beneficial for him/her: "you could do *p*, *p* would be good for you").
RM (rapport management)	S overtly codifies his/her awareness of H's potential reactions to the utterance.
	This intersects formally with presence of clause-periphery intersubjective markers (SFPs such as *a* 啊, *ma1* 吗, *ma2* 嘛, *ne* 呢, *le* 了, *de* 的, etc.) and peripheral periphrastic strategies (e.g. agreement or assent markers) either in the single utterance or in the longer stretch of talk to which the sentence-final expression refers.
RN (rapport neglect)	S produced an utterance without any overt element of RE or RM (maybe because focused on self).
RC (rapport challenge)	S utters something that is disadvantageous to H (e.g. gives an overt order, accuses or exerts some form of power over H, makes a dispreferred move such as refusal, interrupts or contradicts H).

Table 21: Criteria for the usage-based identification of rapport orientation (Adapted from Tantucci & Wang, 2018: 66)

The last intersubjective-related dimension concerns the production of face-threatening (FTA) or face-enhancing acts (FEA) on the part of the speaker and directed towards the hearer. A FEA is one in which the speaker overtly says something about the hearer that boosts the hearer's personal/social image (e.g. appraisals, positive comments), as in (37):

37. 哦, 那是就是证明你很独立啊 , 其实.

Ó, nà shì   jiùshì   zhènmíng nǐ hěn   dúlì   a,   qíshí.

Oh that be   exactly.be testify   2SG very   independent SFP actually

'Oh, this proves that you are an independent person, actually.'   (CallFriend/zho-m/5906)

Conversely, when producing a FTA the speaker says something that overtly downgrades his/her personal/social image. The face work dimension naturally intersects with the rapport orientation dimension, but the two do not necessarily overlap. For example, if a speaker produces a FTA as in (38), this necessarily implies a rapport challenge orientation; however, the entailment does not hold the other way around, as one can observe looking back at example (36) in which A criticizes B's behaviour without explicitly referring to his personal or social face:

38. Context: A explains to B that she is adopting a new method for her diet, i.e. she picks up one craving and eats it for one whole week before changing to another one.

B: 这是懒人有懒招儿, 就是.

Zhè shì lǎnrén   yǒu lǎn   zhāo'r,   jiù-shi.

This be   lazy.person have lazy   trick   exactly-be

'This is a lazy trick for lazy people, this is.'   (CallFriend/zho-m/5975)

The criteria adopted for the annotation of face work are summarized in Table 22:

Tag	Corpus-driven annotation criteria
FEA (face enhancing act)	S overtly says something that boosts H's personal/social image (e.g. appraisals, positive comments).
FTA (face threatening act)	S overtly says something about H that downgrades his/her personal/social image.
no (absent)	S addresses H's persona neither positively nor negatively.

Table 22: Criteria for the usage-based identification of face work (Adapted from Tantucci & Wang, 2018: 66)

2.3.1.2. Information structure

The last three dimensions of annotation are connected to information structure properly. First, the variable labelled *thematic structure* regards the information structure of the utterance and was based on the assumption that the sentence focus is either narrow or broad (see Chapter 1, § 2). The former was labelled as *NF* whenever the sentence focus was restricted to a single constituent in a marked, non-sentence-final position – either contrastive or not – and bearing special intonation, eventually marked off by focus markers such as *shì* 是*...de* 的 or (*lián* 连*...) dōu* 都*/ yě* 也, or other focus-interacting adverbs such as *cái* 才 and *jiù* 就 (see Chapter 1, § 4).[172] An example is given below in (39), wherein the focus marker *shi* is itself an instance of narrow focus and the illocutionary purpose of the utterance is to stress the truthfulness of the proposition. Such utterances not only contain *in situ* SFEs, such as the VP *tǐng lèi d*e 挺累的 'rather tiring' in the example below, but can additionally be followed by a dislocated SFE such as the modal expression *wǒ juéde* 我觉得 'I think' occurring in the same utterance:

39. A: 哎, 打工/TOP ^是/FOC 挺累的//SFE 我觉得//SFE

    Āi dǎgōng/TOP   SHI/FOC   tǐng lèi   de//SFE   wǒ juéde//SFE

    Ah part-time.job   IS   rather tiring NMLZ   1SG think

    'Oh, a part-time job is INDEED quite tiring, I think.'   (CallFriend/zho-m/4447)

Figure 12 below illustrates the intonation pattern of the utterance, wherein the highest pitch is reached in correspondence of *shi:*

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[172] Since there is no total agreement in the literature as whether all variants of the *shi…de* construction are indeed used to signal narrow focus, I only assigned narrow focus to the constituents which were also characterized by a perceptually prominent intonation, following Chen et. al (2016: 739)'s claim that "when focus is not realized at the default structural focus position […] prosodic prominence is salient". As for the focus-interacting adverbs, I have mainly followed Hole (2004), which has the advantage of providing indications concerning both their semantic contribution and their interaction with the information-structural articulation of the utterance(s).
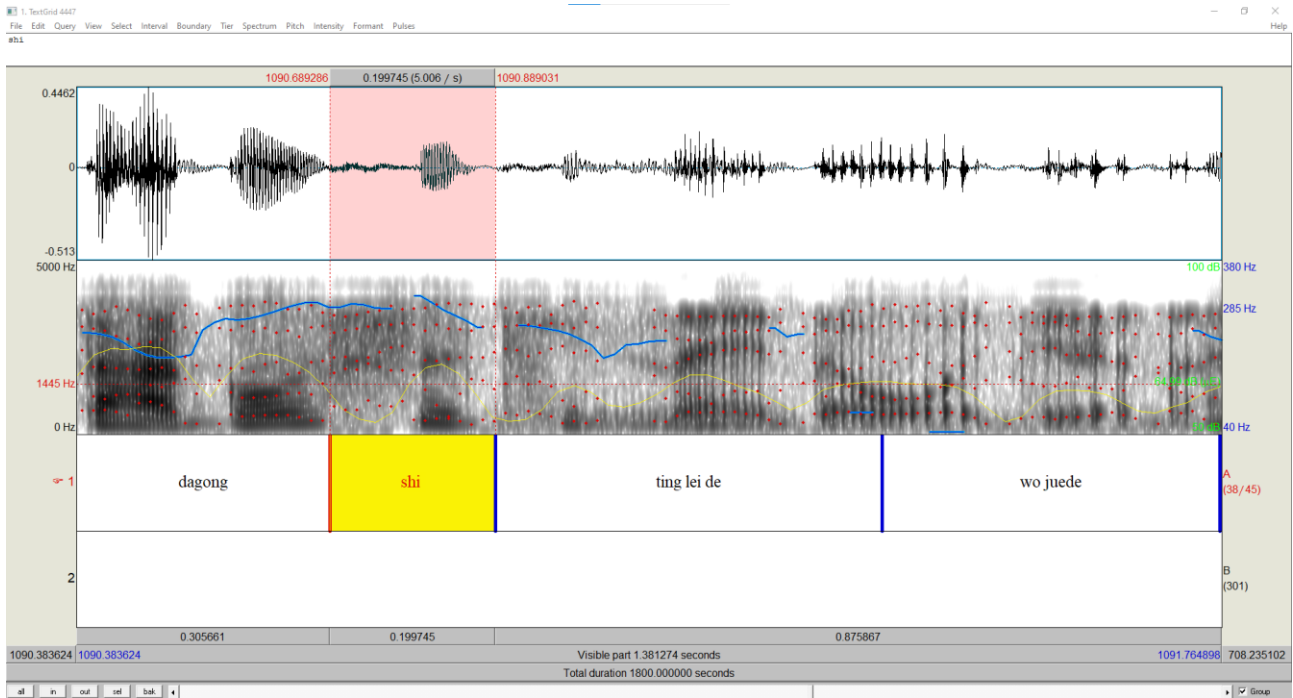
Figure 12: Narrow focus intonation pattern (CallFriend/zho-m/4447)

In the case of broad focus, the annotation additionally took into account the structural complexity of the utterance preceding the SFE. Utterances with a topic-comment articulation, i.e. with a default sentence-final informational focus, eventually extending over the sentence-initial topical elements was labelled *TC*.[173] An instance of TC utterance is presented in (40), which presents a given referential topic in sentence initial position and an additional framing topic in sentence-final position:

40. B: 我/TOP 也不看地图/COM 平时//SFE

Wǒ/TOP   yě   bú   kàn   dìtú/COM   píngshí//SFE

1SG   also   not   watch   map   usually

'I also don't look at maps, usually.'   (CallFriend/zho-m/5905)

The intonation pattern can be observed in Figure 13 below:

---

[173] As discussed in Chapter 1, § 4.2, whether a sentence-initial high pitch is to be considered as signalling a sentence-focus construction or a new topic (aboutness or topic shift) or even if the pitch height is at all significant in topic/focus marking in Mandarin Chinese are still a matter of debate in the literature. As for other prosodical cues, they were not always reliably measurable in all the naturally occurring conversations, due to the nature of the corpus itself (overlapping voices or bad audio quality). Therefore, no distinction was made between broad sentence-focus and broad VP-focus utterances, which I both labelled as TC whenever a potential aboutness topic was present, either prosodically prominent or not.
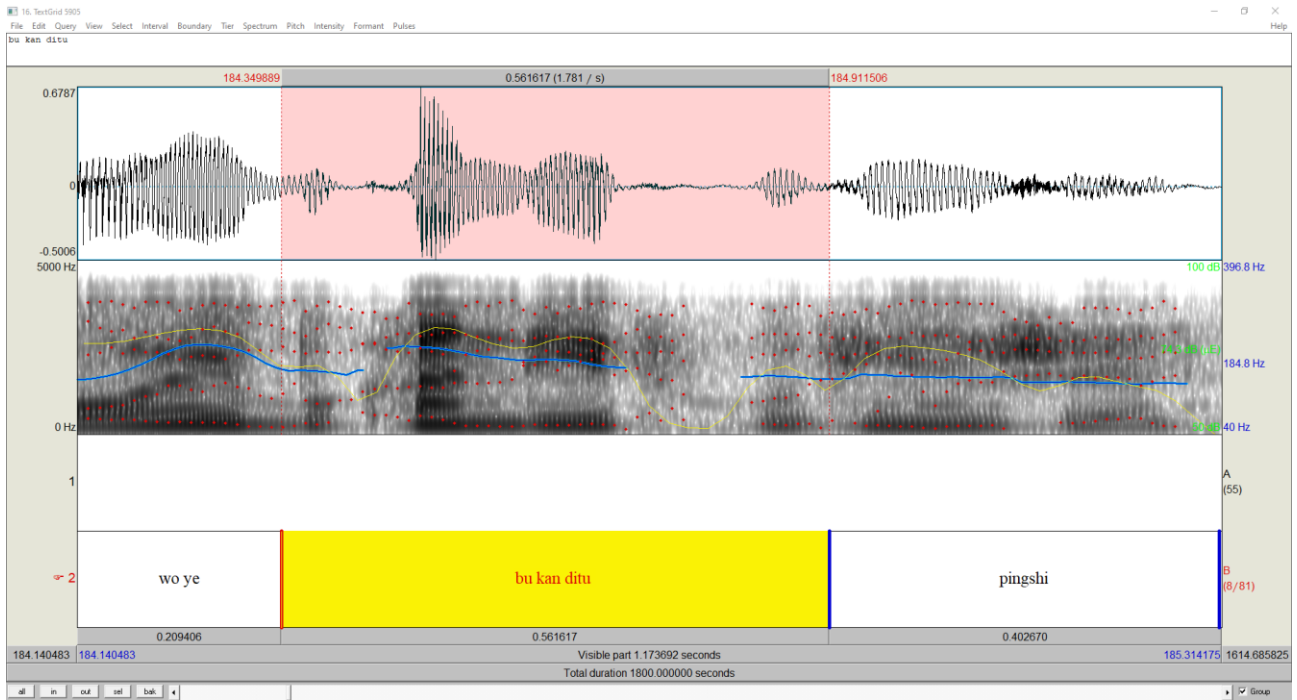
Figure 13: Topic-comment intonation pattern (CallFriend/zho-m/5905)

Utterances with unmarked sentence-final focus only comprising a predicate (either a verb with its eventual arguments or an adjectival or nominal predicate) were labelled *PF*. An example is given in (41), which contains a verbal predicate:

41. B: 不知道哦/FOC 现在//SFE

    Bù   zhīdào   o/FOC xiànzài//SFE

    Not know   SFP   now

    '[I] don't know, right now.'

(CallFriend/zho-m/5930)

Figure 14 below illustrates the intonation pattern:
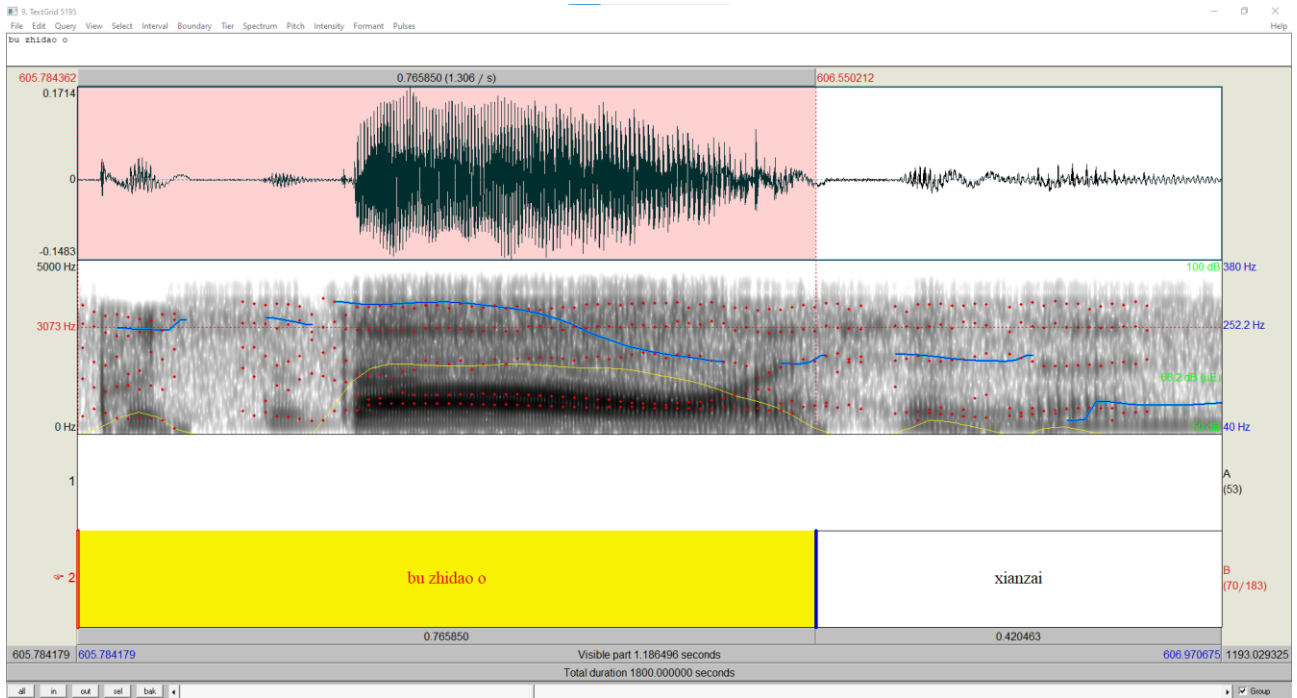
Figure 14: Predicate-focus intonation pattern (CallFriend/zho-m/5195)

Finally, utterances with sentence-final focus that were only composed of a verbal argument or complement are labelled *AF*.[174] An example is provided in (42) and illustrated in Figure 16:

42. 那老大一看就是小郑洪民. 'The big brother is Zheng Hongmin Jr. at first glance.'

一模一样/FOC 长得//SFE

Yī-mú-yī-yàng   zhǎng-de
Identical   grow-DE
'Exactly the same, (they) look.'   (CallFriend/zho-m/5949)

---

[174] Adjectival and nominal predicates were considered PFs rather that AFs since they are an unmarked type of predicate in Chinese, i.e. the presence of a copula in such constructions would be considered marked. For example, *Jīntiān xīnnián* 今天新年 'Today is New Year' rather than *Jīntiān shì xīnnián* 今天是新年 'Today is New Year indeed' is considered to be the unmarked construction in Mandarin Chinese (Liu, 2001: 457).
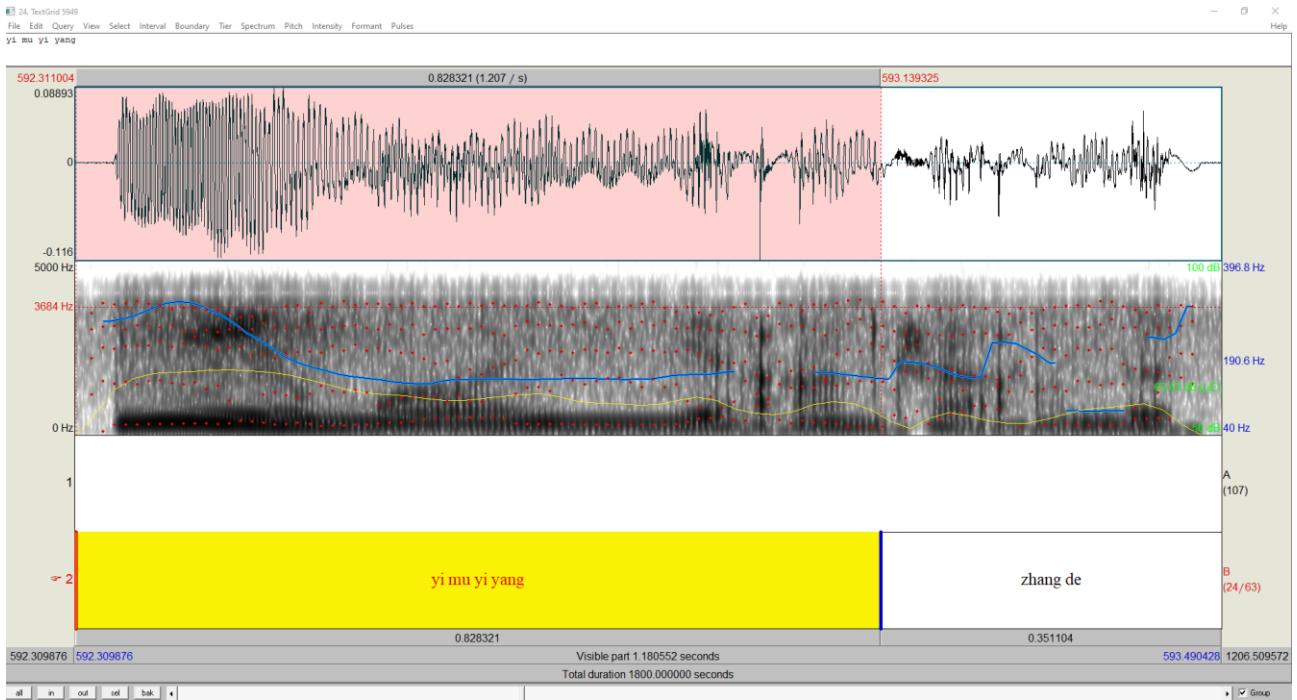
Figure 15: Argument-focus intonation pattern (CallFriend/zho-m/5949)

Table 23 summarizes the above IS annotation criteria, which are mutually exclusive:

Tag	Annotation Criteria
NF (narrow focus)	special prosodic prominence on a single constituent or element of the utterance
	compatible with focus markers such as *shi…de*, *lian…dou/ye*
TC (topic-comment)	prominence on sentence-final constituent or no prominence
	compatible with additional prominence on sentence-initial elements
PF (predicate-focus)	utterance coincides with a predicate phrase (verbal, adjectival or nominal)
	prominence on sentence-final constituent or no prominence
AF (argument-focus)	utterance coincides with a verbal argument or complement
	prominence on sentence-final constituent or no prominence

Table 23: Criteria for the annotation of the utterance IS

Subsequently, the activation status and coreferential profile of the SFEs were tackled. Concerning referent activation, the framework reference is based on a combination of Chafe (1987)'s three activation states and Lambrecht (1994)'s concept of activation and identifiability described in Chapter 1, § 1. Specifically, six different conditions of referent activation were possible: active (already introduced in the immediately previous context), situationally-accessible (present in the situational context), textually-accessible (introduced earlier into the discourse but not currently active),

semantically-accessible (accessible based on the activation of a semantic frame), unused (inactive but identifiable to both speaker and hearer) and inactive (inactive and unidentifiable for the hearer).[175]

Example (43) contains an active referent in sentence-final position which was already introduced and established as a discourse topic in the previous context by the same speaker, while (44) contains a referent belonging to the time-space coordinates within which the conversation takes place:

43. A: 就是你知道访问谁吗？   'Do you know who he interviewed?'

   A: Bill Gates.   'Bill Gates'

   […]

   A: 他说的我们这 studio 这块儿都没你那面积那么大.

      'He said: "Not even this studio of ours here is as big as your place".'

   A: 特神, 那家伙!

      Tè shén, nà jiāhuo!

      Too smart that fellow

      'Extraordinary, that fellow!'   (CallFriend/zho-m/5975)

44. A: 哎你跟你太太怎么样啦, 现在？

      Āi nǐ gēn   nǐ tàitai zěnme-yàng la   xiànzài?

      Hei 2SG with 2SG wife   how.about   SFP now

      'Hei, how are things with your wife, now?'   (CallFriend/zho-m/5542)

Examples (45) and (46) are respectively instances of a textually-accessible referent with more than 10 intervening sentences between the first introduction (*March meeting*) and the second (*huìyì* 会议 'conference'), and of a referent (*xuéxiào* 学校 'school') becoming accessible because of the mention of the semantic frame *xiàoyuán* 校园 'campus':

45. A: 哎, 我我们这现在在那个 March meeting 已经开始那个订票 啊什么的 啦 .

      'Hey, we have already started booking tickets and stuff for the March meeting now.'

   […]

   A: 那不能自费呀, 'You can't pay for it yourself,'

      嗯你说你是明明是去参加他的^他的会议.

---

[175] For the sake of coherence, the activation status of the referent refers to its condition prior to the production of the utterance containing the SFE. This is to avoid eventual coreferential forms inside the main clause referring cataphorically to the SFEs impacting on the assessment of the activation status of the SFE itself. Thus, it is not the presence of a cataphoric form which indicates referent activation, but rather its introduction in the previous context.

Ǹg	nǐ	shuō	nǐ	shì	mínmíng	shì	qù	cānjiā	tā	de	TĀ	DE
Oh	2SG	say	2SG	be	clearly	be	go	participate	3SG	ATTR	3SG	ATTR

huìyì.

conference

'Yeah, you are clearly going there to attend HIS conference.'(CallFriend/zho-m/5982)

46. A: 那个那个校园里还是相当不错的. 它是中心地带, center 地铁还是可以的.

'The campus is not bad at all. It's centrally located and the centre subway is also fine.'

B: 你们是在 downtown 么, 学校?

Nǐmen	shì	zài	downtown	me,	xuéxiào?
2SG.PL	be	be.at	downtown	SFP	school

'So it's downtown, your school?' (CallFriend/zho-m/5784)

Example (47) contains an unused but identifiable referent in sentence-final position, i.e. one that both the speaker and the hearer can identify but was not yet introduced in the ongoing discourse:

47. A: Ze- 怎么回事啊, 你那税?

Ze-	Zěnme	huí-shì'r	a,	nǐ	nà	shuì?
How-	how	CLF-thing	SFP	2sg	that	taxes

'What's going on with those taxes of yours?' (CallFriend/zho-m/5673)

Lastly, (48) contains an entire clause that has not been previously introduced and cannot be considered to be already shared by the hearer, i.e. the VP *hái chéng wèntí ne* 还成问题呢 'is a(nother) problem:

48. A: 那你干吗不去考那个 physical therapy 呢?

'Then why don't you take the exam for physical therapy?'

B: 它不是考, 那个东西它不用, 你-

'There's no test, you don't need to take a test for that thing, you-'

它愿意要是^要不要你还成问题呢.

Tā	yuànyì	yàoshi	^YÀO-BÙ-YÀO	NǏ	hái	chéng	wèntí	ne.
3SG	agree	if	want-not-want	2SG	still	become	problem	SFP

'Whether they want you or NOT is a(nother) problem.' (CallFriend/zho-m/5542)

The criteria are summarized in Table 24 below:

Tag	Corpus-driven criteria

active	already introduced in the immediately previous context
situationally-accessible	present in the situational context
textually-accessible	introduced earlier into the discourse but not currently active
semantically-accessible	accessible based on the activation of a semantic frame
unused	inactive but identifiable to both speaker and hearer
inactive	inactive and unidentifiable for the hearer

Table 24: Criteria for the annotation of coreferentiality (Based on Lambrecht, 1994: 165)

As far as coreferentiality is concerned, in order to account for the complexity of the forms involved, five mutually exclusive conditions were identified drawing on Guo (1999): zero or null coindexation; elaboration, i.e. the SFE is referentially more informative than the utterance-internal coreferential expression; reduction, i.e. the SFE is referentially less informative than the utterance-internal coreferent; reformulation, when the SFE represents a reelaboration or substitution of the utterance-internal form with an equally informative value; repetition, i.e. the same utterance-internal expression is repeated at the end of the utterance. The criteria are summarized and examples are given in Table 25:

Tag	Corpus-driven criteria	Example
no	zero or null coindexation	Ø → *nà jiāhuo* 那家伙 'that guy'
elaboration	SFE is more informative than the coreferent	*nà* 那 'that' → *nà dìfang* 那地方 'that place'
reduction	SFE is less informative than the coreferent	*Fèichéng* 费城 Philadelphia → *zài zhè'r* 在这儿 'here'
reformulation	SFE is as informative as the coreferent	*nà tóu* 那头 'that guy' → *nà-ge rén* 那个人 'that person'
repetition	SFE is a repetition	*nǐ* 你 'you' → *nǐ* 你 'you'

Table 25: Corpus-driven criteria for the annotation of coreferentiality

Whenever not applicable, i.e. in the case of non-referential expressions, the values for the two dimensions related to activation and coreferentiality were marked as *na* and were excluded from statistical analyses.

The above annotation dimensions were designed with the aim of carrying out a maximally "objective" analysis of linguistic data. For this reason, I strived to rely upon overtly marked corpus-driven criteria to disambiguate between the different modalities of each variable. However, I am fully aware that a certain degree of subjectivity is necessarily involved in any activity of classification and annotation. In order to ensure that the subjective view of the researcher did not have a significant influence on the outcome of the analysis, those dimensions involving subjective judgment to a higher extent underwent an inter-coder reliability check. Specifically, three randomized samples of 50

occurrences were annotated by three different annotators for the dimensions regarding sentence type, speech act, evaluation and evaluational structure, as well as rapport orientation and face work. The total amount of double-annotated occurrences was 18% of the dataset. The inter-coder agreement rate was at least 86% for each of the dimensions considered and for each of the three raters involved. The dimensions with a lower agreement rate were those referring to the sentence type and rapport orientation, for the trained annotators did not have access to the audio recordings but only to the written version of the data, whereas the dimensions obtaining higher scores of agreement were those involving the speech act and the presence of positive/negative evaluation. The inter-coder reliability was further assessed for each dimension and for each annotator by means of Kirkendorff's alpha (Hayes & Krippendorff (2007) and the outcome values of the tests ranged between $\alpha \geq .781$ and $\alpha \geq .875$.[176] Overall, we may conclude that the annotation agreement was way above the chance rate and can be considered to have a medium-high reliability.

Given the high number of variables and categories used in the annotation process, these are schematized in Table 26 below:

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[176] According to Krippendorff (2004: 241), the lowest conceivable limit for the acceptability of the test is $\alpha \geq .667$, while values above $\alpha \geq .800$ are indicative of the statistical reliability of the test.

Utterance-related variables	Categories			
speaker gender	F (female)	M (male)		
pragmatic function	evaluative	evidential	frame	modal
	other	referent	text	swear
interaction gender	F-F	M-M	F-M	
sentence type	declarative	interrogative	exclamative	imperative
speech act	assert	opinion	present	request
	question	rhet_quest	express	commit
sentence-final particle	yes	no		
evaluation	pos	neg	no	
evaluative structure	yes	no		
rapport orientation	RN (rapport neglect)	RM (rapport management)	RC (rapport challenge)	RE (rapport enhancement)
face work	FTA (face-threatening act)	FEA (face-enhancing act)	no	
thematic structure	NF (narrow focus)	TC (topic-comment)	AF (broad argument-focus)	PF (broad predicate-focus)
referent activation	active	sit_acc	sem_acc	text_acc
	unused	inactive		
coreferentiality	no	elaboration	reformulation	reduction
	repetition			

Table 26: Annotation variables and relative categories

3. Data overview and quantitative analyses

In the following section an overview of the types and features of the SFEs contained in the data sample will be presented, together with the results of the different statistical tests used to assess the associations between these features. The findings and their implications are further discussed in § 4 and 5.

Before describing the statistical models and their results, is necessary to present an overview of the types of SFEs found in the data sample. Table 27 shows that, on the whole, topical SFEs outnumbered both the interpersonal and the textual expressions, for as much as 59% of all the expressions occurring in sentence-final position can be classified as topical themes. Among the topical type, the category *other* is the most prominent, representing 33% of the whole sample, while referents and frames occur in similar proportions, the first amounting to 13% and the latter to 14% of the sample.

SFE	N	%
Topical	**406**	59%
other	224	33%
frame	93	14%
referent	89	13%
Interpersonal	**258**	**38%**
swear	97	14%
modal	65	9%
evaluative	64	9%
evidential	32	5%
Textual	**22**	**3%**
textual	22	3%
Total	**686**	**100%**

Table 27: Types of SFEs in the data sample

As for interpersonal expressions, these make up 38% of the sample, with swear words representing the most frequent type (14% of the sample), immediately followed by modal and evaluative expressions, each constituting 9% of the sample, while evidential expressions only amount to 5% of the occurrences. Finally, textual connectors and organizers represent about 3% of the sample.

Graph 1 shows the different types and proportions ordered according to their frequency in the dataset.
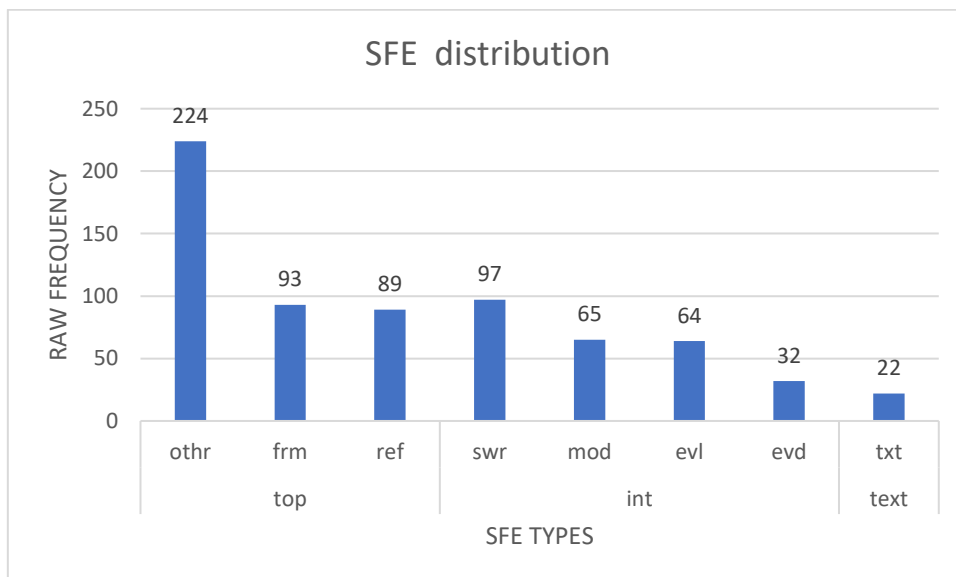
Graph 1: Types of SFEs in the data sample

On the whole, what can be captured from the above figures is that topical themes, and in particular topics labelled *other*, which are neither referents nor frames, are the most frequent type of SFE. An example of an SFE falling into the *other* category is given below in (49), wherein one can observe that the topical SFE *néng jiàn-hao* 能建好 'be able to finish constructing' introduced by the adverb *cái* 才 is already active and given based on the previous context and is deaccented as the result of a narrow focalization (Hole, 2004: 9) on *míngnián niándǐ* 明年年底 '[at] the end of next year'.

49. A: 啊, 你知道, '他那房子到现在还没建好呢.

'Ah, you know, his house hasn't been built yet.'

B: 还没建好了, 我看了嘛. 'It's not finished yet, I saw it.'

A: 而且要到^明年年底才能建好.

Érqiě	yào	dào	MÍNGNIÁN NIÁNDǏ	cái	néng	jiàn-hǎo.
Also	must	arrive	next.year end.of.year	only	can	build-good

'And it won't be completed until THE END OF NEXT YEAR.' (CallFriend/zho-m/5975)

However, Table 27 also suggests that while textual connectors are not very frequently employed in sentence-final position, more than one third of the elements occurring at the right periphery has an interpersonal nature, with swear words and modals representing the most frequent types. Examples are given in the following section, which tackles their employment on the part of female and male speakers.

3.1. Distribution of SFEs across genders

The second set of figures we ought to look at regards the data distribution in the three types of gender-combination of the interactions and the gender of the speakers producing the SFEs. As one can observe from Table 28 below, the number of SFEs produced by male and female speakers is roughly similar, with male speakers producing 342 SFEs – which amount to half of the sample – and female speakers uttering 344 – which represent the remaining 50% of the sample.

Gender	Female		Male		Total	
Frequency	N	%	N	%	N	%
	344	50%	**342**	50%	686	100%

Table 28: Overall distribution of SFEs across gender

As for the types of SFEs that female and male speakers produce, the macro types show some statistically significant differences (Pearson's Chi-squared test: $\chi_2(2) = 12.93$, $p < .01$): interpersonal SFEs are more frequent in men's speech, whereas women's utterances display a slightly higher frequency of topical and textual elements, as can be observed from Graph 2.

Bar plot of SFE distribution across genders
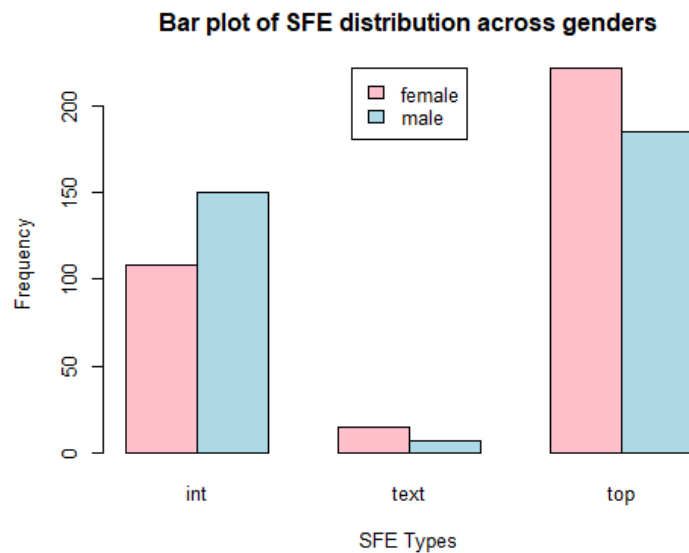
Graph 2: Distribution of SFE macro-types across genders

However, more significant mismatches can be observed regarding the specific types employed by female and male speakers at the end of their utterances. The most visible differences that can be observed from Graph 3 concern the higher use of modal expressions on the part of female speakers and the exclusive use of swear words on the part of male speakers.
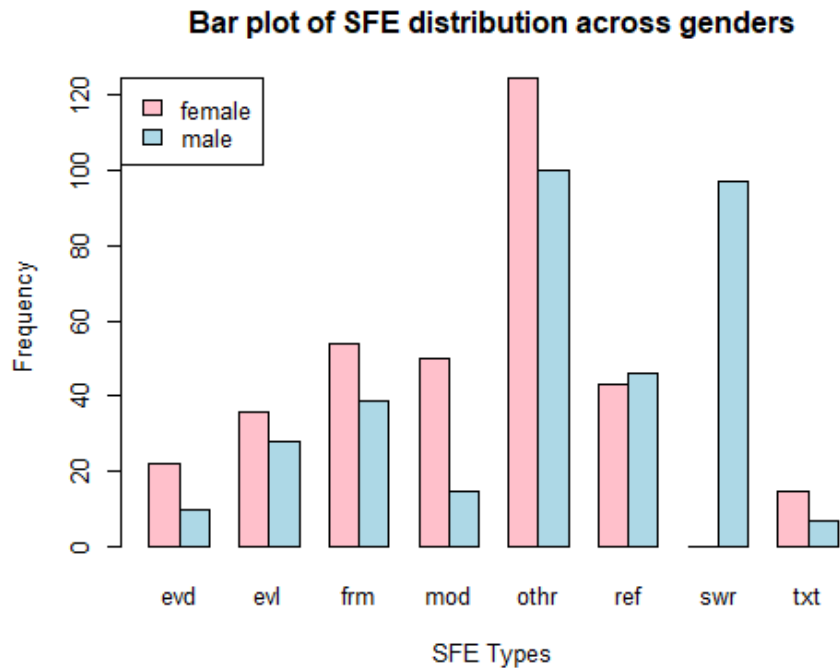
Graph 3: Distribution of SFEs types across genders

The mismatch in the use of specific SFE types on the part of the two genders was confirmed by the statistics of a Pearson's Chi-squared test ($\chi_2(7) = 129.34$, $p < .001$), which also revealed that modal expressions are used much more frequently than expected by chance by women speakers ($SE = 3.05$), while the opposite holds true for swearing expressions ($SE = -6.97$).[177] What is more, the latter type of expressions is exclusively employed in same-gender male interactions, which – crucially – present a significantly lower amount of modal expressions ($SE = -3.09$).

To sum up, the above observations tell us that although the use of the intersubjective macro-type is almost comparable in terms of overall frequency across genders, the specific types are employed differently by the men and women: while female speakers use modal expressions more frequently at the end of their utterances to express a subjective opinion, male speakers make more abundant use of swear words both to strengthen their emphatic stance and to establish a bond with their "fellow" interlocutors. The two types of expressions can be observed respectively in (50) and (51): (50) is an example of a modal expression used at the end of an utterance in a female to female discourse-

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[177] Field *et al.* (2012: 825) define standardized residuals (*SE*) as "the error between what the model predicts (the expected frequency) and the data actually observed" for each combination of the two variables involved. According to them, standardized residual values outside ±1.96 are significant at $p < .05$, those outside ±2.58 are significant at $p < .01$, and values outside ±3.29 are significant at $p < .001$. However, in "smallish samples it's OK to look for values above 1.96" (Field & 2012: 175).

orientation to point out that the assertion contained in the main clause represents the subjective opinion of the speaker, which may or may not coincide with that of the hearer; (51) represents a swear word being used in a male to male conversation to intensify a positive evaluation of a state of affairs:

50. 她也很苦啊, 我觉得.

    Tā yě hěn kǔ   a, wǒ juéde.

    3SG.F also very bitter SPF 1SG think

    'It's hard for her too, I think.'   (CallFriend/zho-m/5930)

51. 对, 我运气不错, 我操!

    Duì,   wǒ yùnqi bú-cuò, wǒ cào!

    Exact   1SG luck   not-bad 1SG fuck

    'Yeah, I was quite luck, fuck!'   (CallFriend/zho-m/5784)

If the overall distribution of SFEs across genders is comparable in the sample, the proportions of SFEs are different for the three types of discourse-orientation, as shown in Graph 4: male to male interactions contain 39% of the total occurrences of SFEs, female to female interactions represent 32% of the sample, whereas female to male interactions contain only 29% of the total amount. Among the latter type, 64% of the SFEs are produced by female speakers and only 36% are produced by male speakers.

Pie chart of SFE types in different interaction types
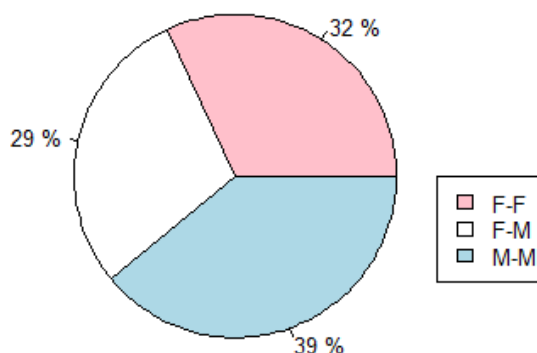
Graph 4: Distribution of SFEs in three gender-combination interactions

In addition, a Chi-squared test revealed that the three types of discourse-orientation contain significantly different proportions of SFE types ($\chi_2(4) = 46.69$, $p < .001$): the most interesting figures are those concerning female to male interactions, wherein interpersonal SFEs are significantly less frequent than in same-gender interactions. This can be observed looking at the standardized residuals

(*SE*) for each combination of discourse-orientation and SFE type in Table 29: the highest significant value is connected with a negative figure for the interpersonal type (SE > 3.85), meaning that less interpersonal expressions than expected were used in female to male conversations, and with a positive value for the textual type (*SE* = 2.90). Equally interesting are the figures concerning male to male conversations which not only – as already emerged from Graphs 4 – contain more interpersonal SFEs than expected (*SE* = 3.92), but also contain less topical expressions than expected (*SE* = -2.59) and almost completely lack textual connectors (*SE* = -2.26).

Interaction gender / SFE type		Interpersonal	Textual	Topical	Row Total
F-F	N	69	7	142	218
	%	32%	3%	65%	32%
	SE	-1.43	0.00	1.14	
F-M	N	48	13	137	198
	%	24%	7%	69%	29%
	SE	-3.07	2.64	1.83	
M-M	N	141	2	127	270
	%	52%	1%	47%	39%
	SE	3.92	-2.26	-2.59	
Total	N	258	22	406	686
	%	41%	3%	56%	100%

Table 29: Contingency Table of the interaction gender and SFE types variables

Simply put, if we observe the raw frequencies of the three macro-types of SFEs in the three combinations of genders in Table 30, we can observe that interpersonal expressions and textual connectors have an opposite distribution trend: while interpersonal SFEs show a decline from M-M to F-M, passing through F-F interactions, textual connectors show a cline in the same interaction types; topical elements, on the other hand are somewhere in between the two and show very little variation among the three groups:

	M-M	F-F	F-M	Total
INT	141 (55%)	69 (27%)	48 (19%)	258 (100%)
TOP	127 (31%)	142 (35%)	137 (34%)	406 (59%)
TEXT	2 (9%)	7 (32%)	13 (59%)	22 (100%)

Table 30: Raw frequencies of SFE types in the three gender-combination interactions

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An explanation to this interesting datum arguably lies in the lower degree of intimacy existing between different-gender interactants or in a lower desire to create such intimacy, hence the production of more limited amounts of expressions in sentence-final position that express a high degree of (inter)subjectivity. In fact, at least as far as some interpersonal expressions such as swear words are concerned, studies have shown that the more intimate and relaxed the relation within a certain group, the more (social) swearing there is (Wajnryb, 2005: 34). On the opposite, a higher number of cohesive devices in sentence-final position might indicate a more "objective" way of regulating the relationship between the interlocutors, i.e. one that is based on textual inferences and logical entailments rather than explicitly subjective opinions and expressions. An example of a textual connector used in such way is given below in (52), wherein the adverb *fǎnzhèng* 反正 'anyway' is used to retrospectively link the current utterance to the hearer's initial statement.[178] In the first utterance, A compliments B and degrades her own intellectual skills at the same time. Although B makes the conventional move of rejecting this claim, A seeks further reassurance from B, producing a stronger negative face-threatening act that limits B's personal freedom and puts him in a difficult position (Spencer-Oatey, 2000: 20); B then reassesses his disbelief of A's claim being true, and dismisses the issue by arguing that he, too, is not in possession of the answer to their problems. Here the use of the additive adverb *yě* 也 'also, too' conventionally implies that B is not the only one that does not know what the right path for their careers is; in addition, by further attaching the adverb *fanzheng* at the end of the last clause, as Haselow (2012: 197) argues for English *anyway*, B establishes an unexpressed concessive-conditional relation between A's first statement (I feel like a fool) and B's last one (I don't know): even though A might feel a fool compared to him, he, too, doesn't know what's the best thing to do for his career. Thus, B downgrades the validity of A'a claim and replaces it with one which is true no matter what she might think. *Fanzheng*, hence, implies or entails the negation of all the conditions that could challenge the proposition to which it is attached, including the one expressed by A's first utterance.

52. Context: A and B are talking about careers and future plans.

A: 不过我觉得好像, 跟你相比, 呃, 我觉得, 我像个傻瓜似的.

'But I think apparently, I feel like a fool, compared to you.'

A: &=laugh .

B: &=laugh 没有的事啦. 'There's no such thing.'

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[178] More specifically, according to Haselow (2012: 195), the link between the two is similar to the one existing between a conditional-concessive clause and its antecedent, wherein the conditional typically entails its consequent. In other words, "no matter if a specific condition is or would have been fulfilled or not, *p* is supposed to hold" (Haselow, 2012: 195).

A: 是不是待傻了? 'I am stupid or not?'

B: 没有的事，我也不知道, 反正.

Méi yǒu   de shì'r, wǒ yě bú zhīdào,   fǎnzhèng.

Not have   REL thing 1SG also not know   anyway

'There's no such thing. I, too, don't know [what's best to do], anyway.' (CallFriend/zho-m/5982)

3.2. Distribution of SFEs across sentence types and speech acts

After observing the distribution of the pragmatic types among female and male speakers, we can look at their distribution in different sentence types and speech acts. As far as sentence types are concerned, we can observe that more than two thirds of the SFEs (78%) occur in declarative sentences, 11% occur in exclamatory and 10% in interrogative sentences, while only 2% of the SFEs are used at the end of an imperative sentence.

Sentence type	N	%
declarative	532	78%
exclamative	73	11%
interrogative	68	10%
imperative	13	2%
Total	**686**	**100%**

Table 31: Distribution of SFEs across sentence types

This interesting outcome might be due to more than one factor, both cross-linguistic and language-specific: first, this uneven distribution might be caused by factors that are unrelated to the presence of the SFEs, i.e. the unmarked status of declarative utterances in discourse. Concerning this point, Givón (1991: 13) argues that declarative sentences predominate not only in oral and written narrative, but also in informal conversations like the ones involved in this study. This point should suffice to explain why declaratives are the most frequent type of sentence in my data sample. However, the occurrence ratio for declaratives is still comparatively high with respect to Givón's study, who reports a 53% of declarative sentences found in his sample of English conversations.

A second factor impinging on the low frequency of marked sentence types – and especially the imperative one – containing SFEs might be exquisitely language-specific, i.e. connected to a general

trend on the part of Mandarin Chinese speakers to use direct and unmitigated speech acts.[179] A number of studies have argued that contexts involving low social distance and relative power abound of requests that are not mitigated by politeness expressions or utterance tags, with the only exception of SFPs (Lee-Wong, 1994; Gao, 1999). In other words, familiar contexts such as the one existing among friends tend to favour the use of direct requests, mainly in the form of imperative utterances – which are not perceived as impolite in the given contexts – while softening strategies might be appropriate or even required with increasing degrees of social distance between the interlocutors, relative power and imposition of the request. Among the small quantity of imperatives in my dataset, one third are closed off by a referential topic, generally in the form of a vocative expression addressing the hearer, which has the function of mitigating the strength of the speech act (Givón, 2001: 313). This use is exemplified in (53) below, which represents a request on part of the speaker towards the hearer to drop the current discourse topic, which he considers rather inconvenient. In this case, despite the "friendly" environment, a certain amount of impoliteness might nonetheless be perceived, thus the appendage of the 2nd person pronoun – crucially followed by a third softening SFP in addition to those following the focal constituent – is considered appropriate:

53. Context: B is complaining about women and their "terrible" character, A drops a hint about B's bad luck with his (former) loved one:

    B: 嗯算了吧, 你啊!

    Ěn suàn-le ba, nǐ a!

    Hey drop-SFP SFP, 2SG SFP

    'Hey, forget it, you!'   (CallFriend/zho-m/5982)

If imperatives have been argued to be preferably devoid of mitigating or intensifying devices when used in symmetric interactions, this might also be the case for other sentence types and – most importantly – for other speech acts. In order to fully grasp the meaning of Table 31, it is useful to observe the speech acts realized by the above-mentioned sentence types and the SFEs they contain. In terms of speech acts, Table 32 shows that as much as 66% of the sample is composed of assertions, 9% are opinions, 8% are questions and 7% are presentations, whereas the other types occur with a very low percentage: 3% are expressives, 3 % are rhetorical questions, while requests and commissives amount to only 2% and less than 1% of the sample respectively.

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[179] According to Zhang (1995), however, politeness and indirectness do characterize Mandarin Chinese speech, but they are achieved through "the sequencing of information in the whole discourse, rather than in the grammatical features of the language". In other words, Chinese indirectness is not conveyed (so much) at the level of utterance periphery, but rather through macro speech acts extending over more than a single utterance (Lin, 2005: 58-59).

Speech act initial	N	%
assert	452	66%
opinion	65	9%
question	58	8%
present	50	7%
express	23	3%
rhet_quest	22	3%
request	13	2%
commit	3	0%
Total	**686**	**100%**

Table 32: Distribution of SFEs across speech acts

Thus, it is not only imperative sentences and request speech acts that are hardly ever followed by SFEs, but also commissives, rhetorical questions and even expressive speech acts. Whereas the low amount of commissives and rhetorical questions is predictable because of the highly marked type of speech act they perform, expressives are unexpectedly infrequent for between-friends interactions and deserve special attention. Why expressives in the data sample occur with such a low percentage, I believe might be explained independently from the presence of SFEs: as Shei (2014: 174) observes, an expressive speech act is often "realized as a 'joint act' with some other speech act in the same host sentence". This means that not only utterances like (54) contain "pure" expressive speech acts, but also cases like (55) – whose primary illocutionary purpose is to assert the speaker's unbiased belief about the truth of the proposition therein expressed – can be considered as expressing a certain amount of (strong) emotions by the speaker. If speech acts' secondary illocutionary purpose were also to be taken into account, it is not far-fetched to believe that the resulting amount of speech acts conveying the speaker's psychological states would be much higher, in line with what one expects from conversations between intimate or closely-related interlocutors.

54. B: 也特想回去, 说实在.

    Yě   tè   xiǎng huíqù,   shuō   shízài.

    Also   extremely want go.back say   true

    'Also, I really want to go back (to China), to be honest.'   (CallFriend/zho-m/4447)

55. A: 你扯淡, 你!

    Nǐ   chědàn   nǐ!

    2SG   talk.nonsense   2SG

'You're talking nonsense, you!'   (CallFriend/zho-m/5905)

To sum up, the probability of an SFE to be found at the end of an utterance varies according to the sentence type and to the speech act it realizes. Moreover, the pragmatic types of SFE occurring in each of them might be different as well. In order to observe significant patterns of interaction between sentence types and the different speech acts they realize, as well as the different types of SFE they contain, I used what is called a "conditional inference tree" (Tagliamonte & Baayen, 2012) to retrieve unbiased convergences of these three variables. Convergences of sentence types, speech acts and SFEs within the data set can be defined as *unbiased* because of the particular statistical process at work in this model, which avoids bias problems connected with traditional regression methods (Hothorn et al., 2006). To be more precise, this method – which was first applied to linguistic analysis by Tagliamonte & Baayen (2012) – is based on binary recursive partitioning and offers the advantage of unbiased variable selection in addition to being non-parametric, i.e. it does not require data to meet specific distributional assumptions. The algorithm on which the conditional inference tree (CT) is based first makes a binary split in the independent variable that is found to be more strongly associated with the response variable and then repeats the procedure for each subset until no other variable significantly associated with the response is left (Levshina, 2015: 291-292). Figure 16 represents a CT obtained through the "ctree" function of the "partykit" package in R that uses the pragmatic function of SFEs as the response variable, and speech act and sentence types as two independent or explanatory variables. It can be observed that the variable associated more strongly with the response variable – i.e. with the SFE type – is sentence type, which the algorithm split into two subsets: exclamative and imperative on the one hand, and declarative and interrogative on the other hand ($p < .001$).
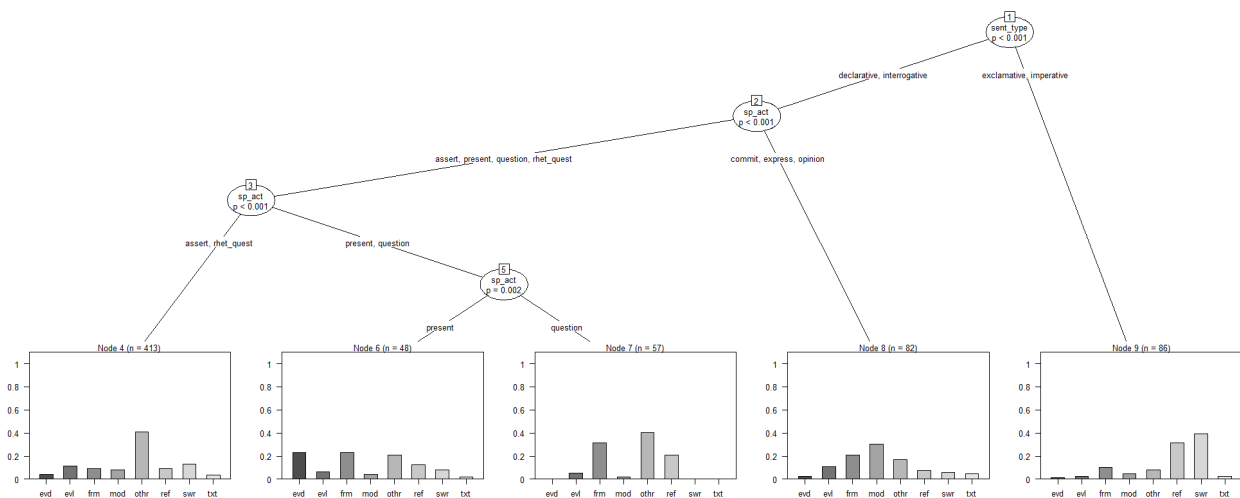
Figure 16: Significant distributions of SFEs across sentence types and speech acts (1)

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For ease of visualisation, the CT in Figure 17 zooms on the first significant pattern corresponding to the right-hand side node (9) in Figure 16, containing exclamative and imperative sentences. Figure 17 shows that these sentences, regardless of the speech act conveyed, correlate with a high frequency of swear words and referential topics in sentence-final position.
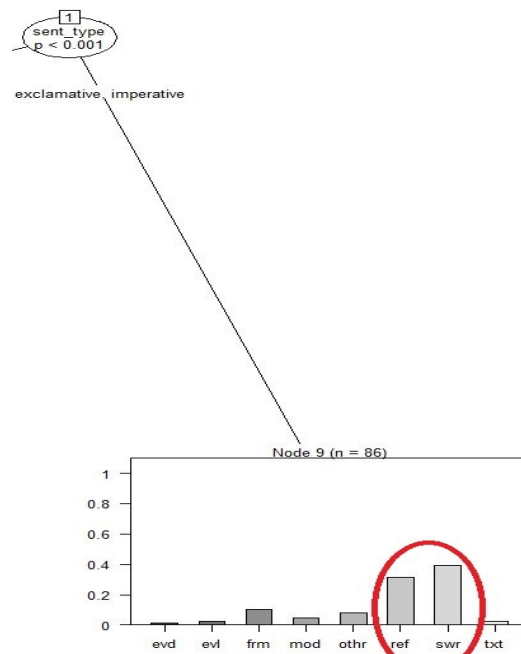
Figure 17: SFEs used in exclamatives and imperatives

I have already commented on the use of referential expressions in imperatives, which can serve the purpose of softening a request towards the addressee that might appear too harsh or impolite; as far as swear words are concerned, these are rather frequent in exclamative and imperative sentences produced by male speakers, as already emerged in § 3.1, to reinforce the expression of a subjective stance and/or to ensure the creation of intimacy and shared views with the interlocutor. Regarding the use of referential topics in exclamative sentences, these represent the prototypical function of right dislocations the main literature has focused upon. An example can be observed in (56), wherein the production of the referential topic *zhè-ge* 这个 'this' in sentence-final position does not serve a clarifying or disambiguating purpose but is rather "used as a grammaticalized device for creating an affective bond with the hearer" (Aijmer, 1989: 150).

56. 太过分了，这个!

    Tài   guòfèn   le, zhè-ge!

    Too excessive   SFP this-CLF

      'Too much, that!'   (CallFriend/zho-m/3684)

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As far as declarative and interrogative sentences are concerned, there is a significant split (*p* < .001) between two groups of speech acts: commissives, expressives and opinions on the one hand, and assertions, presentations, questions and rhetorical questions on the other hand. Figure 18 shows the central node (8) of the CT in Figure 16, corresponding to declarative and interrogative utterances by means of which the speaker expresses an opinion, a commissive or an expressive speech act. As can be observed, in these speech acts, the most frequently used SFEs are modal expressions, but also framing topics and – to a minor extent – *other* topical expressions.
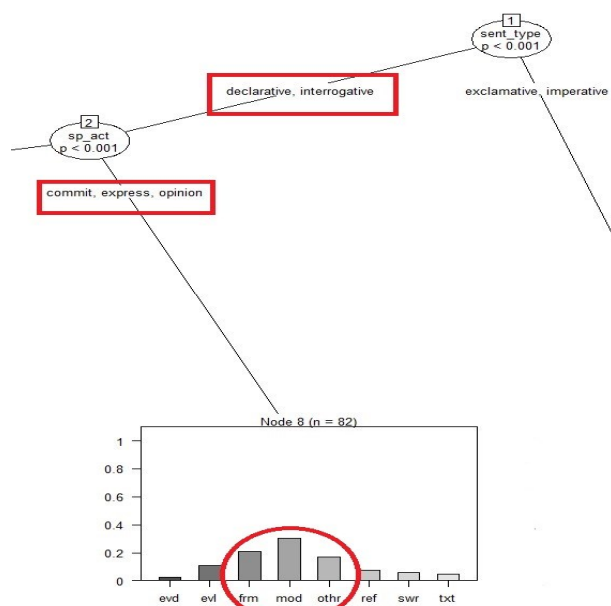
Figure 18: SFEs used in commissives, expressives and opinions

What is interesting about this group of speech acts is that they can be regarded as expressing the highest degree of subjectivity, for the three commit the speaker either to a future state of things or to the "paternity" of a reasoning process or psychological state. The SFEs used at the end of such speech acts can: i) further remark that the proposition is the product of the speaker's individual mental process and the awareness that this might or might not coincide with the hearer's opinion, as achieved through the epistemic expressions *kěnéng* 可能 'maybe' and *wǒ gǎnjué* 我感觉'I believe' in (57):

57. 我觉得要难一些, 可能, 我感觉.

> Wǒ juéde yào nán yīxiē, kěnéng, wǒ gánjué.
>
> 1SG think must difficult some maybe 1SG feel
>
> 'I think it's a bit more difficult, perhaps, I believe.' (CallFriend/zho-m/4447)

ii) limit or mitigate the scope of the proposition through the use of framing topics, as done by the adverbial phrase *yǒu diǎn'r* 有点 'a bit ' in (58);

58. A: 什么叫神神叨叨? 'What does "behave oddly" mean?'

B: 就是, 怎么说嘞, 神经质吧, 有点儿.

Jiùshì, zěnme shuō lei, shénjīngzhì ba yǒu diǎn'r.

Just-be how say SFP neurotic SFP have a.bit

'It's just, how to say, [they're] neurotic, a bit.' (CallFriend/zho-m/5906)

iii) exploit the topical status of the SFE to strengthen the status of implicit information, such as the conversational implicature triggered by the use of the superlative in (59) (Sbisà, 2015), i.e. that there are other tings positioned lower on the importance scale. That is to say, the speaker does not assert but implies that other things apart from the ones he just mentioned – contrary to what the interlocutor might think– are not important.[180]

59. Context: B is telling A that he wants to buy a desk for his room, together with some table lamps and a stool.

B: 我觉得^这个最重要的.

Wǒ juěde ZHÈ-GE zuì zhòngyào de.

1SG think THIS-CLF most important NMLZ

'I think THESE are the most important.' (CallFriend/zho-m/5982)

The left-hand side Nodes of Figure (16) shown in Figures (19), (20) and (21) refer to declarative and interrogative sentences conveying assertions, presentations, questions and rhetorical questions. As far as these speech acts are concerned, a significant split was identified between assertions and rhetorical questions on the one hand, and presentations and questions on the other hand ($p < .001$). The former represent the most numerous group in the whole data sample and show a rather strong association with topical expressions that are neither frames nor referents. Figure 20 shows that almost 50% of the SFEs employed in declaratives or interrogatives conveying assertions or rhetorical questions belong to the SFEs labelled *other* (Node 4).

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[180] According to Lombardi Vallauri & Masia (2013: 162-163), implicatures convey an implicit – i.e. non-asserted – content, while presuppositions conceal the act of presenting a content as true – i.e. they conceal the speaker's responsibility towards the content. However, both implicatures and presuppositions have the effect of reducing the challengeability of what is being said on the part of the addressee, in addition to that of inducing the addressee to reduce her/his attention towards the message by means of its linguistic packaging. Moreover, topical expressions are also argued to possess a presupposing strength – although weaker than the former – because of their ability to reduce the speaker's responsibility for the introduction of the topical content. The presupposing strength of implicatures and presuppositions is thus strengthened when combined with topical linguistic encoding (Lombardi Vallauri & Masia, 2013: 167-168).
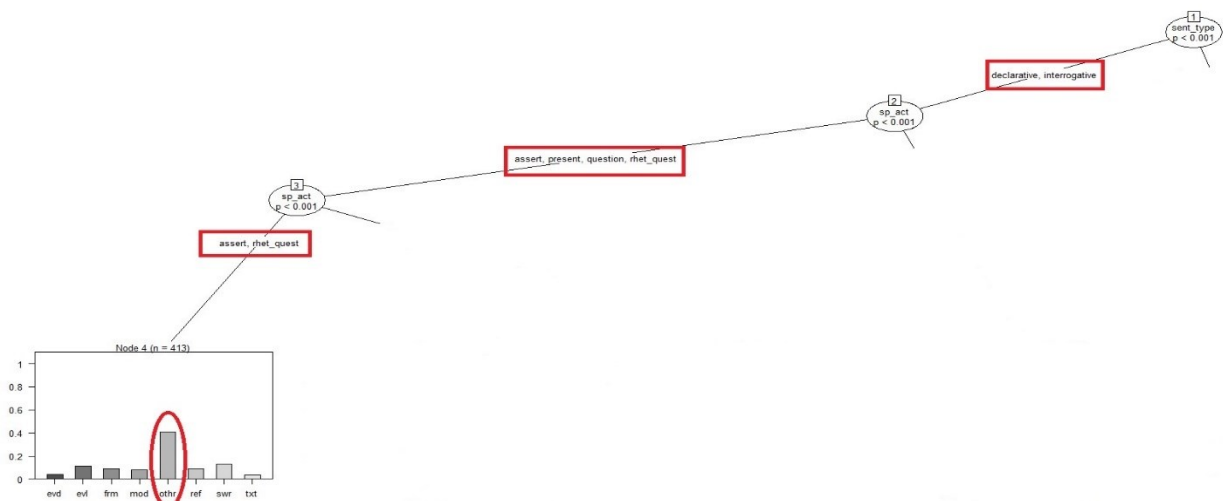
Figure 19: SFEs used in assertions and rhetorical questions

An example of the occurrence of *other* SFEs in a rhetorical question is given in (60), wherein – again – speaker B, instead of explicitly asserting that he is not clever, exploits the narrow focus articulation to confer topical status to his being clever, while only focalizing the wh- element *nǎ* 哪 'where'. This has the effect of a conventionalized rhetorical question which does not explicitly assert the intended meaning (I am not clever) but puts the hearer in the condition to imply this meaning through a generalized conversational implicature.

60. Context: A is telling B she believe that she's not so smart anymore, at least not as smart as B.

    B: 没有的事啦, 我^那有聪明啦?

        Méi yǒu   de shì'r la, wǒ NǍ   yǒu   cōngmíng la?
        Not have   REL thing SFP 1SG WHERE   have clever   SFP?
        'There's no such thing! How am I clever?'   (CallFriend/zho-m/5982)

Finally, the CTs in Figure (20) and (21) show declaratives and interrogatives conveying questions or presentations, which present an additional split (*p* < .01): questions contain mainly *other* topical expressions, followed by framing and referential topics in terms of frequency (Node 7, Figure 20), whereas presentations contain more evidential and framing expressions, in addition to a good number of other topical expressions (Node 6, Figure 21). The occurrence of *other* topical expressions in interrogative questions is chiefly related to the main prosody falling on *wh-* elements whose position is not sentence-final. The *other* SFE is generally already active in the context and produced with reduced intonation, as shown in example (61):

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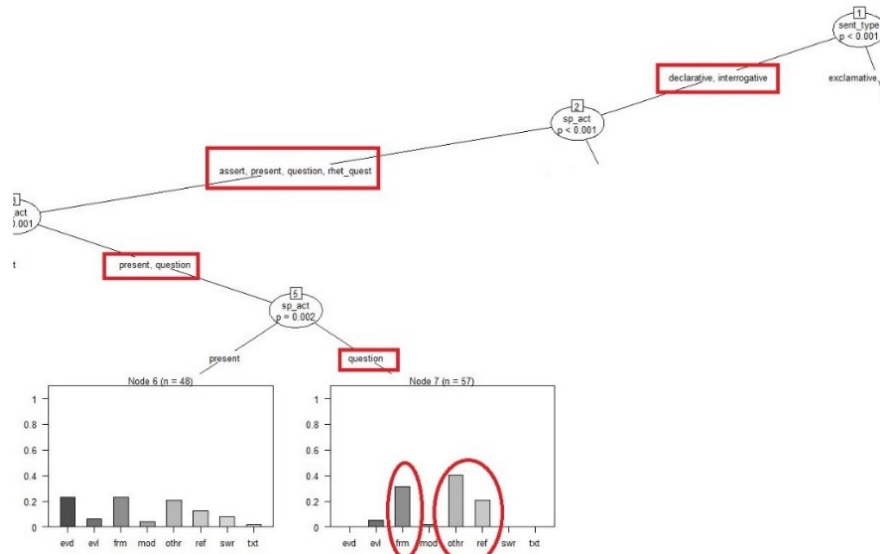
Figure 20: SFEs used in questions

61. B: 大家都想转化工, 他不要中国人, 我是运气特别好. 'Everyone wants to transfer to chemical industry, [but] he doesn't want Chinese people, I was very lucky.'

A: 是吧? 他^为啥不要中国人?

Shì ba? Tā   WÉI-SHǍ bú yào   Zhōngguó-rén?

Be SFP 3SG.M WHY   not want Chinese-people

'Really? WHY doesn't he want Chinese people?'   (CallFriend/zho-m/5982)

The same holds for framing and referential topics occurring in interrogatives, all of which are right-dislocated at the end of the utterance to mark their topical status, since they have been already introduced into the discourse. An example is given in (62) below:

62. A: 芝加哥那边怎么样?   'How's Chicago?'

   [...]

A: 社会治安怎么样, 你们那?

Shèhuì   zhì'ān   zěnme-yàng, nǐmen nà'r?

Social   security how.about,   2.PL   there

'How-s social security, over there?'   (CallFriend/zho-m/4198)

Finally, presentations are frequently followed by evidential expressions further stressing or emphasizing the status of the proposition as *acquired knowledge* (Tantucci, 2013), i.e. information that the hearer somehow got hold of, or by framing expressions limiting the field of application of the utterance focus in terms of time, space or domain (Frascarelli, 2017). In both cases, the speaker weakens her/his commitment towards the truth of the proposition, either by shifting the responsibility

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to someone else, or by limiting it to a specific and more limited field of application established by the framing topic. The two uses can be observed in (63) and (64) respectively.
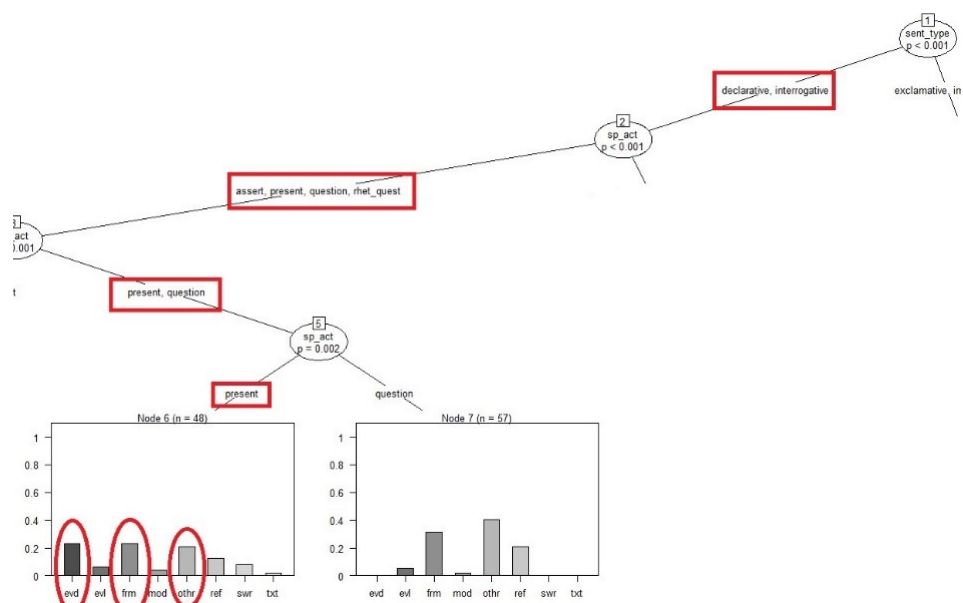
Figure 21: SFEs used in presentations

63. 他说那个地方 VP 一大把, 说.

Tā	shuō	nà-ge	dìfang	VP	yī	dà	bǎ,	shuō.
3SG.M	say	that-CLF	place	VP	one	big	bundle	say

'He said there are a lot of VPs in that place, said. (CallFriend/zho-m/5949)

64. 他们就说很难带, 进来.

Tāmen	shuō	hěn	nán	dài,	jìn-lái.
3PL	say	very	hard	bring	enter-come

They said it's very difficult to bring [those], [when] coming in.' (CallFriend/zho-m/4447)

Presentations can also be produced with a narrow sentence-internal focus generating an instance of *other* SFE, as in (65), where the SFE is topical and favours a factive reading of its content – i.e. the fact that it is possible to grab money –, weaker as it may be with respect to presuppositions triggered by other lexical, syntactic or conversational factors (Lombardi Vallauri & Masia, 2013: 176).

65. 他说就是^这个时候你就抓住钱.

Tā	shuō	jiùshì	ZHÈ-GE	shíhou	nǐ	jiù	zhuāzhù	qián.
3SG.M	say	just.be	THIS-CLF	time	2PL	just	grab	money

'He said THIS is the moment to grab money.' (CallFriend/zho-m/5195)

3.3. SFEs and evaluation

As it was possible to observe form the examples given above, many utterances containing SFEs convey either a positive or a negative evaluation of a person, thing or state of affairs. From a holistic perspective, it is found that 37 % of the SFEs are connected to either a positive or negative stance on the part of the speaker. However, the utterance right periphery appears to be biased towards the negative pole: while only 13% of the SFEs are produced in contexts expressing a positive evaluation, the expressions co-occuring with overtly coded markers of negative evaluation are almost double (24%). This outcome seems to suggest that, in the context of everyday conversations, producing a negative evaluation might call for strengthening or mitigating devices more than positive evaluations, so that the speaker does not expose herself/himself to rebuttal on the part of the addressee.[181] Consider for example the context in (66), wherein B is telling A that she feels quite off living in the US and that she is thinking about returning to China. A thus tries to persuade B to be more positive and not to worry too much, but B defends her position and reasserts that it is really hard for her. However, since she is aware that A holds a different view, she first emphasizes that this is her personal opinion (*wǒ juézhe* 我觉着 'I think') then successively mitigates the speech act further by means of an inferential evidential (*hǎoxiàng* 好像 'apparently') distancing her from the negative evaluational judgement, and finally adds a framing SFE which limits its field of application to the present moment (*xiànzài* 现在 'now'), leaving the door open for a possible different course in the future.

66. Context: B is telling A that she doesn't know if she will be able to keep staying in the USA and that she is thinking about going back to China.

A: &=k 哎呀别别, 别这样子想, &=h 肯定可以, 你别着急, 没事儿的. '

Oh don't, don't say this, &=h you can definitely do it, don't worry, it will be okay.'

[…]

B: 真是觉着好像不知道怎么回事.   'I really feel I don't know what's going on.'

B: 所以觉得好像还是挺难的, 现在.

  Suǒyǐ juězhe hǎoxiàng hái shì tǐng nán   de,   xiànzài.

  So   think apparently still be   quite difficult NMLZ now

  'So I think apparently things are quite difficult, now.   (CallFriend/zho-m/4447)

As can be observed from the CT in Figure (22), the observation concerning the tendency of evaluation towards the negative pole holds for all the pragmatic types of SFEs but evidential expressions:

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[181] This observation, however, might differ depending on the context of utterance. One can imagine that in the context of exam evaluations or job interviews, for instance, positive evaluations on a candidate's performance might be less frequent, even unusual, and thus perceived as more marked and requiring an additional amount of mitigation or strengthening when discussed among the members of a committee.
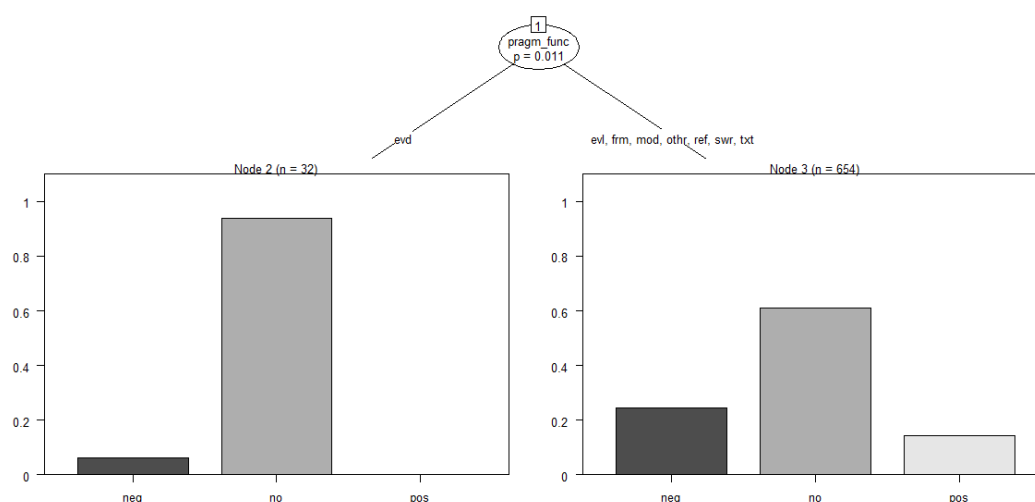
Figure 22: Pragmatic types of SFEs and pos/neg evaluation

Interestingly, evidentials show a very strong correlation with absence of evaluation (Node 2), except for two single cases in which negative evaluation is involved. In other words, surprisingly enough, evidential SFEs are almost never used in utterances containing an evaluation, but only in those conveying more "neutral" propositions, as observed in (67):

67. A: 他是加拿大拿的, 好像.

    Tā   shì Jiānádà ná de,   hǎoxiàng.

    3SG.M be Canada take NMLZ apparently

    'He brought it from Canada, apparently.'   (CallFriend/zho-m/5195)

However, the absence of lexically encoded positive or negative evaluation does not translate into the total absence of a subjective evaluation on the part of the speaker. In fact, by uttering the assertion in (67), the speaker commits herself both to the truth of the proposition and to the "ownership" of the factual evaluation. The production of the evidential SFE then has precisely the function of "de-responsibilizing" the speaker by distancing him both from a factual and from an evaluational standpoint.

The same process of de-responsabilization of the speaker can be observed in the two cases of evidential SFEs co-occurring with a negative evaluation contained in the data sample. These are *hǎoxiàng* 好像 'apparently' and *kàn yàngzi* 看样子 'by the looks of it; apparently', both instances of inferential evidentials, i.e. devices presenting the information as acquired through an inferential process, and thus very close to modal expressions such as *kěnéng* 可能 'maybe, perhaps' or *wǒ juěde*

我觉得 'I think'. Example (68) below reports the utterance containing the negative evaluation conveyed lexically by *fùdān* 负担 'burden' and containing *kan yangzi* in sentence-final position:

68. A: 不过有朋友也是-也是负担, 看样子.

    Búguò yǒu   péngyou yě shì- yě shì fùdān,   kàn yàngzi.

    But   have   friends also be also be burden, see aspect

    'But having friends is a burden too, apparently.'   (CallFriend/zho-m/5982)

If instances of positive or negative evaluation can be associated to each type of SFE except from evidentials, evaluative syntactic structures are more strongly associated with some SFEs than others (Pearson's Chi-squared test: $\chi_2(7) = 31.51$, $p < .001$). More specifically, evaluative structures of the type (X) (be) good/bad appear to occur more frequently with referential topics than with any other SFE type ($SE > 3.29$). In fact, as much as 37% of the referential topics in the data set are tied to predications explicitly structured to express a positive or negative evaluation about that referent and can be classified as the prototypical type of sentence-final topic upon which the studies concerning right dislocations have concentrated (e.g. Aijmer, 1989; Lambrecht, 1981; Frascarelli, 2017). An example of a positively evaluative structure is given below in (69):

69. 特别温暖, 那种感觉.

    Tèbié   wénnuǎn, nà-zhǒng gǎnjué.

    Particularly   warm   that-CLF   feeling

    'So warm, that feeling.'   (CallFriend/zho-m/5982)

Evaluations such as the one in (69) are expressed in the form of an assertion over which the speaker takes full responsibility, for s(he) is committed both to the truthfulness of the evaluation and to her/himself being the source of such evaluation. However, as Aijmer (1989: 149) – among others – has observed, these predications not only have "an expressive or emotional function", but are also able to convey a sense of "shared knowledge". In other words, on the one hand, these predications directly expose the speaker to the "danger" of a possible rebuttal by the hearer; on the other hand, however, they also present such information as something the hearer can relate to and be less likely to challenge. The latter function is achieved, in my opinion, through the uttering of referential SFEs that have been already established as discourse topics and thus represent shared knowledge among the interlocutors. It is not far-fetched to hypothesize that because of the recency effect of the sentence-final position (Haselow, 2012: 189), the production of shared information in this particular slot can give the impression that also what was said before can be (more or less) shared.

3.4. SFEs and other dimensions of (inter)subjectivity

A further element supporting the above-mentioned hypothesis concerning the role of referential SFEs comes from the observation of the interaction between SFE types, the use of SFPs and type of rapport orientation. The CT in Figure 23 represents the intersections between these three dimensions, with the first significant split occurring between utterances with and without SFPs ($p < .001$). The former are the less numerous type and are likely to present a referent or framing topic in sentence-final position (Node 5), whereas the latter present a second split wherein rapport orientation is at play ($p < .05$): instances of rapport challenge are significantly connected with the presence of referential topics (Node 3; Pearson's Chi-squared test: $\chi_2(7) = 27.68$, $p < .001$, $SE = 3.70$), while rapport neglect, management and enhancement are significantly associated with the presence of *other* topics and swear words (Node 4).
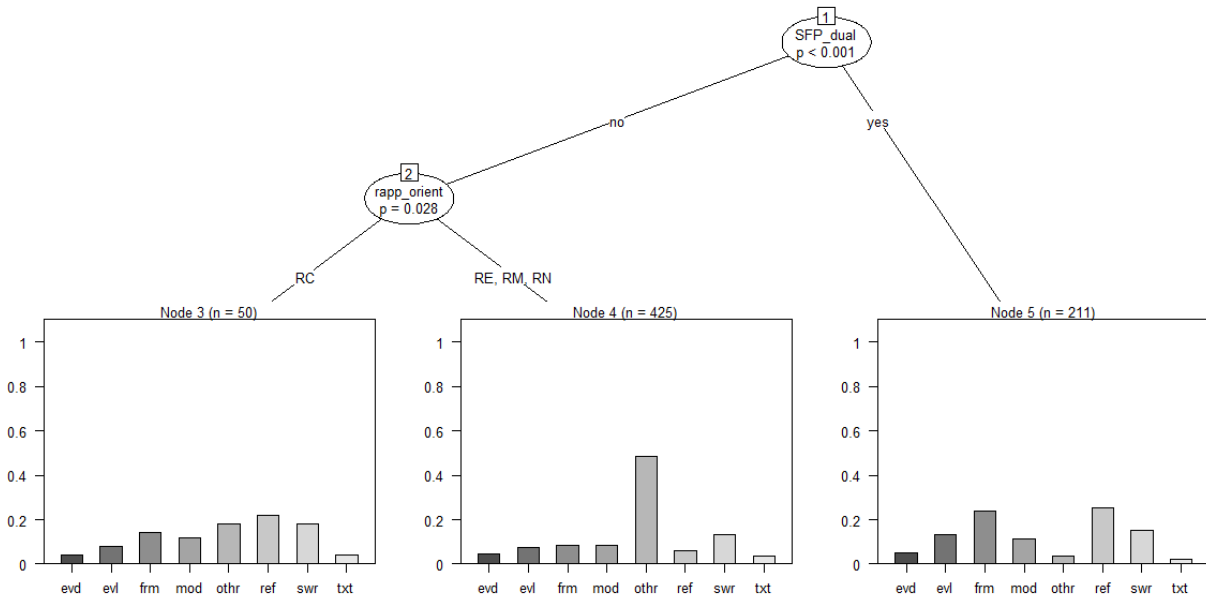
Figure 23: Pragmatic types of SFEs, presence of SFPs and rapport orientation

As discussed in § 4.1, Chapter 2, it has been argued that one of the main functions of Chinese SFPs is to regulate the relationship between the interlocutors, frequently functioning as either speech act mitigators or intensifiers. For this reason, in my annotation scheme based on Tantucci & Wang (2018), utterances containing SFPs were included among instances of rapport management. If we specifically focus on the interaction between SFPs and SFEs (Node 5 on the right-hand side of the CT), we can observe that both the mitigating and intensifying functions of the SFPs can be reinforced through the use of SFEs, as shown in (70) and (71), wherein the speech act results mitigated and intensified to a higher extent respectively by means of a frame and of a referential topic. Specifically, the assertive

speech act in (70), which is already softened by the presence of the SFP *ba* 吧, is further mitigated by the presence of the framing SFE *xiànzài* 现在 'now', which limits the field within which the assertion holds true to the present tense only:

70. 车反正还行吧, 现在.

    Chē fanzhèng hái xíng ba, xiànzài.

    Car anyway still ok SFP now

    'Anyway the car is ok, now.'   (CallFriend/zho-m/4198)

The speech act contained in (71) expresses the speaker's amazement in finding out that a certain English course is free and is strengthened through the production of the referential topic *zhè-ge* 这个 'this' in sentence-final position:[182]

71. 这个就- 就 free 的 啊, 这个!

    Zhè-ge   jiù- jiù free de   a,   zhè-ge!

    This-CLF just just free NMLZ SFP this-CLF

    'Wow, this is free, this [is]!'   (CallFriend/zho-m/5906)

However, as far as utterances without SFPs are concerned, instances of rapport challenge are significantly followed by a referential SFE which is already given and thus shared among the interlocutors. One example of such use was provided in (54) and is reported here again as (72). Here one can notice that one the one hand, the negative evaluation contained in the assertion is enhanced and strengthened; however, on the other hand, the already shared NP might help mitigate the challenging strength of the speech acts through the creation of an affective bond between the speaker and the hearer.

72. Context: B tells A that he recently bought sea crabs at one dollar something per pound. A says the price is really high.

    A: 你扯淡, 你!

        Nǐ   chědàn   nǐ!

        2SG   talk.nonsense   2SG

        'You're talking nonsense, you!'   (CallFriend/zho-m/5905)

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[182] Note that the referential SFE can only be analysed in terms of speech act enhancement or strengthening, since its referential power is null (it represents a deictic expression with little or null disambiguating power which, in addition, represents a repetition of an identical sentence-initial NP).

A further example is given in (73), wherein A interrupts B abruptly, challenging the relationship between the two. Nonetheless, in order to recover from the dispreferred move, A continues to talk and makes a positive comment about the place B is supposed to move to – in the intent of enhancing their rapport – closing it off with a referential NP denoting an already introduced place, *nà dìfang* 那 地方 'that place'. Thus, not only B produces a positively evaluating utterance, but he also exploits the sharedness effect conveyed by the sentence-final referential NP to reach out to the interlocutor and enhance the bond between the two.

73. A: 去哪啊？   'Where will you go?'

    B: 唉阿尔伯特爱因斯坦.   'Albert Einstein [Institute].'

    A: 那不算很好啊? 'Isn't that great?'

    B: 那, 胡老师原来最早出国- .'Well, when Prof. Hu went abroad the first time-'

    A: 对, 我知道, 不过也还可以, 那地方.

        Duì,   wǒ zhīdào, búguò yě hái kěyǐ, nà dìfang.'

        Right, 1SG know   but   also still can   thet place

        'Yeah, I know, but it's quite good, that place.'   (CallFriend/zho-m/5905)

Unlike speech acts challenging the relationship between the speaker and the hearer, instances of rapport neglect, management or enhancing without SFPs are characterized mainly by the presence of topics whose pragmatic function was labelled as *other* or as *swear*. *Other* topics are frequent in cases of rapport management signalled by elements occurring at the utterance left periphery, as exemplified by (74), whereas swear words are frequent in cases of rapport neglect as the one in (75). In (74), rapport management is signalled by the presence of the agreement marker *duì* 对 'correct; yeah', but also by the addition of the discourse marker *nǐ zhīdào ba* 你知道吧 'you now' after the conclusion of the utterance as a further attempt to reach A's empathy. The clause has a narrow focus falling on the verb *yòng* 用 'use', while the object NP *computer* is deaccented to signal its already given and topical status:

74. A: 还有你的 computer 要好, 公司全部都是用 computer , 你的报告全部都是用 computer 打出来的.

        Also, you must have a good computer, all the companies use computers, your reports are all written using a computer.'

    B: 对对. 'Yeah.'

    A: 没有什么手写的.'Basically there's no handwriting.'

B: 对, 我现在才开始学怎么^用 computer , 你知道吧.

Duì, wǒ xiànzài cái kāishǐ xué zěnme YÒNG computer, nǐ zhīdào ba.

Right 1SG now   just start study how   USE   computer, 2SG know SFP

'Yeah, right now I'm just learning how to USE a computer, you know?'

<div align="right">(CallFriend/zho-m/5906)</div>

In (75), A tells B that he attended a class on fluid mechanics but couldn't understand any of the contents. B then replies by giving a negative evaluation on the course and emphasizing it through the use of a swear word in sentence-final position. B's answer, without the presence of the SFE, was classified as in instance of rapport neglect. However, the use of the swear word can be considered as enhancing or at least managing the rapport between the interlocutors for it creates a sense of empathy and shared views along the same lines of (active or highly accessible) referential SFEs, i.e. they are intersubjective in nature. In such cases, I believe one can safely argue that it is the presence of this specific type of SFE that takes over the intersubjective function of rapport management generally performed by SFPs.

75. A: 我今天, 我不是今天, 我这学期选那个 fluimechanics, 上课都听不懂.

'Today, not today, I'm taking fluimechanics this semester, and I can't even understand the class

B: 特难, 我操.

Tè   nán,   wǒ cào.

Very difficult 1SG fuck

'It's extremely difficult, fuck.'
<div align="right">(CallFriend/zho-m/5784)</div>

As far as the propositional face work dimension is concerned, only a very small amount of utterances with SFEs contained a positive or negative evaluation directly targeting the hearer. In fact, only 21/686 utterances containing SFEs represented a face-threatening (FTA) or a face-enhancing act (FEA). The former amounted to a total of 12 occurrences and the latter to 10 occurrences, each constituting less than 2% of the data set. This result is not completely surprising, since Tantucci & Wang (2018: 68) also found that only a small portion of evaluative utterances were FTAs or FEAs. Nonetheless, the occurrences in their data set were slightly higher than mine, with 5% of FEAs and 3% of FTAs.[183] An explanation to this fact might come from one of Tantucci & Wang's findings, i.e.

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[183] Note however that all the utterances in Tantucci & Wang (2018)'s data set contained a modal expression – either *huì* 会 'to be able to; to be the case that', *yào* 要 'to want; must', or *kěyǐ* 可以 'to be allowed; to be in the conditions of', whereas this is not necessarily true for the utterances in my data set.

that instances of rapport challenge – and by extension FTAs – in Mandarin Chinese do not generally co-occur with peripheral pragmatic markers (Tantucci & Wang, 2018: 73). In other words, pretty much along the same lines as imperative speech acts, FTAs are not generally mitigated by SFPs or SFEs. Example (76) shows one of the few exceptions containing a 2nd person pronoun in sentence-final position:

76. A: 别抽疯儿了, 你!

    Bié   chōu-fēng'r le, nǐ!

    IMP.NEG act-crazy   SFP 2SG

    'Stop acting crazy, you!'   (CallFriend/zho-m/5975)

Interestingly, 4 out of the 12 FTAs contained a 2nd person pronoun SFE. However, this does not imply that the use of the 2nd person in sentence-final position should be exclusively related to a negative evaluation or to a face threat. In fact, the dataset also contained examples of positive evaluation connected to 2nd person pronouns or vocative NPs used in sentence-final position, as can be observed in (77). In this example, the 2nd person pronoun is re-elaborated in sentence-final position to emphasize a positive evaluation on the part of the speaker towards the hearer and his wife, whom he finds very funny:

77. 你们太逗了, 你们那儿.

    Nǐmen tài dòu   le, nǐmen nà'r.

    2PL   too funny SFP 2PL   there

    You're so funny, you (over there).'   (CallFriend/zho-m/4198)

Why should FEAs as the one contained in (77) be unlikely to occur with SFEs, however, is an issue that deserves future investigation.

3.5. SFEs and the utterance IS

Finally, the last dimensions remaining to be investigated concern information structure. First of all, we can observe the distribution of the IS articulations in the data set. Overall, the most frequent type of focus realization is broad focus, which includes mainly the topic-comment articulation (41%), the

predicate-focus articulation (19%), and the argument-focus articulation (3%).[184] However, narrow focus is also frequent in the data set, characterizing 36% of the utterances with SFEs.
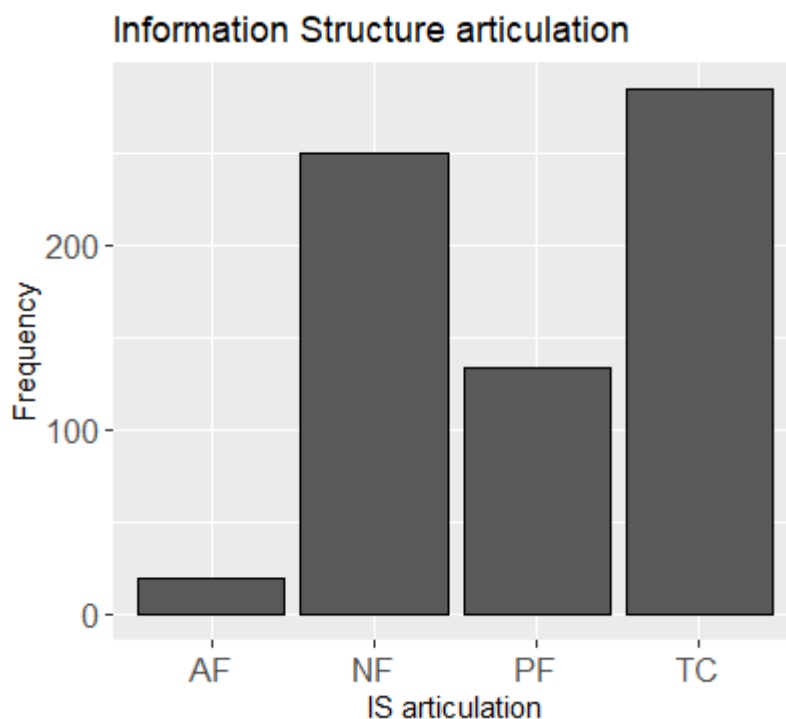
Graph 5: Distribution of IS articulation types in the data set

Example (78) shows an instance of broad focus realization, which is compatible with a focal extension as broad as sentence-focus, but also with a less broad extension only coinciding with the subject-predicate segment or even only with the predicate:

78. 明大化学系很臭的, 我操.

Míngdà   huàxuéxì   hěn chòu de, wǒ cào.
Minnesota.University   chemistry.department   very smelly SFP, 1SG fuck
'The Chemistry Department of Minnesota University is very bad, fuck.'

(CallFriend/zho-m/5784)

Conversely, example (79) shows an instance of narrow focus realization, where the utterance focus only comprises a single constituent:.

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[184] Remember, however, that this articulation includes both broad focus proper, i.e. the sentence-focus type in the sense of Lambrecht (1994), and topic-comment proper, i.e. an *aboutness* topic in the sense of Reinhart (1981) followed by a comment.

79. 那你连^书桌都没有?

    Nà   nǐ   lián   SHŪZHŌ   dōu méi yǒu?

    Then 2SG EVEN DESK   all not have

    'So you don't even have a DESK?'   (CallFriend/zho-m/5784)

However, in order to fully grasp the meaning of the frequency figures and their bearing on the use of SFEs, it is undoubtfully useful to observe the IS articulation of utterances connected to different pragmatic types of SFEs. More specifically, since topical themes are generally part of the propositional content of the utterance (Halliday, 1994), as opposed to interpersonal and textual themes, it is interesting to investigate whether the former behave differently with respect to the other two types. Graph 6 shows that overall, interpersonal and textual themes have a similar distribution in terms of information structure: the majority of the SFEs in the two groups tend to occur in utterances with a topic-comment or a predicate-focus structure, while they are less frequent in those with narrow focus and hardly ever present in those with an argument focus.
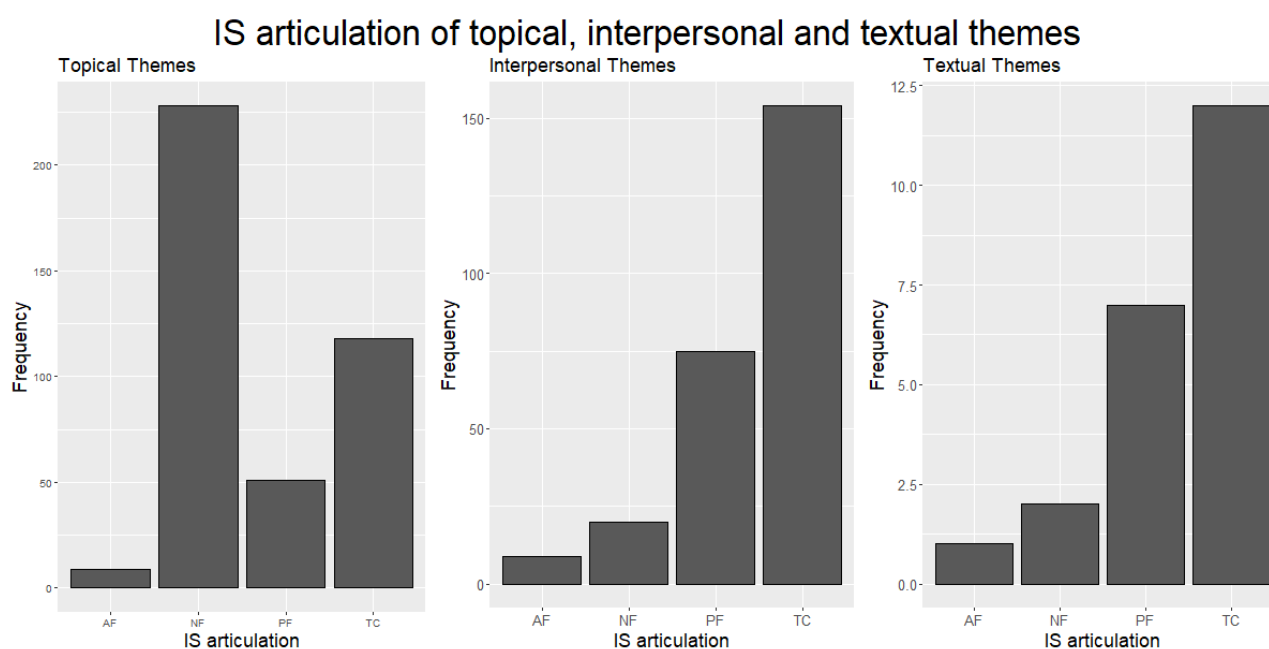
Graph 6: IS articulation of topical, interpersonal and textual SFEs

However, topical themes behave differently, for they appear to occur with a much higher frequency in utterances characterized by a narrow-focus structure (228/406 topical SFEs), and deserve a more detailed investigation. Graph 7 focuses in particular on topical themes being used in sentence-final position, additionally distinguishing between referential, framing and *other* topics:
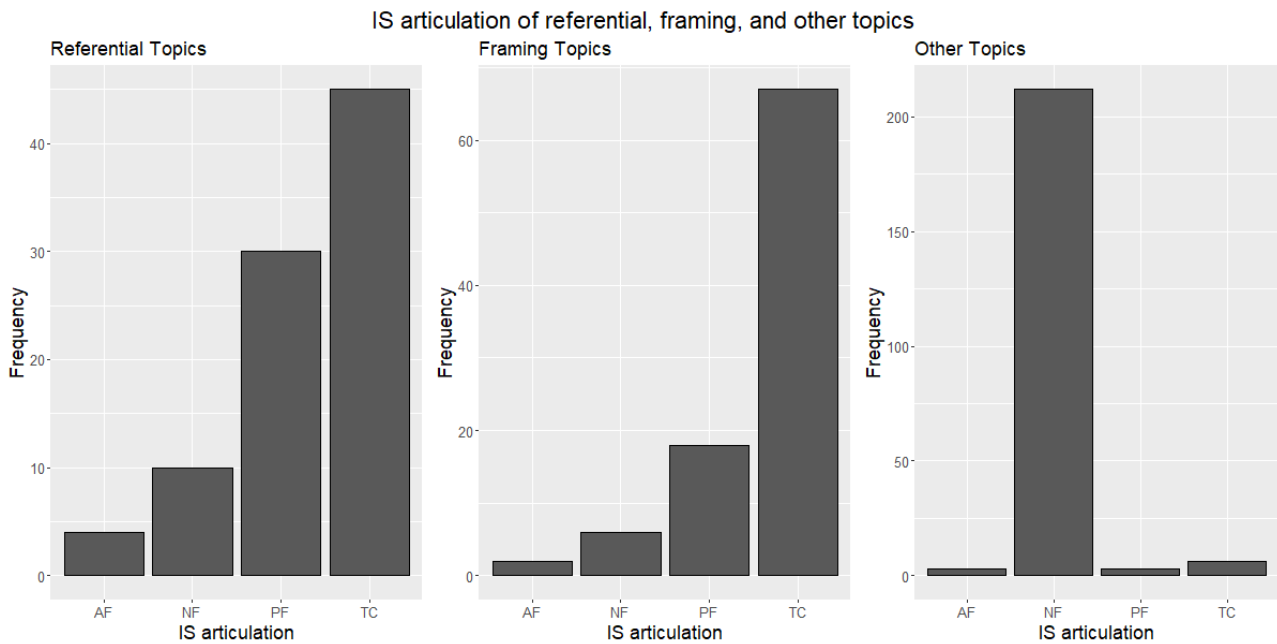
Graph 7:IS articulation of topical themes

What is rather evident from Graph 7 is that *other* topics are realized almost exclusively in utterances with a narrow-focus articulation. In other words, utterances with narrow focus – predictably – generate in the majority of cases topical SFEs labelled as *other*, i.e. that are neither referents nor frames. For the most part, they are entire VPs (77%), or more or less complex sentence fragments (20%), as shown in (80) and (81) respectively. In (80), the focalization of the preverbal subject NP *zhè* 这 'this' has a defocalizing effect on the entire VP, whereas in (81) the SFE only consists in the second verb of a serial verb construction, as an effect of the narrow focus being located on the verb modifier *nàme* 那么 'so':

80. A: 你买点儿这搁冰箱里, 省得-这不就省得你每天乱吃, 胡吃八吃的.

    'You can buy some and keep it in the fridge, it will save you from eating poorly.'

    B: 哎呀, 咳你说的, 在这儿 s- 一 东西 一 多 了, 就反倒那什么了 .

    'Uhm, what you say, here as soon as there's more of something, it's the other way around.'

    A: 你看, 你 ^这就是不对了.

Nǐ	kàn,	nǐ	ZHÈ	jiù	shì	bú	duì	le.
2SG	look,	2SG	THIS	just	be	not	right	SFP

    'You see, THIS is where you're wrong.'   （CallFriend/zho-m/5975)

81. 做研究的人啊, 呃不能够去衡量, { lipsmack }

    'People who do research, they're not good at weighing things up,'

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唔不能够去 ^那么衡量.

Wú　bù　nénggòu　　qù　NÀME　héngliáng

Ehm　not　be.able　　go　SO　　　weigh

'Ehm, they're not THAT good at weighing things up.'　　　　　　(CallFriend/zho-m/5930)

Moreover, one can also observe that with respect to both frames and *other*, referential topics tend to occur more frequently in shorter utterances only comprising the predicate focus or the argument focus, as shown in (82) an (83) respectively. These, in fact, constitute prototypical cases of right dislocations frequently commented upon in the literature (e.g. Aijmer, 1989; Lambrecht, 1981). However, they only represent 5% of my data set (35/686 SFEs).

82. A: 她那边儿也得有点儿 experience, 'She has to gain some experience too'

　　A: 然后的话呢, 他要是到那儿去的他就可以把她也调过去了,

　　　'And then, if he goes there, he can bring her along too.'

　　A: 不是就方便了嘛, 那样儿?

　　　Bú　　shì　jiù　fāngbiàn　le　ma, nà-yàng'r?

　　　Not　be　just　convenient　SFP　SFP　that-way

　　　'Isn't it convenient, that way?' (CallFriend/zho-m/5930)

83. A: 因为我也不知道他那 那个镇大不大 […]

　　　'Because I don't know how big is if that town he lives in'　[…]

　　B: 就是他妈一^个圈儿, 他那 g-个-他那个 town.

　　　Jiùshì　tā　　mā　　yī-GE　JUĂN'R, tā　　nà　g-ge　tā　　nà-ge　town.

　　　Just.be　3.SG.M mother　one-CLF CIRCLE　3SG.M that g-CLF 3SG.M that-CLF town

　　　'It's just a fucking circle, that town of his.'　　　　　　　　(CallFriend/zho-m/5653)

As can be observed from the examples above, not all the topical SFEs can be said to have the same degree of accessibility or activation in the interlocutor' minds. Sometimes, referents are fully active in both the topic-comment and the narrow-focus conditions, as in (81), (82) and (83), but this is not necessarily true, as testified by example (80), wherein the VP *jiù shì bú duì le* 就是不对了 'exactly be wrong' has not been introduced before, even though it is treated as such. In fact, Graph 8 shows that the three types of topics not only can have different degrees of activation, i.e. they are not

necessarily given or highly accessible, but there is also a different distribution of the activation status across them:[185]
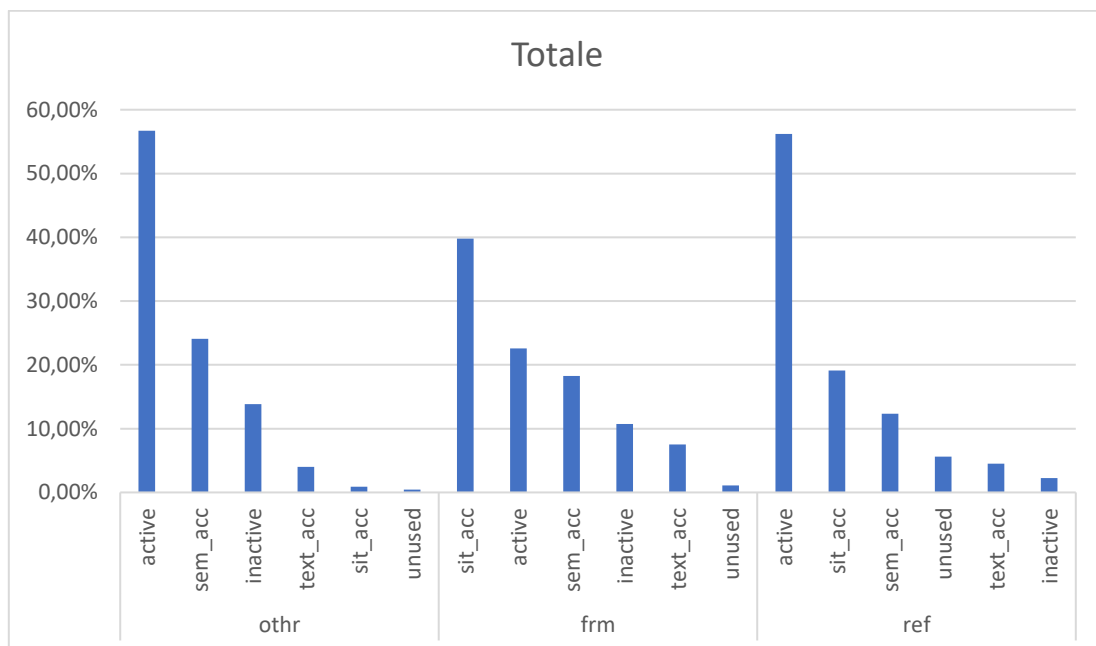
Graph 8: Activation status of topical themes

What immediately catches the eye is that both *other* and referential topics are for the most part active (almost 60%), while only 23% of framing topics are active; when produced in sentence-final position, the latter are more markedly characterized by a situationally-accessible status (40%), as can be observed in (84), wherein the PP *zài zhè'r* 在这儿 '[over] here'– although not introduced previously into the discourse – is expressed through a deictic continuous form because its meaning can be understood by the hearer as coinciding with 'USA' based on the situational context.

84. A: 我今天, 我也是, 就想吃国内的东西. 'Today, mee too, I just want to eat Chinese dishes.'

   […]

   A: 茭白, 哦, 茭白你喜欢吃. 'Wild rice, huh, you like wild rice.'

   B: 对. 'Yeah.'

   B: 也没吃过么, 在这呢.

   　　Yě　　méi chī-guò　me, zài zhè'r ne.

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[185] Interpersonal and textual themes were not analysed in terms of activation status for – unless they are repeated – they are not given, and yet cannot be considered as completely new. In other words as Lombardi Vallauri (2009: 75) puts it – they are "empty words" for which it makes little sense to talk about activation in the speakers' short-term memories.

Also   not eat-ASP   SFP   at here   SFP

'But I haven't eat it yet, over here'.   (CallFriend/zho-m/5982)

Moreover, *other* and referential topics are characterized differently as far as the second most frequent activation status is concerned: the former tend to be semantically-accessible, whereas the latter are more likely to have a situationally-accessible status. Example (85) shows an instance of *other* SFE which becomes accessible inside the semantic frame activated by the previous mention of *niúbī* 牛逼 'awesome; talented', while example (86) shows a referential topic which is highly accessible because of its presence in the situational context (it is the name of one of the two interlocutors):

85. B: […]而且很多活儿就不需要特别牛逼的人.

'And there are many jobs that don't require particularly talented people.'

[…]

B: 啊我被他妈 IND interview. Fuck, I was interviewed by an IND.'

^那帮人是高手.

NÀ   BĀNG RÉN shì gāoshǒu.

That group people be   master

'THOSE GUYS are true masters.'   (CallFriend/zho-m/5653)

86. B: 可以啊, 罗任.

Kěyǐ   a,   Luō Rèn.

Can   SFP Luo Ren

'Okay, Luo Ren.'   (CallFriend/zho-m/5784)

Finally, while referential topics are hardly ever inactive, framing and *other* topics are more frequently newly introduced, as shown in (87) and (88). Both *bù gǎn shuō* 不 敢 说 'dare not say' and *píngshí* 平时 'usually' have been labelled 'inactive', for they have not been introduced in the previous context, nor are they accessible based on textual, situational or semantic factors.

87. 这人我 从一开始就知道 , 你说 { breath } 你那个实验室有什么特殊的,

'This person, I knew it from the beginning, tell me { breath }, what's so special about that lab?'

你就连实验室电话儿也不敢说.

Nǐ   jiù lián   shíyàn-shì diànhuà'r yě bù gǎn shuō.

2SG just even laboratory phone   also not dare say

'She doesn't even dare to give people THE LAB'S PHONE NUMBER.'

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(CallFriend/zho-m/5930)

88. 我不知道, 我他妈哪儿我也没去过.

'I don't know. I've fucking never been anywhere.'

我也不看地图, 平时.

    Wǒ yě bú kàn   dìtú,   píngshí.

    1.SG also not look   map   usually

'I don't look at maps either, usually.'   (CallFriend/zho-m/5905)

The production of inactive framing SFEs as the one in (88) has the function of retrospectively limiting the field of application of the utterance focus in terms of space, time, domain, etc., whereas *other* SFEs such as the one in (87) are produced as an effect of the narrow focalization of some specific sentence-internal constituent. However, as mentioned earlier, it is not infrequent that the topical status of such SFEs be exploited to conveying implicit information. In (87), what remains implicit is the previous introduction into the discourse of the fact that there are (other) things that the women whom the speaker is talking about does not dare to share with others, thus the speaker's responsibility towards the introduction of this (inactive) information is concealed.

However, for a deeper understanding of the functions the SFEs perform, in addition to observing the activation status of the different types of topics, it is useful to also observe their coreferential profile, which is visible in Graph 9:
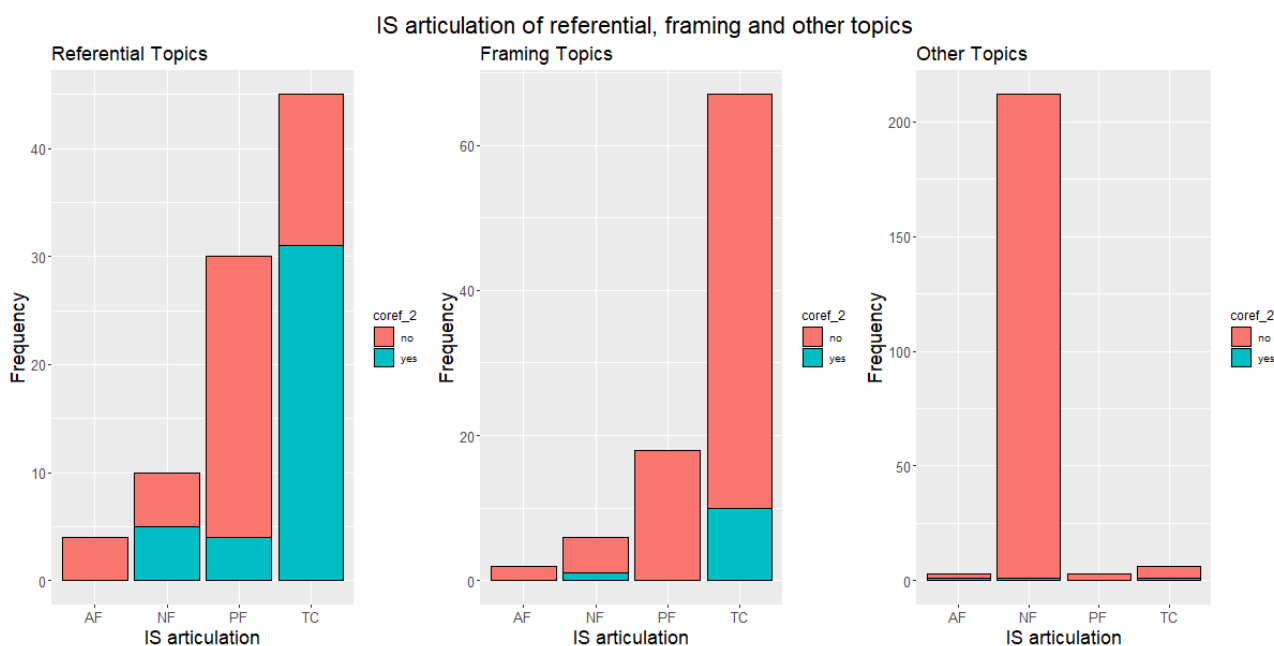
Graph 9: Coreferential profile of topical themes

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The graph shows that there is a decline of coreferential overt forms going from referential to *other* topics: while a good part of referential SFEs are coreferential to a sentence-internal form, frames present a much lower amount of coreferential forms, whereas *other* topics are hardly ever resumed. Clearly, this has to do with the greater availability in Chinese of coreferential forms for referential, locative, time and domain phrases, with respect to other linguistic categories such as verbs, adverbs, adjectives, etc (Liu et al., 2001). However, at least part of this variation might be connected with the activation states of the topics. To put it another way, since Lambrecht (1994) argues that the function of right dislocations is to signal that not-yet active referents are going to be named at the end of the utterance, it is reasonable to expect for more continuous forms (i.e. zero forms or elaborations) to be connected with a lower degree of activation in the hearer's short-term memory. In other words, the right-dislocated topic should make up for the low informativity of the continuous sentence-internal coreferential form. In order to verify the connection and intersection between the three types of topics, activation status and coreferential profile, I plotted another CT shown in Figure 24:
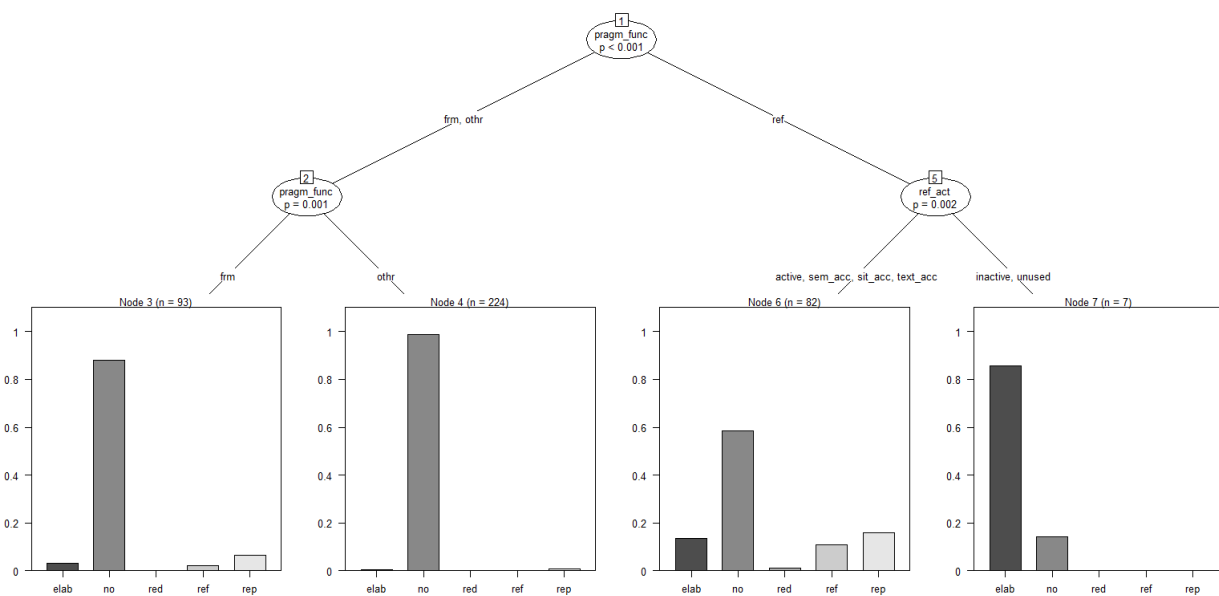
Figure 24: Coreferenmtiality and activation status of referential topics

The picture emerging from this CT is rather straightforward: framing topics and much more so *other* topics behave differently from referential topics ($p < .001$): the former show a clear-cut tendency for non-resumption, regardless of their activation status; as far as referential topics are concerned, however, the activation status of the referent does come into play ($p < .01$): inactive and unused referential SFEs, i.e. referents with a very low degree of accessibility, are not only very infrequent (7/89 referential SFEs), but are also more likely to represent an elaboration of a sentence-internal

constituent, while more accessible referents tend to be mostly non-resumed or resumed by repetitions and re-formulations. In other words, referential SFEs constituting repetitions or re-formulations of sentence-internal constituents are mostly active or highly accessible, and thus have little or null referential informativity but are rather motivated by emphatic needs, as can be observed in (89):

89. B: 她还什么钱, 'What money should she pay back?'

她没借什么钱哪, 她.

Tā   méi jiè   shénme qián   na, tā.

3SG.F not borrow   what   money SFP 3.SG.F

'She didn't borrow any money, she.'   (CallFriend/zho-m/5542)

On the other hand, referential SFEs presenting less informative sentence-internal coreferents – i.e. elaborations – are characterized by a very low accessibility status and are thus motivated by referential explicitation needs. This is exemplified in (90), wherein the SFE *nà-liǎ chē* 那辆车 'that car' is produced to integrate the low informativity of the sentence-internal topic *nà-ge* 那个 'that', which has not been previously introduced and thus results ambiguous in reference:

90. 张淑英那个都快到头儿了, 那辆车.

Zhāng Shūyīng nà-ge   dōu kuài   dào-tóu'rle, nà-liàng chē.

Zhang Shuying that-CLF all almost   arrive-head   that-CLF car

'That [thing] of Zhang Shuying almost arrived at the end of its life, that car.'

(CallFriend/zho-m/4447)

Finally, as far as zero anaphora are concerned, contrary to Lambrecht's claim, these are connected for the most part to highly accessible or already active referents, whose production in sentence-final position cannot thus be motivated by referential integration needs but rather – on a par with reformulations or repetitions – by interpersonal-oriented needs such as the creation of an affective bond (Aijmer, 1989; Berruto, 1986; Lambrecht, 1981) or the ensuring of the hearer's agreement on the utterance (Cresti, 2009). An example of such use was already presented in (83), wherein the production of the active referent *tā nà-ge town* 他那个 town 'that town of his' has the function of ensuring the hearer's consent and empathy of views regarding the negative evaluation therein conveyed.

To sum up, highly active referents are resumed mainly for emphatic reasons, while less accessible referents are resumed for reasons related to referential explicitation. The observation is consistent with Lepadat (awaiting publication)'s study on the relationship between referent activation and coreferentiality in Mandarin Chinese, where it was found that speakers deemed right dislocations

with active referents more acceptable when coindexed with a fully-fledged sentence-internal NP, while situationally-accessible and unused referents were rated higher when coindexed with a pronoun or zero anaphora.[186]

4. Qualitative analysis and discussion

Based on the quantitative and statistical analyses presented so far, this section will discuss and analyse the results from a qualitative point of view, identifying the functions performed by the SFEs, while further pointing out their interaction with other linguistic expressions of (inter)subjectivity. Finally, the results of both quantitative and qualitative analyses will be discussed to provide an answer to the research questions illustrated in § 1.

Addressing the functions of the SFEs used in sentence-final position does not come without a challenge. As Schiffrin (1987) long since pointed out, pragmatic markers frequently perform functions pertaining to different levels of discourse, making it difficult to distinguish and clearly isolate one meaning or function from the other. In addition, as Lim (2014) – who also embarked on the arduous task of describing the functions of Mandarin Chinese SFEs in oral interactions – states, "an exhaustive list of possible interactional functions may not be possible" (Lim, 2014: iii). Nonetheless, as the statistical analyses suggest, there is a certain prototypicality in the data that one can use to discuss and further define these functions. The discussion will proceed from more general to more specific levels of linguistic analysis: i.e. from the broader perspective of interpersonal relations to that of the relationship holding between different parts of discourse and finally to that of information-structural units within the single utterance. However, because of the intrinsic polysemic or polyfunctional nature of the type of expressions under investigation, the discussion will not always be limited to a single plane of discourse or linguistic level, but will point out eventual polysemies and overlappings in the use of these elements.

4.1. Interpersonal functions

From an interpersonal point of view, the quantitative analyses presented in § 3 suggested that the great majority of SFEs occur in declarative utterances and assertions, and a minor part can be found in interrogative and exclamative utterances realizing questions or again assertions – and indirectly

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[186] The study was based on an online acceptability judgement taken by 156 Chinese native speakers after reading and simultaneously listening to utterances containing right dislocations with different conditions of referent activation and coreferentiality.

also expressives. However, the SFEs are hardly ever used with speech acts such as commissives and directives.

Concerning this issue, different hypothesis can be made based on both language-universal and language-specific criteria. First, as Givón (1991: 341) points out, "the main, declarative, affirmative, active clause has been tacitly assumed, in grammatical description ever since the Greeks, to be the privileged, unmarked clause type." Put differently, non-assertive speech acts can be defined as marked both in terms of frequency and in terms of cognitive complexity. The former type of markedness accounts for the fact that non-assertive speech acts are less frequent in discourse in general, while the latter accounts for their low occurrence in the sample, i.e. in intersection with an SFE. More specifically, the more marked a speech act is, the greater its salience and its standing out vis-à-vis unmarked constructions (Givón, 1991: 337). On this view, a greater attention being paid to these speech acts could accordingly translate into a higher degree of planification on part of the speaker and thus into a less frequent necessity of recurring to afterthoughts or other topical elements at the utterance right periphery.[187]

Second, from a language-specific perspective, it has also been argued that manipulative speech acts such as requests tend to be expressed through direct or unmitigated linguistic structures (Lee-Wong, 1994; Gao, 1999), or more precisely, indirectness and mitigation connected to such speech acts are more frequently achieved through a succession of connected utterances rather than at the level of the single utterance (Zhang, 1995). As a result, it is not surprising that utterance peripheries, and in particular the right periphery, should not be the designated place for the mitigation or strengthening of these speech acts. To give an idea of the "extended" indirectness strategy employed in request by Mandarin speakers, example (91) is extracted from the same corpus employed for the SFEs analysis. In this case, the request act extends over two sentences, the first representing an imperative mitigated only by an instance of verb doubling (*wèn-wèn* 问问 'ask'), and the second containing an explanation (Lee Wong, 1994: 507-508; Su & Ren, 2017: 435-436):

91. 你问问, 你问问 Chris, 他可能知道多一些.

Nǐ wèn-wèn, nǐ wèn-wèn Chris, tā kěnéng zhīdào duō yī-xiē.
2SG ask-ask 2SG ask-ask Chris 3SG.M maybe know more some
'You should ask Chris, perhaps he knows more.'

---

[187] I am indebted to my colleague Sergio Conti for pointing out the possible correlation between degrees of markedness and amount of planification.

Lastly, assertions are arguably the type of speech act that more than others expose the speaker to the chance of being challenged by the addressee (Givón, 2001: 289; Masia, 2016: 89-90). In fact, as Givón (2001: 289) argues, representative speech-acts – or declarative in his words – can have a truth value, unlike questions and commands, and can thus be meaningfully challenged. In addition, among the three types of representatives adopted in my annotation scheme, both presentations and opinions are less challengeable than assertions with respect to the utterance truth value for – as already argued in Tantucci (2016: 203-204) – the speaker is not committed towards the factuality of the proposition therein contained. To be sure, the preponderance of SFEs occurring at the end of assertive speech acts is at least partly connected to the speakers' attempts to avoid their utterances being challenged by their addressees.

In fact, a very good amount of the SFEs in the data set were found to be produced exactly with the intention of reducing the degree to which the utterance they accompany could be challenged by the interlocutors. In my dataset, the strategies used by the speakers to reach this purpose can be reconducted to two main types: subjective grounding and intersubjective grounding: as suggested by the term itself, the former type anchors the illocutionary force of the utterance to the speaker's persona, i.e. grounds it in her/his subjective belief, evaluation, attitude or emotion; on the contrary, the latter type anchors the illocutionary force of the utterance to different aspects of what the speaker and the hearer share or, alternatively, to an additional third party belonging to the society, i.e. grounds it into the universe of discourse co-constructed by the interlocutors or to an external source of knowledge belonging to the social community. Clearly, these distinctions are modelled on previous literature, including Traugott (2002, 2010; Traugott & Dasher, 2002)'s distinction between subjective and intersubjective expressions as well as Tantucci (2013, 2015)'s distinction between immediate and extended intersubjectivity. Nonetheless, the perspective adopted here is somehow different from both these approaches: I prefer talking about (inter)subjective grounding strategies rather than (inter)subjective meanings since a number of expressions used in sentence-final position which overtly encode the speaker, e.g. 1st person-subject epistemic verbs and swearing expressions, while surely anchoring the illocutionary force to the speaker's persona, may also be considered as performing intersubjective functions: epistemic verbs pre-emptively account for the hearer's possible reaction to the utterance, while swearing expressions are meant to create an intimacy bond and a sense of social inclusion between the speaker and the hearer.

4.1.1. Subjective grounding

Subjective grounding can be achieved through the use of modals, evaluatives, swearings and a limited number of framing SFEs expressing speaker coordinates, whereas intersubjective grounding

is achieved through the use of referential and *other* topics as well as evidential SFEs. Finally, textual expressions can be positioned in between the two, since they anchor the illocutionary force of the utterance to a prior content of the universe of discourse (Haselow, 2012), while also expressing a subjective evaluation which guides the hearer's inferential process concerning this link (Blakemore, 2006).

Regarding the first strategy, the use of SFEs performing subjective grounding can have two opposite effects: they can either mitigate the illocutionary force of the speech act or, on the opposite, reinforce the speaker's stance. In both cases, the possibility of the utterance being challenged by the addressee significantly decreases. Crucially, the SFEs belonging to this category are the ones which present the higher differences between males and females. In fact, the distribution of the SFEs in the analysed conversations suggested with a certain strength that males and females make a different use of the post-sentential slot, and they do so also according to the gender of their interlocutor. As it turns out, female speakers in my sample tend to utilize much more often modal expressions, especially in same-gender interactions; on the opposite, male speakers only occasionally use epistemic expressions, while making abundant use of swear words in male to male interactions.

More specifically, women speakers tend to make more frequent use of modal expressions with an overtly coded 1st person subject such as *wǒ juéde* 我觉得 'I think', *wǒ xiǎng* 我想 'I think', *wǒ gǎnjúe* 我感觉 'I feel', but also modal adverbs such as *kěnéng* 可能 'maybe' and *dàgai* 大概 'probably', among the others, especially in connection with a negative evaluation (32% of the cases intersect with a negative evaluation, whereas only 10% are produced after an element of overtly coded positive stance). By doing so, the speakers signal that the utterance is the product of their subjective reasoning about a certain state of affairs, which might as well depart from that of the hearers. However, this can have two opposite effects: either decreasing the illocutionary force of the utterance, i.e. lowering the speaker's commitment towards the truth of the proposition, as in (92), or reinforcing the illocutionary force of the act by adding intensifiers such as *jiù* 就 *or jiùshì* 就是, as in (93).

In (92) Speaker A is talking about her English exam and how she found it very difficult, unlike other classmates. She explains to B that with respect to the type of essays that are required in other tests, the compositions for this exam are comparatively more difficult. She tries to convince her interlocutor about the truthfulness of her reasoning process. Nonetheless, in order to preserve her social image, she repeatedly marks the utterances as a subjective point of view, once at the beginning and twice at the end of the last sentence, both by means of the modal adverb *kěnéng* 可能 'maybe' and the epistemic chunk *wǒ gǎnjúe* 我感觉 'I feel'.

92. Context: Speaker A is describing her English exam to her friend. Specifically, she is talking about the composition part.

B: 我觉得好像这种的相对还好一些, 因为现在写的作文呢, 有点象那种就是那种记叙文一样的感觉. 'I think apparently this is comparatively easier, because I feel that the compositions we must write now are a bit like some sort of narrative'

A: 嗯. 'Mhm'

B: 或者说 m- 散文一样的,感觉, 就是你得描述出来怎么样的感觉, 是吧?
Or like prose, I feel. I mean, you have to be able to describe how it feels, right?'

A: 啊. 'Oh'

B: 那就比那种辩论性的那种议论文要, 我觉得要难一些, 可能, 我感觉.

Nà	jiù	bǐ	nà-zhǒng	biànlùnxìng	de	nà-zhǒng	yìlùn	wén
Then	just	COMP	that-CLF	argumentative	ATTR	that-CLF	argumentative	essay

yào,	wǒ	juéde	yào	nán	yìxiē,	kěnéng,	wo	gǎnjué.
must,	1SG	think	must	difficult	a.bit	maybe	1SG	feel

'Then with respect to that kind of argumentative essays, I think they are a bit more difficult, maybe, I think.' (CallFriend/zho-m/4447)

In (93) the female speaker A is telling her male friend B that she is worried about her sister's behaviour concerning dating and she wishes to warn her to be more careful, as her mother asked her to do so too. She expresses the fact that her sister should be more discrete twice, and the second time a modal expression is appended to the end of the utterance; however, unlike what happens in (91), the illocutionary force of the act is not weakened but reinforced, since speaker A is striving to convince B of the reasonableness of her statement, as also confirmed by the use of the question tag *dui ba* to further seek B's alignment. Importantly, the subjective SFE also intersects with the use of the SFP *a* 啊 indicating personal involvement (Chu, 1998).

93. Context: Speaker A is talking with B about her sister's love affairs and explains that her mother also asked her to talk to her.

A: 不是说, 就是说让我嘱咐她这方面的事情吗, 我说, 我给她嘱咐嘱咐她, 得让她慎重一点儿. ' In other words, didn't she ask me to warn her about this sort of thing? I said, I will warn her, I must tell her to be a bit more discrete.'

A: 反正得慎重啊, 我就觉得, 对吧.

Fǎnzhèng	děi	shènzhòng a,	wǒ	jiù	juéde,	duì	ba.
Anyway	must	be.discreet SFP,	1SG	just	think	right	SFP

250

'Anyway [she] needs to be discreet, I really think, isn't it so?' (CallFriend/zho-m/5975)

Regarding male speakers specifically in my sample, they distinctively use swear words in same-gender interactions at the end of their utterances, a good part of which have declarative or exclamative intonation and contain a negative evaluation of a state of affairs (almost 30% of the cases intersect with an overtly coded negative evaluation, while only 14% are associated with a positive evaluation). On the one hand, these expressions clearly have a strong intensifying function consisting in the expression of an emotional subjective stance on the part of the speaker; on the other hand, as pointed out in research on the use of swearing and taboo words among different groups of individuals, the use of emphatic swearing among peers generally has the purpose and effect of creating and maintaining social harmony (Jay & Janschewitz, 2008: 270-272). In other words, the use of swear words creates a sense of integration and belonging to a specific (social) group, for they are used to empathically involve the hearer and to share with him the speaker's own psychological state. Crucially, as one can observe also from example (94), swear words used in sentence-final position can intersect with propositional forms of swearing (e.g. the use of *tā mā* 他妈 'damn; fucking' – literally 'his mom' – as an emphatic modifier) and other dimensions encoding intersubjectivity such as SFPs. The evaluation expressed in such exclamative utterances tends to be mostly negative, and in many cases also coincides with an additional mirative or unexpectedness flavour.

94. Context: Speaker A is complaining to B about the lab heads telling on him to his supervisor Freda.

A: 他们就把电话打到 Freda 那. 'They called Freda.'

A: 说 Gang 现在 &=laughs 去补他的错误去了. 'They say: "Gang went to fix his mistake".'

A: 怎么怎么着. 'Etcetera, etcetera.'

A: &=laughs .

B: &=laugh .

A: &=laughs 我操. 'Fuck.'

A: 真他妈坏噢, 我操!

Zhēn   tā   mā   huài o,   wǒ cào!

Really 3SG.M mom   mean SFP 1SG fuck

'They're really fucking evil, fuck!'   (CallFriend/zho-m/5673)

However, most of the utterances with a swearing expression in sentence-final position are not marked by SFPs, which become redundant elements. In fact, throughout the conversations analysed, the swearing SFE appear to take over the function of marking the speaker's attention to the interlocutor's

persona, both as a means of maintaining his interest and attention during a longer turn by the speaker, and as a mean of soliciting his agreement and empathy in turn-final position. The two uses can be observed in (95), wherein both speakers avail themselves of sentence-final swear words in order to create and maintain a bond with their interlocutor: B's first instance in line B3 is turn-medial and has the purpose of maintaining A's attention throughout the speech, while the second occurrence in line B6 serves as a turn-yielding device, emphatically closing off a long turn of more than 10 clauses which only occasionally alternate with A's backchannels; A's reply in line A3 consists in a negative evaluation of the state of affairs described by B, which is also characterized by the use of a sentence-final swear word to strengthen and enhance A's being completely aligned with him; before yielding the turn, a further evaluation is produced in the same vein, with the sentence-final referential topic repeated in sentence-final position to perform a roughly similar function:

> 95. Context: B is telling A about the time his professor gave him a wrong score on his class test.
>
> B1: 我们一考完, 最高分是七十一吧还是多少.
>
> 'As soon as we finished the exam, the highest score was 71 or something like that.'
>
> A1: 嗯.
>
> 'Oh.'
>
> B2: 我们一考完, 我一看卷面分五十三点五,
>
> 'As soon as we finished the exam, I looked at the paper and [saw I] scored 53.5.'
>
> B3: 当时傻了, 我操.
>
> Dāngshí shǎ-le,　　wǒ　　cào.
>
> Then　　crazy-PERF 1SG　　fuck
>
> At that moment I lost my mind.'
>
> B4: 按这个分数只能得 b 了.
>
> 'According to this score, I could only get a B.'
>
> A2: 嗯.
>
> 'Oh.'
>
> B5: 然后我一看, 五道题么, 我把五道题加起来怎么总分差十分,
>
> 'Then I took a look, 5 questions, I added up [the score of] the five questions and ten points were missing from the total score'
>
> B6: 他加分给我加错十分, 我操.
>
> Tā　　jiā fēn　gěi　wǒ jiā-cuò　shí fēn,　wǒ cào.
>
> 3SG.M　add point give　1SG add-wrong ten　points 1SG fuck
>
> 'He gave me ten points less, fuck me!'

A3: &=laugh 这是不可能的, 我操.

    Zhè   shì bù kěnéng de,   wǒ cào.

    This   be   not possible NMLZ 1SG fuck

    'That's not possible, fuck

A4: &=laugh 这太过分了, 这.

    Zhè tài   guòfèn   le, zhè!

    This too   excessive   SFP this

    'That's too much, that!'   (CallFriend/zho-m/5784)

To sum up, both female and male speakers in my sample distinctively use 1st person expressions at the end of their utterances; however, a major difference characterizes the two genders: the more prominent use of modal expressions, covertly or overtly encoding the speaking subject (1st person pronoun), on the part of the former, and the unique use of swear words reaching out to the interlocutor on the part of the latter. In other words, male speakers use swear words overtly encoding the 1st person in the intent of being more inclusive, for they try to create an ambiance of shared views with the interlocutor, conforming with Carter (2004)'s description of English tails; female speakers, on the contrary, tend to be more exclusive, utilising 1st person modal expressions to present their propositional contents as the mere result of their subjective judgment or evaluation. In the literature on formulaic language, the two uses correspond to two different functions of social interaction that formulaic – i.e. prefabricated – sequences perform: asserting group identity and asserting separate identity (Wry & Perkins, 2010: 14). Moreover, the peculiarity of the utterances produced by female speakers is confirmed by gendered language studies in sociolinguistics such as Lakoff (1975, 2004), who argues that women's language if often characterized by the use of hedges in order to reduce their commitment towards the proposition, reduce the illocutionary force of their utterances and avoids conflict (Yueh 2012):10). In addition, a number of studies on gendered use of sentence-final particles have pointed out a different frequency and distribution of these markers in the language of the two genders (e.g. Shi, 1984; Chan, 1997(B. H.-S. Chan 2014); Yueh, 2012; Wamsley, 2019; Baumel, 2020). Of particular interest is Wamsley (2019)'s study which argues that the SFPs *a* and *ba* – reducing the forcefulness of an illocutionary act (Wamsley, 2019: 12) – are much more frequent in women's speech. In conclusion, although both trying to avoid their utterances being challenged by their addressees, men and women in my sample use subjective grounding to create diametrically opposite effects: male speakers strengthen their assertions and "force" the addressee to accept them as so because of the bond linking speaker and hearer; on the opposite, female speakers mostly mitigate

their statements by excluding any involvement of the addressee as a co-source of evaluation, so that the latter can feel "safe" and become more prone to accept their utterances.

A third type of expression used to ground the illocutionary force of the utterance to the speaker's persona is represented by framing topics encoding speaker coordinates or subjective evaluation. Prototypical examples are time or place adverbs or phrases related to the speaker's temporal or spatial position such as *xiànzài* 现在'now' and *(zài) (wǒ) zhè'r/zhè-bian* (在) (我) 这人/这边'here (where I am)', as well as expressions indicating a subjective quantity or degree such as *yǒu diǎn'r* 有点儿 'a bit'. An example of the former type is given in (96), wherein the framing PP *zhè-bian* 这边儿 'here' is produced in sentence-final position as a partial repetition of the sentence-initial PP *women zhè'r* 我们这儿 'here (where we are)' to strengthen the illocutionary force of the utterance, i.e. to add emphasis and credibility to the fact that working conditions in the speaker's city are not bad at all. In addition, a slight contrast can also be perceived in B's utterance between the city he lives in and that of the hearer, which has been described in the prior discourse as not particularly ideal for finding a part-time job:

96. Context: B suggests that A should move to his town, where living conditions are pretty decent.

B: &=h 我们这儿打工 w- 都不都不发愁, 这边儿.

Wǒmen zhè'r dǎgōng w- dōu bù dōu bù fāchóu, zhè-biān'r.
1PL here part-time.job w- all not all not worry here
'You don't even need to worry about part-time jobs, here.' (CallFriend/zho-m/4198)

The latter type of frames is exemplified in (97), wherein speaker B uses the adverbial phrase *you dian'r* to retrospectively limits her "vulnerability" by limiting the grounds on which the statement can he held true and thus, implicitly, also the extent to which her utterance can be rebutted.

97. A: 去年, 去年我就听你们那边冷的要命.

'Last year, I heard last year it was terribly cold over there.'

B: 嗯, 好像现在好一些, 习惯了, 有点儿.

Ǹg hǎoxiàng xiànzài hǎo yīxiē, xíguàn-le, yǒu-diǎn'r.
Oh apparently now good some accustomed-PERF a.bit
'Well, it seems to be better now, getting used to it, sort of.' (CallFriend/zho-m/5949)

Fourth, subjective grounding can also be achieved through the use of evaluative SFEs, which represent a rather heterogeneous class and a good part of which conveys and is connected with negative evaluation (22%). In fact, a non-neglectable amount of evaluative SFEs are employed in connection with an explicit negative evaluation both by female and – to a lesser extent – by male

speakers. This can easily be observed in example (98), wherein a negative evaluation of a computer software is expressed lexically by the speaker through the emphatic construction Adj + *sǐ* 死 'die' + *le* 了 containing the negative adjective *màn* 慢 'slow', and further reinforced via the production of the chunk *jiǎnzhí (shì)* 简直(是) 'simply/completely (is)' – which in this case expresses a negative feeling or a complaint (Sun & Hsieh, 2008: 135).

98. A: 我见过一个以前的 html 的, 简直土的一塌糊涂.

    'I've seen a previous HTML, it is a complete mess.'

[…]

  A: 那就慢死了, 简直是.

    Nà   jiù màn-sǐ le, jiǎnzhí shì.

    Then just slow-die SFP, simply be

    'It's awfully slow, it is.'   (CallFriend/zho-m/5636)

What is more, the evaluative SFE can convey a negative (or positive) evaluation even without this being overtly coded utterance-internally. In example (99) below, the question *shàng nǎ'r le?* 上那人了? 'Where did she go?' is lexically neutral, yet a sense of disapproval is conveyed by the use solely of the adverb *yòu* 又 'again' (Chu, 1999: 91), or, more explicitly, based on the implicature that is conventionally triggered by the use of *you*. Moreover, since the adverb is produced with reduced intonation and outside the scope of the focal assertion, the resulting evaluation is quite subtle, implied rather than explicitly stated, intersubjectively shared rather than subjective. Adapting von Fintel (2000: 16)'s words on presupposition, we might say that sentence-final *you* permits the speaker to "smuggle an important piece of information into the common ground that merits more attention".

99. B: […] 不是后来小江也换单位了吗? 'Didn't Xiao Jiang also change jobs afterwards?'

  A: 上哪儿了, 又?

    Shàng   nǎ'r le, yòu?

    Go.up   where SFP again

    'Where did she go, this time?'   (CallFriend/zho-m/5010)

Thus, as evidenced by (98) and (99), not necessarily all members of a pragmatic class uniformly hinge on the same grounding strategy. Rather, some can perform a subjective anchoring of the illocutionary force, as in (98), whereas others are more likely to achieve an intersubjective grounding, as in (99). In fact, the boundaries between the different pragmatic types of SFEs should be conceived as fuzzy and their capacity of avoiding information challenging as graded. To further illustrate this point, one

can compare the effects achieved by the subjective grounding strategy, and in particular by the employment of framing expressions such as the one contained in example (96), to the function carried out by expressions of intersubjective grounding, and in particular to that of evidential SFEs, which shall be described in the remaining part of this section.

4.1.2. Intersubjective grounding

With respect to intersubjective grounding, this strategy includes: i) the use of SFEs that are anchored to the universe of discourse co-constructed by the speakers and the beliefs therein created, and ii) the use of SFEs anchoring the responsibility of what is being said to an external source overtly or covertly indexed.

When anchoring the illocutionary force of the utterance to the co-constructed universe of discourse, the speakers can be interested in concealing the responsibility for the introduction of a certain information, or in conferring certain information a more reliable status by presenting it as "communicated from the perspective of both speaker and receiver" (Masia, 2016: 137). In both cases, as Masia (2016: 137) argues, "receivers themselves are called upon as co-source of the information communicated".

Concealment of information introduction can clearly characterize each type of SFE that has not been previously introduced into the discourse and by means of which the speaker presents (more or less) new information as already given, "hiding" her/his responsibility for its introduction. However, as already discussed in § 3.5, the SFE most frequently used in such a way is the *other* type, which shows the larger amount of semantically-accessible and inactive referents among topical themes and is generally produced in utterances characterized by a narrow focus articulation. One more example is given below to illustrate this function. Here speaker B produces a narrow-focus utterance which confers a topical status to the SFE (*dōu*) *bùhǎo* (都)不好 'not good', which was not previously introduced into the discourse. Nonetheless, it is produced in sentence-final position as if it was already topical information, i.e. formerly introduced into the discourse and known to both interlocutors. This strategy allows speaker B to conceal her responsibility for introducing such information, which becomes unlikely to be meaningfully challenged. This is crucial, since speaker A is advising B against driving to Philadelphia, and might be interpreted as her not being totally happy with B's prospective visit. As also anticipated by the use of the sentence-initial pragmatic marker *wǒ gàosu nǐ* 我告诉你 'let me tell you', this represents a face-threatening act whose rapport-challenging force is somehow reduced through the use of the *other* SFE:

100. Context: B tells A that she would like to go visit her, since she's never been to Philadelphia before.

B: 你你并且你和那个男的那个同事两个人住, 我可以在你们那儿 living room 睡一下没问题的.

'You and that man colleague of yours live together, I can sleep in your living room for a while, it won't be a problem.'

A: 没有, 你 m- 你你这个- 'Don't, you you you, this-'

B: 我把我东西, 我带睡袋来就完了, 不是-

'I'll take my stuff, I'll bring my sleeping bag and that's it, it's not-'

A: 我告你, 我告诉你, 'Let me tell you, let me tell you'

B: 哎. 'Ah'

A: 费-   'Phil-'

B: 我开车过来, 对. 'I'll drive over, yeah.'

A: 我你 k- 我告诉你开这个费城^一点都不好.

Wǒ gàosu	k- wǒ gàosu	nǐ	kāi-	zhè-ge	Fèichéng	YĪDIĂN'R	dōu	bù	hǎo
1SG tell	k-1SG tell	2SG	drive	this-CLF	Philadelphia	A.BIT	all	not	good

'Let me tell you, let me tell yo, you drive- this Philadelphia is not good AT ALL.'

(CallFriend/zho-m/5906)

Nonetheless, the same function can also be achieved through the use of other SFEs such as the framing topic in (101), wherein speaker A presents the content of the sentence-final adverbial clause as already introduced into the discourse, and thus "unworthy" of careful examination (Lombardi Vallauri & Masia, 2013: 163). This allows A to conceal his responsibility for the introduction of a new "piece of evidence" in his argumentation against the financial feasibility of the trip B is planning.

101. Context: B wants to go on a trip to Disneyland, but A is arguing that it's probably too expensive for him:

B: 门票就得花一百多啊. 'The tickets are one hundred dollars!'

A: 门票那个迪士尼可能- 得一个人得一百五, 要是玩足的话.

Ménpiào	nà-ge	Díshìní	kěnéng-	děi	yīgè rén	děi	yī	bǎi	wǔ,
Ticket	that-CLF	Disneyland	maybe	need	one person	need	one	hundred	five

yàoshi	wán	zú	dehuà.
if	have-fun	enough	if

'The tickets to Disney would probably cost one hundred and fifty per person, if we want to hang out enough.' (CallFriend/zho-m/5905)

Speaker and hearer being both called upon as the source of the information conveyed is the strategy used when producing already given or highly accessible referents in sentence-final position. This type of sentence-final topics, as argued in § 3.3 and § 3.4, creates a sharedness effect, a wink of "camaraderie" (Lambrecht, 1981; Berruto, 1986), or a presumption of solidarity (Crocco & Badan, 2021) between the interlocutors. By doing so, the speaker is arguably creating the illusion that not only what was produced in sentence-final position is something the speaker and the hearer already agreed upon, but also the previous assertion concerning it. Many examples of this sort were presented throughout the previous chapters. One more is given below to illustrate this point. In (102), the speaker employs a number of tools to bring the addressee into play and convince him of the trustworthiness of her statement: not only the SFE *nà* 那 PhD 'those PhD [students]' is already given and performs an intersubjective grounding, but is also marked by a dedicated SFP *ma* 嘛 – which is generally used in connection with obvious or highly evident information (Chappell & Peyraube, 2016: 323) and has been argued to mark intersubjectively shared information (Lepadat, 2017: 257); in addition, the intersubjective sentence-initial chunk *nǐ shuō* 你说 'let's see' (literally 'you tell [me]') is used to call upon the addressee and solicit his involvement as co-source of the evaluation.

102. Context: A is narrating a conversation between her and her father, who suggested that she should try and get a PhD. A, however, argues that a PhD holder's living conditions are not at all what one might expect.

A: 我说你懂不. ' I said: You don't understand!'

A: 你又不知道国内回去都说是自己 PhD , 你你回去跟他们讲一讲,

'You don't know they all go back to China and say they have a PhD, but you should go and ask them'

A: 你说他们怎么过的, 那 PhD 嘛?

Nǐ	shuō	tāmen	zěnme	guò	de,	nà	PhD	ma?
2SG	say	3PL.M	how	pass	SFP	those	PhD	SFP

'Let's see how do they [actually] do, those PhD [students]?' (CallFriend/zho-m/5906)

Lastly, evidential SFEs used at the utterance right periphery in my sample represent cases of intersubjective grounding by means of which the speaker anchors the illocutionary force of the utterance to a third party belonging to the social community, be it explicit or implicit. The most frequent evidential shifting the responsibility for the truth of the proposition to an explicit third party

is represented by *(tā) shuō* 她/他说''(s)he said', whereas expressions such as *hǎoxiàng (is)* 好像(是) 'apparently (be)' – though generally used for information acquired through inferential reasoning – are used in sentence-final position to mark the information as shared between speaker, hearer and an eventual third party without explicitly mentioning the information source (Tantucci, 2013: 218). The function of the latter expressions, as mentioned by Mushin (2002: 64), might be that of allowing the speaker to "not mention her role in the acquisition of information, and thus presents a more objective construal of the information". Example (103) illustrates the use of *haoxiang* at the end of an assertive speech act contradicting the interlocutor and thus potentially threatening her positive face. Through the use of this specific SFE in sentence-final position, the speaker turns the utterance into a presentative speech act, i.e. one that is merely intended to inform the hearer that she is wrong, without the speaker committing towards the truth of the assertion, nor to the reasoning process behind the utterance. The use of the SFE at the end of the FTA thus not only avoids direct exposure of the speaker's face, but it also marks the speaker's attention to the addressee's persona and saves her (positive) face.

103. Context: A and B are talking about how the character representing the name of B's cousin is written.

B:就是萤火虫的萤好像就是这个样子的?

'Apparently the ying in yinghuochong (firefly) is (written) like that.'

A: 萤火虫的萤不是这个样子, 好像.

Yínghuǒchóng	de	yíng	bú-shì	zhè-ge	yàngzi	de	hǎoxiàng,
Firefly	ATTR	ying	not-be	this	CLF way	SFP	apparently

'The ying in yinghuochong (firefly) it's not (written) this way, apparently,'

B: 还有一个-下面两个火, 可能. 'There is also one- there are two fire radicals, probably.'

(CallFriend/zho-m/5949)

A further example of an interpersonal function being performed by evidential expressions is connected to repetitions of evidentials explicitly encoding the information source in sentence-final position. Since self-repeats are often employed to strengthen the illocutionary force of the utterance and/or to persuade the speaker about its validity (F. Hsieh, 2009: 165), it is reasonable to believe that also the repetition of a sentence-initial evidential expression may be used to put a stronger distance between the speaker's words and their conceptual source, or to emphasize the extraordinary character of what is being said, as in (104). Here the repetition of the evidential main clause *tā shuō* 她说 'she said' functions as an emphatic device underlying the exceptionality of the embedded clause and enhancing its phonological salience:

104. Context: B tells A about the time one of their friends who owned a shop paid a visit to B. On that occasion, the woman visited a few computer shops and was surprised to find that some things were more expensive than the ones she sold in her shop.

B: 哎哟, 她说有的东西比我卖得贵多了, 她说.

Āiyō,	tā shuō	yǒu	de	dōngxī	bǐ	wǒ	mài	de	guì	duō	le,
Oh,	3SG.F say	have	REL	things	COMP	1SG	sell	DE	expensive	many	SFP

tā   shuō.

3SG.F say

'Oh, she said: "Some things they sell here are much more expensive than my shop", she said. (CallFriend/zho-m/5949)

After presenting both subjective and intersubjective grounding strategies, one can reasonably conclude that a strengthening framing SFE such as *zhebian* is arguably less effective in this regard when compared to an evidential SFE which allows the speaker to avoid any sort of commitment towards the truth of the proposition.

4.1.3. (Inter)subjective grounding

Somewhere between subjective and intersubjective grounding are textual expressions: one the one hand, these SFEs ground the illocutionary force of the utterance to another fragment introduced previously into the universe of discourse (Haselow, 2012); on the other hand, unlike intersubjective grounding connected with the use of referential and *other* topics, the speaker explicitly guides the hearer's inferential processes in deriving certain implicatures based on the universe of discourse (Blakemore, 2006), thus introducing an element of the speaker's subjectivity. Anyway, the ultimate intention of the speaker using textual SFEs appears to be face-saving, in line with both subjective and intersubjective grounding strategies. As already mentioned, the most frequent type of textual SFE in the data set is the conjunctive adverb *fǎnzhèng* (*shì*) 反正(是) 'anyway (is)'. As (105) shows, the production of this SFE retrospectively links the current utterance to a previous one – in this case corresponding to the speaker's own assertion about having been told that Mengru got divorced – which is dismissed as irrelevant for the validity of the state of affairs expressed in the current utterance. Since the truth of Mengru's divorce is deemed as incredible, new or even questionable by the hearer, the speaker asserts that she doesn't know if the news is true "no matter what", regardless of someone else telling her so. In other words, the speaker asserts her ignorance about the facts and – through the use of the concessive *fanzheng* – reinforces its validity in spite of what other people might have said or say, avoiding any kind of self-commitment.

105. Context: B tells A that Jing Qing told B a lot of news about their former classmates, including that Mengru got divorced.

B: &=laugh 说孟茹离婚了.'(She) said that Mengru got divorced.'

A: 孟^茹离婚啦？ 'Mengru got divorced?'

B: 嗯. 'Mhm'

A: 是吗. 'Really?'

B: 我不知道是真是假, 反正是.

Wǒ	bù	zhīdào	shì	zhēn	shi	jiǎ,	fǎnzhèng	shì
1SG	not	know	be	true	be	false	anyway	be

'I don't know if it's true or not, anyway.' (CallFriend/zho-m/5195)

Ultimately, the choice of the strategy employed to avoid one's utterance being challenged appears to depend on a number of factors, among which are included the speech act and sentence type discussed in § 3.2, the presence or absence of positive or negative evaluation tackled in § 3.3, rapport orientation and face work, as argued in § 3.4, speaker and interlocutor gender, as emerged in § 3.1, as well as the speaker's idiosyncratic preference, which can hardly be predicted based on linguistic factors alone and was thus not taken into account on this occasion.

4.2. Discourse-organizing functions

After looking at the different use that female and male speakers make of the sentence-final slot from a (broader) socio-cultural and (inter) subjective perspective, we can observe the functions of the SFEs at the level of turn-taking and discourse organization.

The elements connected to these functions intuitively include textual SFEs, among which *fǎnzhèng (shi)* 反正(是) 'anyway (be)' is frequently used to close or to yield a turn, generally as a reaction to the interlocutor's talk. This use is shown in (106), wherein B dismisses the discourse topic as unimportant or insignificant.

106. Context: A and B are taking about their career plans for the future. A suggests to B that he should find a way to change his major as soon as possible.

B: 我现在也糊里糊涂. 'I'm a bit confused now.'

A: 我觉得你- . 'I think you should-'

B: 哎让他们高-说的,我现在还没确定啊, 反正.

Āi ràng tāmen gào- shuō de, wo xianzai hái méi quédìng a, fǎnzhèng.

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Oh let 3SG.M say say SFP 1SG now still not settle SFP, anyway

'Oh, let them talk, right now I haven't decided yet, anyway.' (CallFriend/zho-m/5982)

However, since the textual marker is used as a reaction to the interlocutor's talk, its function transcends that of discourse organizing and intersects with the interpersonal plane. In fact, (106) portrays the use of *fanzheng* at the end of a rapport challenging utterance to support the SFP *a* in mitigating and preserving the interlocutors' faces. As A has been going on talking about B's future plans, B is slightly irritated and does not wish to continue the conversation on the topic, hence abruptly interrupts A. However, the addition of the SFE at the end of B's utterance dismisses the topic as irrelevant for the time being, while concurrently acting as a pragmatic softener.

A further example of a textual SFE acting both at the level of discourse organization and interpersonal relationships is given in (107), wherein *érqiě shì* 而且是 'in addition (be)' is used to mark the current utterance as an additional factor, with respect to A's previous utterance, in the structural sequence of elements indicating that B's decision to purchase a Corolla was a valid one.[188]

107. A: 对, 那个 Corolla 是挺贵的. 'Yeah, the Corolla is indeed pretty expensive.'

   B: Corolla 的车是很经跑的. 'The Corolla model is very durable.'

   A: 但是我觉得你那个是买得挺好的. 'But I think yours is quite a good buy.'

   B: 对我 m-我们买得还行. Yeah, the one we bought is not bad.'

   A: 你 s-啊你, 比我早一年买, 而且是.

   Nǐ s- a nǐ, bǐ wǒ zǎo yī nián mǎi, érqiě shì.
   2SG s- INTJ 2sg COMP 1SG early one year buy furthermore be

   'Oh, you bought it one year earlier than me, also.' (CallFriend/zho-m/5195)

If textual elements are used to yield the turn and give structural coherence to the different parts of discourse, they are not the only type of expression used to organize the speech structure. In fact, as mentioned earlier, swearing expressions are sometimes used to maintain the speech turn, while also ensuring the speaker's attention. In addition, they are also used in turn-final position to yield the turn and to invite or solicit the hearer's response and alignment of views. The two uses can be observed in (108) and (109) respectively. In (108), speaker B produces a turn-medial swearing SFE to highlight

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[188] Note that this same example is also discussed – more or less along the same lines – in Lim (2014: 228-229), who argues that the SFE's function is that of "reformulating the sequential action" between the current utterance and prior discourse (see Chapter 2, § 2.3).

the extraordinary nature of his propositional content, while also ensuring the hearer's attention throughout the whole stretch of talk:

108. A: 我就想转 Double E, 后来一看我这课程不行啊.

'I precisely wanted to switch to Double E, then I realized this course is not good here.'

B: 我们 Double E 就在我们系旁边嘛, 'Here Double E is just next to our department,'

B: 当时我要转那个教授就很想要我, 我操.

Dāngshí wǒ yào zhuǎn nà-ge jiàoshòu hěn xiǎng-yào wǒ, wǒ cào.'
Then 1SG want switch that-CLF professor very want-want 1SG 1SG fuck
'That time I wanted to transfer that professor really wanted me, fuck.'

B: 那是 Double E 最牛的教授, 最 powerful 的教授.

'That's the best professor at Double E, the most powerful professor.'

(CallFriend/zho-m/5784)

In (109), both B and A produce a turn-final SFE to enhance the evaluative force of their utterances, with the additional intent of reaching out to their interlocutor and ensuring their empathic positioning:

109. A: 我今天, 我不是今天, 我这学期选那个 fluimechanics, 上课都听不懂.

'Today, not today, I'm taking fluimechanics this semester, and I can't even understand the class

B: 特难, 我操.

Tè nán, wǒ cào.
Very difficult 1SG fuck
'It's extremely difficult, fuck.'

A: 狂看笔记, 我考前花了一周, 我操.

Kuáng kàn bǐjì, wǒ kǎo qián huā-le yī zhōu, wǒ cào.
Crazy look notes 1SG take.exam before spend-PERF one week, 1SG fuck.
'I studied those notes madly, I spent a whole week before the exam, fuck!'

B: 听说你都考第一名啊. 'I heard you even came first in the examination.'

(CallFriend/zho-m/5784)

An additional type of elements performing a function at the level of discourse organization appears to be framing expressions, and in particular present time expressions. It is found that throughout the data set, it is mostly – but not exclusively – the adverb *xiànzài* 现在 'now' that is used in interrogative sentences in correspondence with a (sudden) topic shift. Interestingly enough, the topic-shifting

function has been widely discussed in relation to sentence-initial *now* in English but never, to my knowledge, in relation to sentence-final *now* in Mandarin. Aijmer (2002) points out that when *now* is used to signal a change of topic, it acts like a metalinguistic marker mitigating the abruptness of the shift. In addition, when the adverb marks a transition between topics or subtopics, it can also entail an element of contrast (Aijmer, 2002: 75-80). This is exactly what happens when *xianzai* is used in sentence-final position to mark a topic shift. In (110), after talking about the possibility of A moving to B's city, B invites A to reach out to him in case of necessity, then A suddenly asks him how are things going with his wife:

110. Context: B invites A to reach out to him if she needs anything when going to Canada.

    A: 到时候直到你那了哎&=e. 'When the time comes I'll just come to you.'

    B: 嗯: 那倒不 s- . 'It doesn't matter-'

    A: &=laugh.

    B:那倒无所谓. 'It's fine with me.'

    A: 哎你跟你太太怎么样啦, 现在.

        Āi   nǐ   gēn   nǐ   tàitai   zěnme-yàng   la,   xiànzài?

        Hei 2SG with 2SG wife how.about   SFP now

        'Hei, how are things going with your wife, now?'   (CallFriend/zho-m/5542)

As one can easily observe, *xianzai* not only mitigates the abruptness of A's question, who changes the topic "out of the blue", but also implies a certain contrast between the present moment of speech and a past moment, when A knows for sure that things between B and his wife were not going well.

When framing expressions correlate with a topic shift, the sentence type tends to be interrogative, as observed in (110), and generally no positive or negative evaluation is carried out by the speaker. As (111) also shows, the time adverb *zuìjìn* 最近 'lately' is used at the end of an interrogative sentence starting a new topic of discourse, without any particular evaluation being involved. The production of the framing SFE has the function of restricting the application of the illocutionary purpose to a specific time period, in addition to mitigating the abruptness of A's question.

However, one should also notice that the time expression is highly accessible, although not introduced previously into the discourse. Just as *xianzai* is inherently salient because it represents one of the discourse coordinates, *zuijin*'s accessibility status derives from the triggering of a cognitive frame, connected to the production of the expression *zěnme yàng* 怎么样 in sentence-initial position activating a series of expectations in the hearer's mind about what the following element might be.

111. B:喂, 吴一明 你就别聊了.'Hello, Wui Yiming, stop talking.'

A: &=laughs. 'Laugh'

B:&=laughs. 'Laugh'

B:喂, 'Hello'

A: 怎么样, 最近?

　　Zěnme-yàng, zuìjìn?

　　How-about,　lately

　　'How have you been, lately?'　　　　　　　　　　　　(CallFriend/zho-m/5010)

Unlike framing expressions, as discussed in § 3.3, the use of sentence-final referential topics – frequently occurring in exclamative or emphatic sentences – is more strongly associated with a structure of the (X) (be) good/bad type and is significantly more biased toward expressing positive or negative evaluation. Moreover, when occurring in such utterances, referential SFEs are used to maintain and enhance the salience of the discourse topic, as observed earlier in the literature on right dislocations (e.g. Lambrecht, 2001: 1075; Frascarelli, 2017: 496). One example to illustrate this use is provided in (112) below, wherein it can be observed that the referent *Minneapolis* – denoting the city in which B lives – is first introduced as a focal deictic NP (*nī nà-biàn de* 你那边的 'the place where you are') and then recalled much later in a full lexical form as a shifting (aboutness) topic in B's second utterance. The full NP is then repeated at the end of B's last utterance to emphasize the positive evaluation on the part of the speaker, enhancing the salience of the NP referent and maintaining it as a discourse topic.

112. B:我现在用的是公用电话打打到你那边的.

　　　　'I am using a public phone to call your place now.'

　　[…]

　　B:可以啊, 罗任, Minneapolis 很漂亮. 'That's okay, Luo Ren, Minneapolis is beautiful.'

　　　很美啊, 我操, Minneapolis!

　　　Hěn　měi　　a,　wǒ cào,　Minneapolis!

　　　Very　beautiful SFP　1SG fuck　Minneapolis

　　　'It's really beautiful, damn, Minneapolis!'

　　A:是吧, 很美嘛. 'Isn't it so? It is beautiful.'　　　　　(CallFriend/zho-m/5784)

This use of topics can coincide with either turn-yielding, as in (112), where it is the addressee that takes over the talk about Minneapolis, or in turn-maintaining, as in (113). In the latter case it is the speaker himself that continues to talk about the topical SFE, maintaining the turn. After the introduction of the NP referent *Lǎo Cáo* 老曹 'Old Cao' in A's question, B instantiates it as a

discourse topic in sentence-initial position and then repeats it again in sentence-final position to stress the negative stance towards the target referent, expressed both through the negative meaning of the verb *shīzōng* 失踪 'disappear' and the use of the emphatic swearing.

113. A: 老曹呢? 'What about Lao Cao?'

　　B:老曹, 我操失踪了, 老曹.

　　Lǎo Cáo,　wǒ　cào　　shīzōng-le,　　　Lǎo Cáo.

　　Old Cao,　1SG fuck　disappear-PERF　Old Cao

　　'Old Cao, he fucking disappeared, Old Cao!'　　　　　　　(CallFriend/zho-m/5636)

4.3. Information-structural functions

From what has emerged from the previous sections, it should be clear by now that sentence-final expressions are hardly analysable as performing a single well-defined function in the ongoing discourse; on the contrary, multiple linguistic dimensions appear to be at play when SFEs are produced. Even so, some types of SFEs are prototypically used to perform interpersonal functions – as is the case with modal, evaluative, swearing and evidential expressions – while others are known to chiefly affect the structural organization of discourse – i.e. textual expressions. As far as the information-structural level of analysis is concerned, three types of pragmatic SFE which can be reconducted to Halliday (1994)'s concept of topical themes can be regarded as prototypical: referential, framing and *other* topical expressions.

From the point of view of the twelve variables considered for analysis in this thesis (see § 2.3.1), the three groups of expressions appear not to behave completely alike. More specifically, some differences were first of all identified in terms of sentence types, since topics were found to occur more frequently in exclamatives and imperatives, frames were found to be used much more in interrogative sentences, while *other* topics were found to be mostly connected with declaratives (see § 3.2). As mentioned earlier, the presence of framing expressions in interrogative sentences is connected, among other things, to a change of topic and hardly ever correlates with a positive or negative evaluation. On the contrary, active and highly accessible topics are used to maintain a discourse topic and frequently correlate with positive or negative evaluation. Lastly, while a number of *other* topics perform a face-saving role in utterances containing negative – and to a minor extent positive – evaluations, the majority are devoid of any association with either positive or negative evaluation.

Moreover, a closer look at the coreferential profile and activation status revealed some additional differences between the three types of topical expressions. Although the literature on Mandarin right

dislocations has traditionally concentrated on utterances consisting in an argument-focus or predicate-focus and an aboutness topic in sentence-final position, these cases only represent about 5% of my data sample, i.e. 35 occurrences. Instead, most of referential and framing topics are produced in topic-comment utterances (51 % and 72% respectively), whereas the great majority of *other* topics are produced in narrow focus utterances (95%). Moreover – predictably – most of the framing and *other* topics in my data set are not coindexed with an overt coreferential form (88% and 99% respectively), whereas referential topics do show coreferential resumption in almost 50% of the cases. In § 3.5, I have argued that at least as far as referential topics are concerned, activation status and coreferential profile might be indicative of the functions topical themes perform at the semantic or discourse level. Starting precisely with this type of SFE, three main functions can be identified: i) emphasis and topic maintenance or (re)instantiation; ii) referential integration and topic shift; iii) discourse-driven integration.

4.3.1. Emphasis and topic maintenance or (re)instantiation

The first type of function is mostly connected with argument-focus or predicate-focus utterances presenting an aboutness topic in sentence-final position.[189] Such aboutness topic is usually either the sentence subject or – much less frequently – the object. As far as subjects are concerned, examples (114)-(115) illustrate specifically a case of a place NP and a pronoun as aboutness topics occurring in sentence-final position:

114. A: 确实太冷清了, 这边

   Quèshí   tài   lěngqīng le,   zhè-biān.
   Indeed   too   lonely   SFP, here.
   'It's really too lonely, here.'   (CallFriend/zho-m/5982)

115. A: 这回也不戒肉了, 我.

   Zhè huí yě   bù   jiè ròu   le, wǒ.
   This time also not quit meat   SFP, 1SG
   'This time I'm not giving up meat, me.'   (CallFriend/zho-m/5975)-66

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[189] Note that this section refers to aboutness topics in the general sense of Lambrecht (1994), without distinguishing between contrastive, given and shifting topics. However, whenever deemed relevant, it is specified whether the topic has a contrastive value, represents a new topic or was already introduced in the previous stretch of talk. The attribute referential is also employed in the sense of Lambrecht (1994), who defines discourse referents as including "noun phrases, pronouns, various kinds of tensed or non-tensed subordinate clauses, and certain adverbial phrases […] that can be said to refer to the circumstances of a predication" (Lambrecht 1994: 75).

Figure 25 shows the intonation contour of the utterance in (115), which is produced with a falling flat curve towards the end and without any visible pause before the SFE expression:
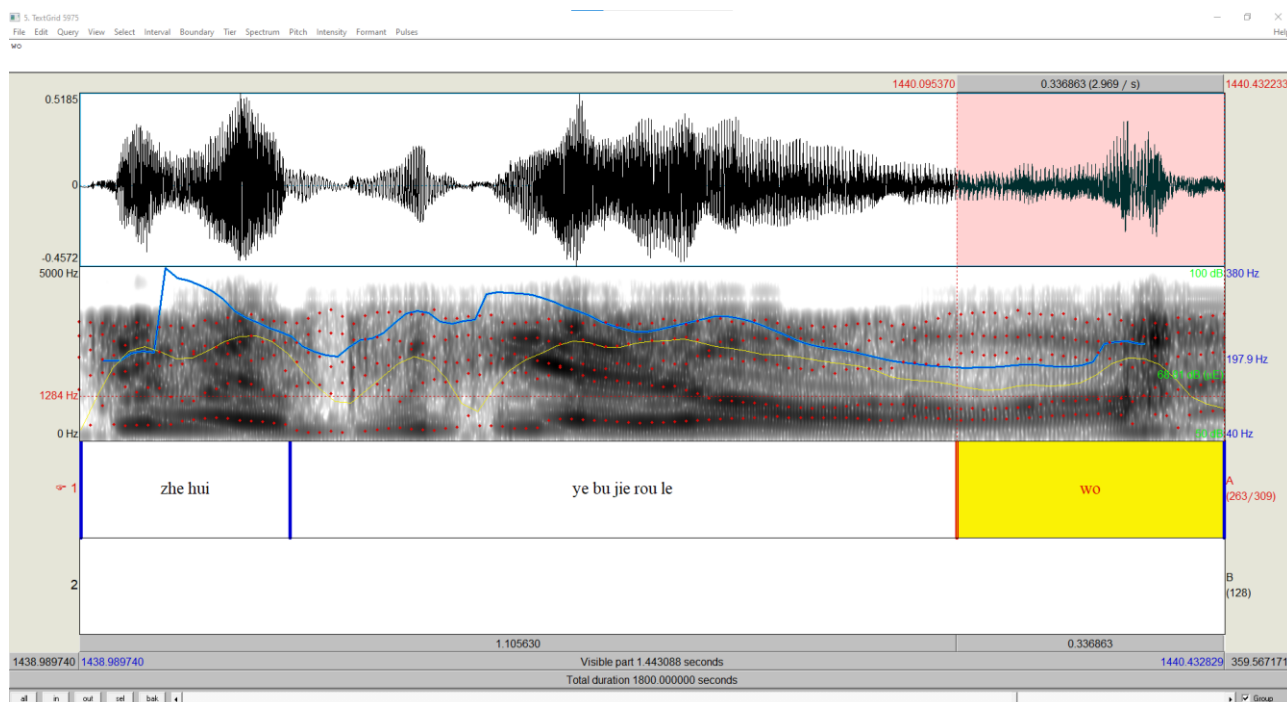
Figure 25: Intonation contour of a sentence-final non-resumed subject NP

Only two cases of object aboutness topics occurring right-peripherally in argument-focus or predicate-focus utterances were identified. This is not surprising, since the unmarked position of object NPs in Mandarin is post-verbal. The two cases in the data sample are clearly marked from the point of view of word order, since they are both coindexed, representing cases of reduction or elaboration of a sentence-internal NP. Example (116) shows the elaboration of the object NP in sentence-final position for purely emphatic reasons, since the generic referent *nǔ tóngbāo* 女同胞 'women fellow' was already introduced as discourse topic in the previous utterance:

116. B:你们, 你们, 你们, 你们女同胞是是是世界 &=laughs 上最伟大的, 最可怕的. You,
    you, you, you fellow women are the greatest and most terrifying in the world.'
    B:&=laugh .
    A: &=laughs 什么女啊, 女同胞.

           Shénme nǔ   a,   nǔ   tóngbāo.
           What   women   SFP   women   fellow
           'What women, fellow women.' (CallFriend/zho-m/5542)

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As the three previous examples suggest, all the referential topics occurring in argument-focus or predicate-focus utterances are highly accessible (23 active and 11 accessible out of 34 occurrences) and non-resumed (30 out of 34 occurrences).

The four exceptions with respect to the latter aspect correspond to two active object NPs, which are coindexed respectively with a reformulation and an elaboration for emphatic reasons, as was observed in (116), a clause fragment partially reelaborated for clarification (117), and a textually accessible subject NP which is reformulated in coincidence with an interruption on the part of the speaker to ensure the hearer's reception and acceptance of the utterance (118). The last example, as will be discussed later, is an instance of interaction-driven function of SFEs.

117. B:我考到, 只相当于百分之: 只相当于: 这个: bottom, 嗯不算吧,

'I've answered up to, in percentage it only represents: it only represents: this: bottom, uhm, it probably doesn't count,'

只是百分之四十吧, 我只答了.

Zhǐ	shì	bǎifēnzhī	sìshí	ba,	wǒ	zhǐ	dá	le.
Only	be	percentage	forty	SFP,	1SG	only	answer	PERF

'Only about forty percent, I've only answered.'   (CallFriend/zho-m/5542)

118. A: 嗯 b- 那个地方叫 Bel. 'Mhm, B- that place is called Bel.'

B: Bel. 'Bel.'

A: Aire. 'Aire.'

B: Aire. 'Aire.'

A: 这是二十七到三十块钱. 'This is twenty-seven to thirty dollars.'

B: 都挺便宜的嘛. 'They're all pretty cheap.'

A: 刚才是二十六块钱啊, 刚才那个.

Gāngcái	shì	èrshíliù	kuài	qián	a,	gāngcái	nà-ge.
Just.now	be	twenty-six	CLF	money	SFP	just.now	that-one

'Just now it's twenty-six dollars, the one just now.'   (CallFriend/zho-m/5905)

B: 行. 'Okay.'

Excluding (117) and (118), the previous examples do not appear to have a different pragmatic function with respect to the aboutness topics occurring at the end of a topic-comment utterance. The most visible distinction is that the former are hardly ever resumed (4 out of 34occurrences), while the latter are much more frequently resumed and thus non restorable (31 out of 45occurrences).

Non-resumed referential topics in topic-comment utterances are for the most part object NPs, as in (119):

119. A: 你, 你有没有朋友嘛, 在那边？ 'You, do you have any friends, over there?'

   B: 我不喜欢费城, 我讨厌死了, 我恨死了, 费城.

   | Wǒ | bù | xǐhuan | Fèichéng, | wǒ | tǎoyàn | sǐ | le, | wǒ | hèn | sǐ | le | Fèichéng. |

   1SG not like Philadelphia 1SG dislike die SFP, 1SG hate die SFP Philadelphia

   'I don't like Philadelphia, I'm sick of it, I hate it, Philadelphia. (CallFriend/zho-m/5906)

The active topic *Fèichéng* 费城 'Philadelphia' in (119) is an object NP first introduced into discourse as a postposed topical PP in A's utterance (*zài nà-biàn* 在那边 'over there'), subsequently produced as a focal post-verbal NP in B's first utterance, then maintained as a Ø topic in her second utterance and finally repeated as a right-hand topic in the third utterance to further emphasize the negative evaluation concerning the object NP:[190] This appears to be exactly the same type of aboutness topic produced at the end of a topical chain to enhance and maintain its salience discussed in Frascarelli (2017: 496), and reported here again as (120):

120. Non è questione che il tempo$_k$ non te l$_k$' ho

   NEG be.3SG point that the time NEG IO.CL.2SG DO.CL have.1SG

   dato, io te l$_k$' ho dato, il tempo$_k$.

   given I IO.CL.2SG DO.CL have.1SG given the time

   'The point is not that I didn't give you time, I did give you time.' (Frascarelli, 2017: 496)

However, one can also notice that, at least in (119), there is an additional referential element which determined the utterance to be annotated as topic-comment, *wǒ* 我 'I'. Not only the 1st person referent is inherently given since it refers to one of the conversation participants, but it also inherits a topical status from the previous utterance, which is construed as being about that exact same referent, lexically represented by the 2nd person pronoun *nǐ* 你 'you' in B's talk. Nonetheless, this does not change the overall pragmatic function of the postposed NP, which remains comparable to that of (112) and (113), for instance. To sum up, highly accessible non-resumed subject or object topics occurring sentence-finally appear to have the same emphatic function (Lambrecht, 2001; Frascarelli, 2017;

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[190] The reader should notice that the marked syntactic position of the object NP is signalled by the presence of the SFP *le* 了 immediately after the predicate. The SFP cannot be confused with the homophonous aspect particle since only the former can occur in the emphatic V/Adj + *sǐ* 死 'die' construction (Liu et al., 2001: 385-386).

Aijmer, 1989), regardless of the thematic structure of the host utterance (argument-focus, predicate-focus or topic-comment).

Not only, these topics also appear to be similar in nature to those which are resumed by specific linguistic forms such as repetitions and less frequently reductions and reformulations. To illustrate this point, we can observe the two examples presented below, the former containing the repetition of the 1ˢᵗ person pronoun *wǒ* 我 'I' and the second containing a reduction, i.e. an expression (*nǐmen* 你们 'you') which is less informative than the sentence-internal coreferential expression (*nǐmen nà'r* 你们那儿 'over there (where you are))'. In both cases, the salience of the SFEs with respect to the utterance focus is emphasized and enhanced.

121. B:我说这这-我做不了, 我, 他妈的.

   Wǒ shuō   zhè zhè-   wǒ zuò-bù-liǎo,   wǒ, tā   mā   de
   1SG said   this this-   1SG do-not-manage 1SG 2SG.M mom   ATTR
   'I said this this-, I cannot do it, me, damn!'   (CallFriend/zho-m/5653)

122. A: 有学校的校车, 然后晚上呢, 还有那个叫-   'There's a school bus, and then at night, there's the one called-

   B: 你们那儿好, 你们.

   Nímen nà'r   hǎo,   nǐmen.
   2.PL   there   good, 2.PL
   'It's good over there [at your university], you.'   (CallFriend/zho-m/5542)

Both forms in (121) and (122) are used to emphasize and enhance the salience of the two topical elements. The same happens with the reformulation in (123), which parallels with the structure that Grosz and Ziv (1998: 9) describe as performing an attributive function. A demonstrative NP (*nà-ge rén* 那个人 'that person') referring to a previously introduced referent is produced in sentence-final position after being already introduced in the main utterance by an informationally equivalent demonstrative expression (*nà tóu* 那头'that man'):

123. A: 我就想起这个这个这个这个-有一个那个老虎出差 那个香港电影.
   'I just remembered of this, this, this, this- there is certain Tiger on a business trip [Tiger on beat], that Hong Kong movie.

   B: 奥, 我知道.   'Yeah, I know.'

   A: 那头就叫作尤法克嘛, 那个人不就.

   Nà-tóu   jiù   jiào-zuò Yóu Fǎkè   ma, nà-gè   rén,   bù   jiù.

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That-CLF just named   You Fake   SFP that-CLF person not just

'That man is called You Fake [You Fuck],that person, isn't it?' (CallFriend/zho-m/5905)

The same function is identifiable in (124), wherein the NP *Bill Gates* is introduced into the discourse and maintained as a topic throughout a very long stretch of talk; despite a second referent (*David Letterman*) intervening as a topic for a few sentences, the referent *Bill Gates* is repeated again at the end of the last utterance in the form of a fully-fledged NP – without being overtly resumed – both to (re-)instantiate it as a discourse topic and to attributively emphasize his being an extraordinary fellow.

124. A:　就是你知道访问谁吗?　'Do you know who he interviewed?'

　　A:　Bill Gates.　　　　　'Bill Gates'

　　[…]

　　A:　他说的我们这 studio 这块儿都没你那面积那么大.

　　　　'He said (David Letterman): "Not even this studio of ours here is as big as your place".'

　　A:　特神, 那家伙!

　　　　Tè shén, nà jiāhuo!

　　　　Too smart　that　fellow

　　　　'Extraordinary, that fellow!'

　　A:　他还建一^那么大的 house 干嘛呀? 'Why in the world did he build such a big house?'

(CallFriend/zho-m/5975)

Moving from referential to the remaining types of topical SFEs, an emphatic function can be clearly identified also as far as framing expressions are concerned. Regarding framing SFEs, the emphatic and attributive function is connected for the most part with zero resumption or repetitions of already active or situationally-accessible topics. We can observe a case of each coreferential type in (125) and (126) respectively. In (125), the time adverb *dāngchū* 当初 'in the first place' is introduced earlier on in the discourse, then used as a framing sentence-initial expression in B's first utterance and subsequently uttered again at the end of his second utterance. In addition to limiting the field of application of the focus, the adverb also helps to reinforce the evaluative and empathic stance taken by the speaker in his rhetorical question.

125. A:　但是我就挺纳闷儿, 她既然-既然[当初]ᵢ奔过去了, 是不是?

　　　　'But I was quite puzzled, since she ran over there back then, right?'

　　B:　对呀, 那[当初]ᵢ为什么还那样, 那还不如回家呢, [当初]ᵢ.

　　　　Duì ya,　nà　dāngchū wèishéme hái nà-yàng, nà　hái　　bùrú　　huí

　　　　Right SFP, then that.time why　　still that-way,　then as.well　be.better.to return

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jiā   ne, dāngchū.

home   SFP, that.time

'Exactly, why did she even did that back then, she might as well have gone back home,

back then.'

(CallFriend/zho-m/5636)

In (126) both the topical NP subject and the framing time adverb are repeated at the end of the utterance for undoubtedly emphatic reasons. Incidentally, we can also notice that the first mention of the subject NP is singular, while the sentence-final re-production is plural.

126. B:[我]ᵢ[现在]ⱼ 不知道, [我们]ᵢ[现在]ⱼ.

Wǒ xiànzài bù zhīdào, wǒmen xiànzài.

1SG now   not know, 1PL   now

'I don't know right now, we now.'   (CallFriend/zho-m/5195)

Figure 26 below shows the intonation contour of the utterance in (126), wherein the SFEs *women* and *xianzai* are produced with reduced intensity and without a visible pause from the host utterance:
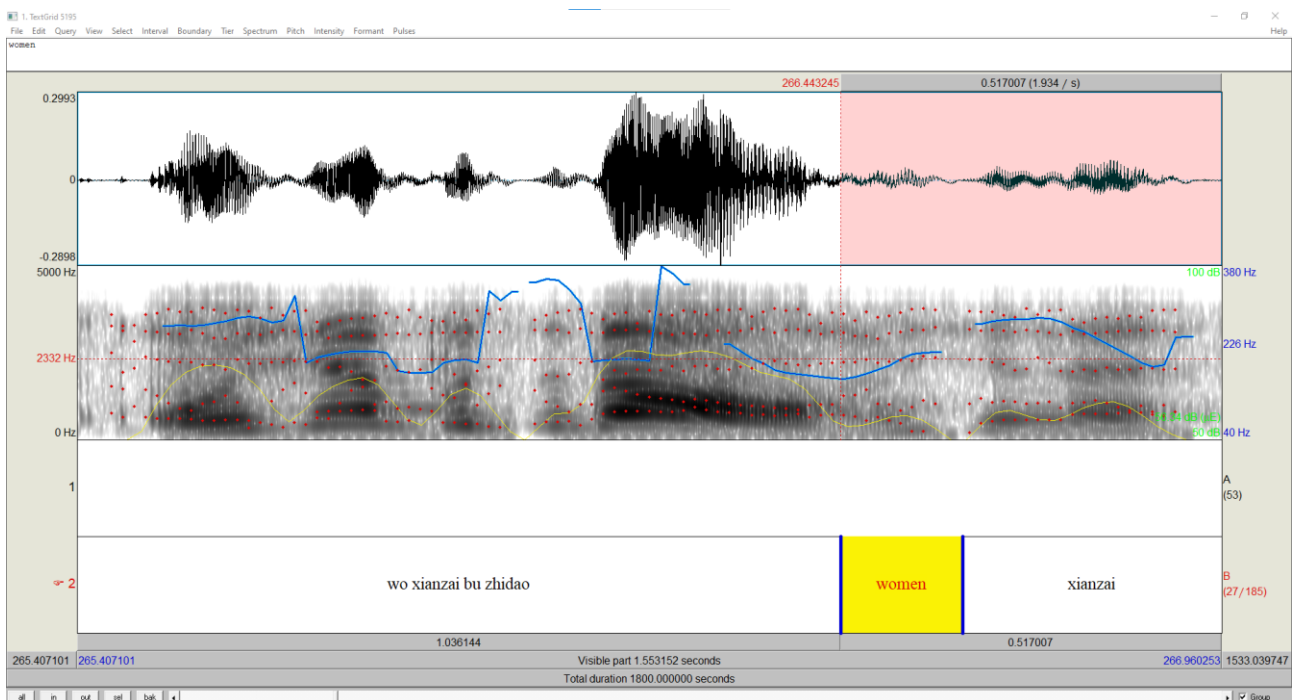
Figure 26: Intonation contour of a sentence-final repeated frame

Lastly the emphatic function can be arguably also attributed to a number of *other* topics occurring in the sample with a highly accessible or active status. These non-referential SFEs are for the most part produced at the end of broad-focus utterances as sentence-final aboutness topics and include entire

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clauses, VPs or Vs, and clause fragments comprising the clause subject and verb. An example of each case can be observed in (127), (128) and (129) respectively.

127. A: 你不是, 有个 roommate 吗? 'Don't you have a roommate?'

[…]

A: 不是挺好吗, 两个人 share?

<div style="padding-left:2em">

Bú-shì   tǐng   hǎo   ma, liǎng-gè   rén   share?

Not-be   rather good   SFP, two-CLF   people share?

'Isn't it just great, two people sharing?'   (CallFriend/zho-m/5542)

</div>

128. 那老大一看就是小郑洪民. 'The big brother is Zheng Hongmin Jr. at first glance.'

一模一样/FOC 长得//SFE

Yī-mú-yī-yàng   zhǎng-de

Identical   grow-DE

'Exactly the same, (they) look.'   (CallFriend/zho-m/5949)

129. A: 他问我是不是愿意&=h 跟个朋友通话.

'He asked me if I was willing to talk to a friend.'

A: 在北美洲. 'In America'.

A: 我想一想, &=qi 没有人. 就你咯.

'I thought about it and I have nobody. There's only you.'

B: 这是干什么啊? 'What is this all about?'

B: 什么意思,他是?

Shénme   yìsi,   tā   shì?

What   meaning,he   be?

'What did he mean?'   (CallFriend/zho-m/5542)

Pretty much in the same way referential topics occurring sentence-finally throughout (114) - (116) may be said to represent what the sentence is construed as being about (Lambrecht, 1994), I believe the non-referential ones are equally definable in terms of aboutness. Moreover, what Tai & Hu (1991: 84-85) describe as a communicative urgency imposed by the conversation inducing the speaker to give precedence to the utterance focus seems particularly applicable to these cases. Although non-referential, one can still observe that the SFEs represent topical material, either accessible or already given: in (128), *zhǎng-de* 长得 'grow-DE' is semantically-accessible based on the previous utterance already talking about the boy's looks and on the collocational expectations about the verb to be used

with the focal degree complement *yī-mú-yī-yàng* 一模一样 'identical'; in (127), although not previously instantiated as a discourse topic, the event denoted by the subject clause *liǎng-gè rén share* 两个人 share 'two people sharing' can be inferred based on the previously stated fact that the hearer has a roommate, hence the speaker chooses to produce it as a topical element directly instantiated in sentence-final position to stress the positive evaluational stance of the rhetorical question; in (129) the hearer produces in first instance the focal NP *shénme yìsi* 什么意思 'what meaning' and only successively utters the fragment containing the already given topical subject *tā* 他 'he' followed by the copula *shì* 是 'be'. Despite the fragment not being syntactically obligatory – the focal NP itself would represent a well-formed standalone clause – it is nonetheless important from a pragmatic point of view for it is ancillary in increasing the emphatic value of the utterance focus. In fact, in all the previous examples, by removing the non-focal elements from their canonical position and anticipating the utterance focus, the effect is that of a more salient focus, both from the positional and the phonological standpoint: not only sentence-initial position has been argued to host contextually salient information in pragmatically-oriented languages as Mandarin Chinese, be it topical or focal, (Mereu, 2009: 94), but phonological studies such as Xu & Xu (2005) and Xu (2015) have also shown that, at least in the case of narrow focus, Chinese uses post-focal phonological reduction as a means to enhance focal prominence. With respect to both points, referential and non-referential topics do not appear to behave differently: i.e. they both show the informationally more salient constituent(s) in sentence-initial position, while the post-focal topical constituents(s) show reduction and for the most part prosodic integration with the main clause, as exemplified in Figure 27 for the last example (129).
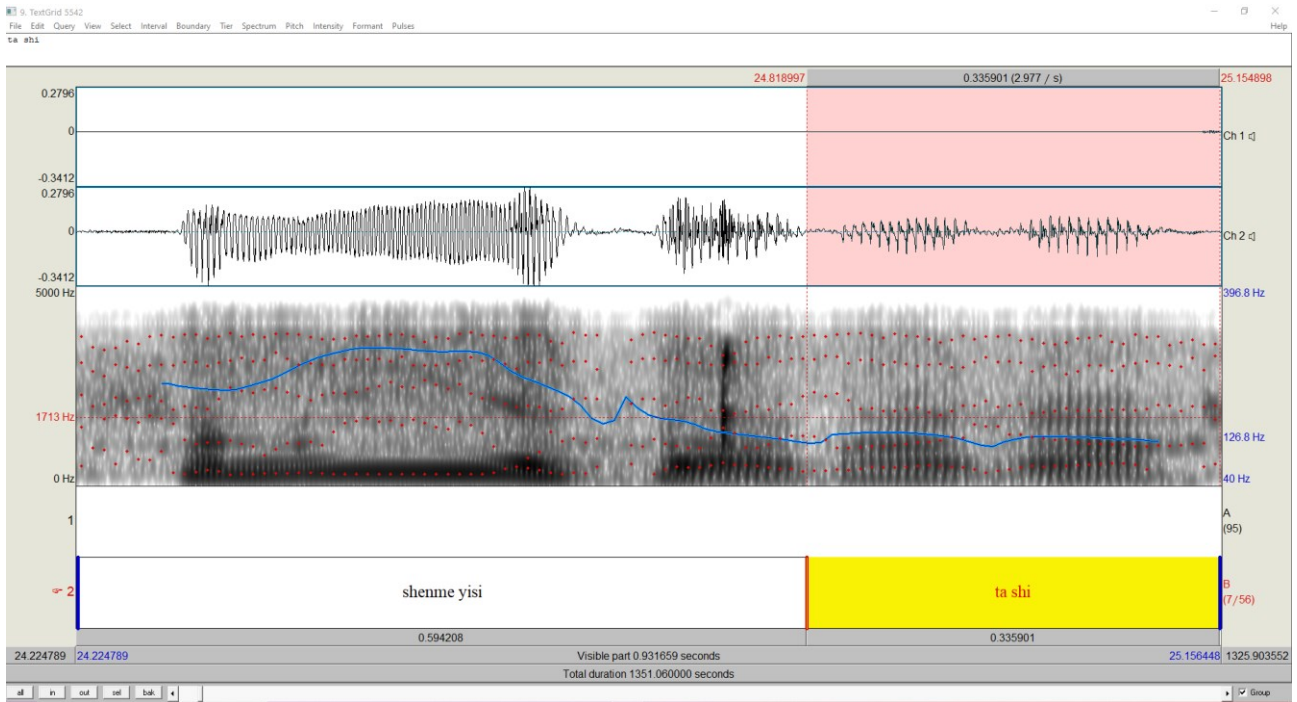
Figure 27: Intonation contour of a sentence-final non-resumed clause fragment

All in all, I believe the function of these non-referential SFEs to be the same as referential and framing SFEs that are postposed for emphatic reasons.

To further illustrate this point, example (130) shows a verb followed by the structural particle *de* 得 introducing a degree complement. Just as in *zhǎng* 长 'grow' in (128), the verb *dá* 答 'answer' is also semantically inferable from the context, since the speaker is talking about how she did in her test. However, unlike (128), (130) displays a syntactically more complex structure since the SFE pertains to an embedded clause introduced by the 1st person epistemic root clause *wǒ gǎnjué* 我感觉 'I feel'; moreover, the embedded clause itself has the structure of a (pseudo) shift-clause with the topical NP *yuèdú* 阅读 'fast reading' acting as the clause subject connected by means of the copula *shì* 是'be' to the relative clause *wǒ zuì zāogāo de yī bùfen* 我最糟糕的一 部分 – within which *dá-de* 答得 could be inserted – acting as the sentence object.

130. B:我觉得相对阅读, 我感觉好像阅读是我[Ø]ᵢ最糟糕的一部分, [答得]ᵢ.

> Wǒ juěde   xiāngduì yuèdú,   wǒ gǎnjué hǎoxiàng   yuèdú   shì wǒ zuì
> 1SG think   relative fast.reading, 1SG feel   apparently fast.reading   be   1SG most
> zāogāo   de   yī   bùfen, dá-de.
> bad   ATTR   one   part,   answer-DE
> 'I think relatively to fast reading, I feel that apparently fast reading is the part I did worst.'

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Lastly, *other* SFEs which occur in narrow-focus utterances can also perform an emphatic function. In fact, whenever such SFEs have an active or highly accessible status, their function is arguably focus-enhancing. Although they are never treated together with right-detached topics in the literature, I believe the production of post-focal *in-situ* topics, have – in many cases – semantic and discursive functions which brings them close to the former type of topics, i.e. they are able to enhance and emphasize the saliency of the focus. A prototypical example is shown in (131) below, wherein the presence of the adverb *dōu* 都 ensures that a specific element is singled out as an "extreme instance, either the best, or the worst, the simplest or the most complicated, and it forms a contrast with another instance, explicitly stated or implied in the context." (Loar, 2011: 447). What is being emphasized here is that the Chinese restaurants in LA sell literally *everything* one can think of:[191]

131. 我各我告诉你各种样儿, 各种各样的饭店都有.

'Let me tell you, any kind, there are any sort of shops.'

什么都有.

SHÉNME   dōu yǒu

WHAT(EVER)   all have

'There is EVERYTHING.'   (CallFriend/zho-m/5975)

However, emphatic *other* SFEs are not necessarily introduced by the (*lián* 连…) *dōu* 都/*yě* 也 construction, but can be marked through prosodic prominence only. Examples (132) and (133) show two *other* SFEs, additionally followed by a referential and a framing topic occurring at the end of narrow-focus utterances. In (132), the prosodic prominence is narrowed down to the adverbial phrase *yī-gè rén* 一个人 'alone', and the post-focal constituents, including both the verb *pay* followed by the SFP *la* 啦 and the object SFE *utility*, are produced with reduced intonation, as can be observed from Figure 28. The *in-situ* SFE *pay* is arguably inferable based on the activation of the semantic frame triggered by the use of the NP *utility;* the latter, similarly to other cases of emphatic use of the sentence-final slot, represents a given referent instantiated as a topic earlier on in the discourse which is maintained and reaffirmed at the end of A's last utterance.

132. A: 对, 就是说 utility 不会- 'Yes, that means utility fees will not-'

     A: 对, utility 你 你们一 sh-一 share 就没有了.

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[191] A distributive interpretation of the adverb *dou* is excluded in this case based on the assessment of contextual factors, i.e., based on the fact that the *other* SFE *yǒu* 有 'have' represents given information and is unlikely to represent the illocutionary purpose of the utterance. Rather, the latter is more likely to be carried out by the indefinite pronoun *shénme* 什么 'everything'.

'Yes, as soon as you share them, utility fees are not a big deal anymore.'

A:　因为不是你^一个人 pay 啦, utility.

Yīnwéi bú shì nǐ YĪ-GÈ RÉN　　pay la,　utility.

Because not be　2SG ONE-CLF PERSON　　pay SFP utility.fees

'Because you don't pay them ALL BY YOURSELF, utility fees.'　　(CallFriend/zho-m/4389)
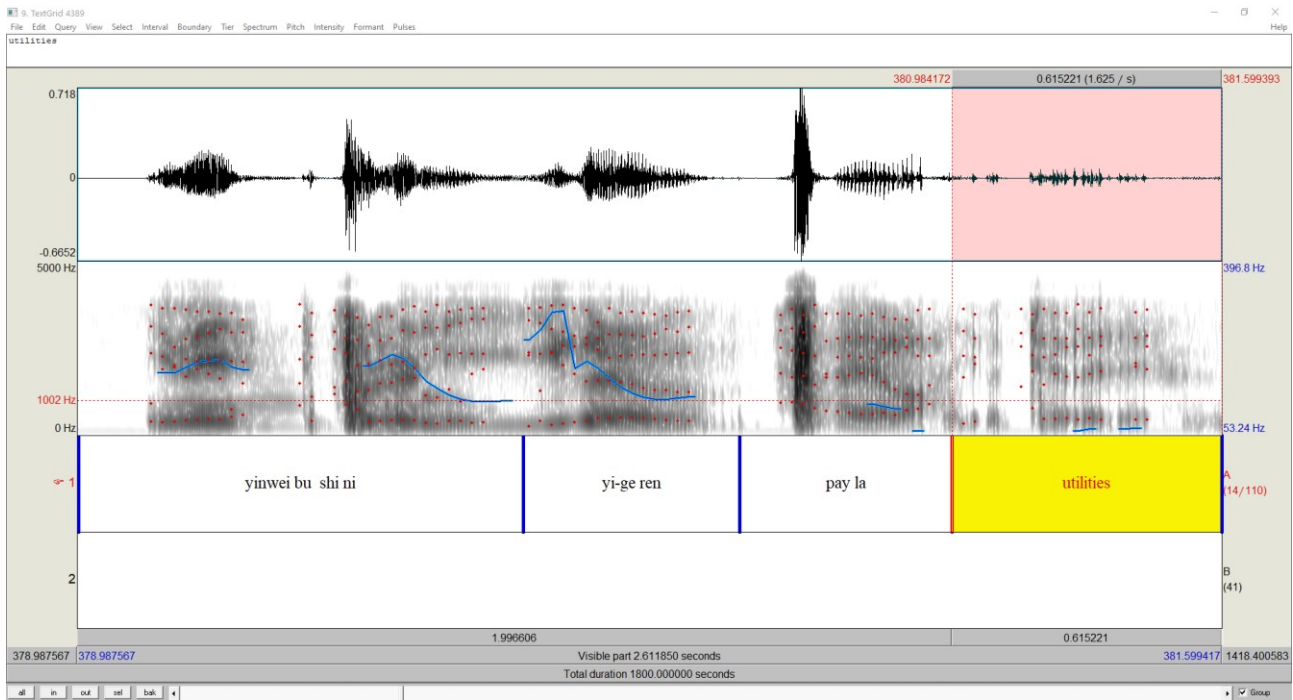
Figure 28: Intonation contour of a topic SFE in a narrow focus utterance

Similarly, example (133) shows the production in sentence-final position of a quantifier NP that was already introduced in speaker A's previous utterance. In fact, A's previous utterance shows a structure which partially parallels with the second one containing the SFE: *nà huàzhuāngpǐn* 那化妆品 'that make-up' represents the aboutness topic for both the first and the second utterance of A, while the framing PP *zài zhè'r* 在这儿 'here' in the first utterance parallels and contrasts the framing NP *guónèi* 国内 'in China' contained in the second utterance; the focal part of the first utterance extends over the entire clause *(wǒ) sān-bǎi yuán mǎi yī-gè* (我)三百元买一个'I bought one for three hundred dollars', while in the case of the latter utterance, the focus is introduced by the focus marker *shì* 是 'be' and narrowed down to the quantifier *sān bǎi duō* 三百多'three hundred something', which carries contrastive intonation; finally, both the remaining part of the quantifier NP – i.e. *kuài qián* 块钱 'money' – and the framing SFE *yī-gè* 一个 'one' are produced with post-focal reduced intonation, as visible in Figure 29.

133. A: 你看那化妆品<u>在这儿</u>哈, 我三百元买一个.

          'You see, the cosmetics here, I buy one for three hundred dollars.'

    B: 嗯. 'Mhm.'

    A: <u>国内</u>是^<u>三百多块钱</u>, 一个,

        Gúo-nèi   shì sān bǎi   duo kuài qián,   yī-ge

        Country-in be three hundred more CLF money   one-CLF

        'Back home they're THREE HUNDRED PLUS yuan, one.'

    A: 简直差价十倍嘛. 'The difference is almost ten times.'   (CallFriend/zho-m/5906)
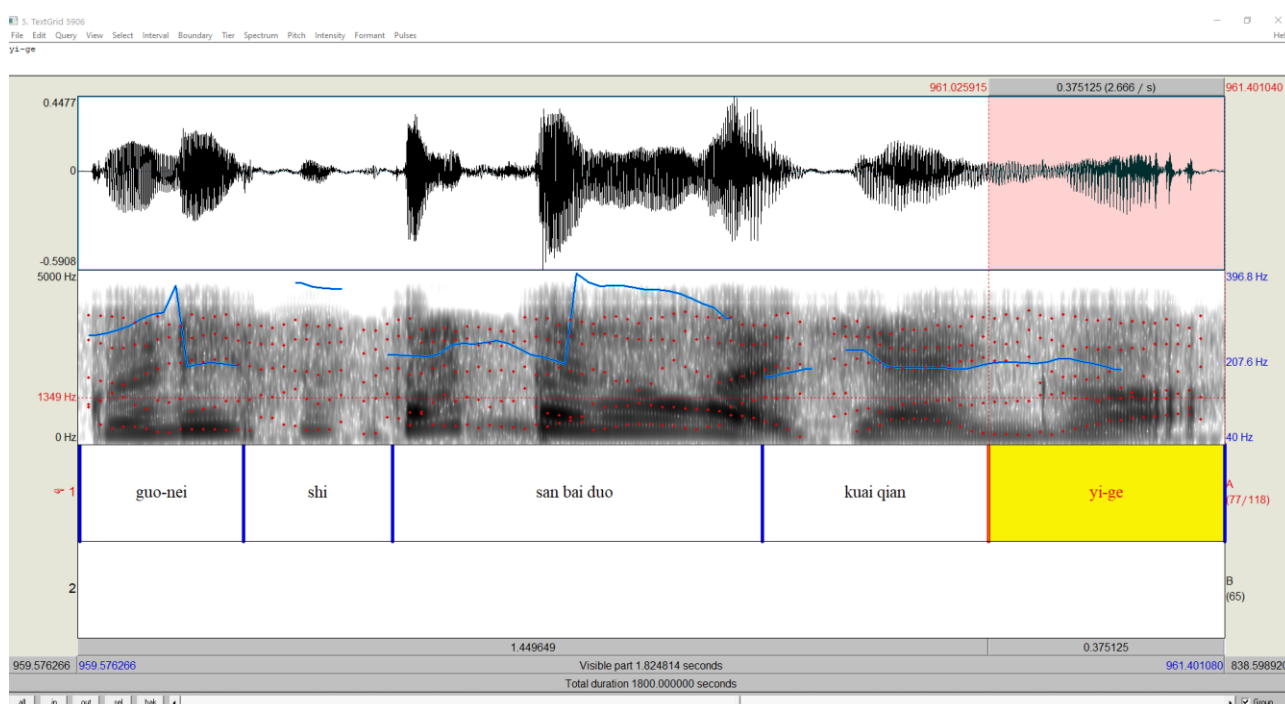
Figure 29: Intonation contour of a frame SFE in a narrow focus utterance

While many *in-situ* SFEs – including examples (131) and (132) – clearly perform an emphatic or focus-enhancing function, in other cases such as (133) the emphatic dimension is less prominent and their production is mainly motivated on structural grounds. In other words, whenever an SFE is part of a larger constituent only part of which is focal, they are deaccented as a means to signal their non-focality status to the addressee. This is exactly what happens in example (134), wherein the verb *ná* 拿 'take' – already introduced in A's utterance – is part of the larger VP, which also comprises the prepositional phrase *zài* 在 'at' + place. In order to signal the non-focality – hence topicality – of *na*, speaker B places the prosodic prominence on the PP *zài* 在 Newark 'at Newark', which is the new content he wants to transmit to the hearer.

134. A: 你是到底在哪儿拿车呀,

'Where will you pick up the car at the end?'

B: 本来应该在^Newark 拿的.

Běnlái	yīnggāi	zài	NEWARK	ná	de
Initially	should	at	NEWARK	take	SFP

'Originally I was supposed to pick it up at NEWARK.' (CallFriend/zho-m/5653)

A further example is given in (135), wherein the (narrow) focus-topic articulation can be observed even at a lower constituent-internal level of analysis. In this case the prosodic prominence falls on the adjectival modifier *Zhōngguó* 中国 'Chinese' within the object NP, whereas the sentence-final head, the noun *huà* 话 'language' is deaccented to signal its non-focal, already active status:

135. 那是那他们是讲的是台湾话, 咱们讲的是^中国话.

Nà	shì	nà	tāmen	shì	jiǎng	de	shì	Táiwān-huà,
That	be	that	3.PL.M	be	talk	NMLZ	be	Taiwanese-language

zánmen	jiǎng	de	shì	ZHŌNGGUÓ-hua.
1PL	talk	NMLZ	be	CHINESE-language

'They speak Taiwanese, we speak CHINESE.'   (CallFriend/zho-m/5975)

It could be argued, however, that although the emphatic function is not equally prominent in all the above examples, post-focal prosodic deaccentation always has at least an enhancing effect on the focal fragment.

To conclude this section, one can observe that with the exception of (117), in all the examples presented hereto, overtly resumed or not, the presence of referential, framing or *other* topics in sentence-final position was never related to the necessity of specifying the reference of the entity involved, for the latter was already clear based on the previous co-text or context. Its production, one might say, does not add to the referential status of the discourse entities, for they are already given (active, situationally-, semantically- or textually-accessible). This function generally correlates with the absence of a pause between the SFE and the host utterance and can intersect with either a positive or negative evaluation in the case of referential topics, but less frequently so in the case of frames or *other* topics.

4.3.2. Referential integration

A second important function attributed to right-hand topics in the literature resides in their use to integrate referential information concerning a discourse entity (Lambrecht, 1994). As far as referential SFEs in the data sample are concerned, this function appears to be significantly connected

with the use of elaborations, i.e. (non)active referents being produced sentence-internally by means of pronouns or other lexically reduced forms and then spelled out in sentence final position through lexically more informative expressions. This function can be illustrated by looking at examples (136) and (137). In (136) the referents *Wēnliáng* 温良 and *Wú Yízhēn* 吴仪珍 are both active but not yet established as a discourse topic. For this reason, the pronoun (*tāmen* 他们 'they') produced sentence-internally strike the hearer as ambiguous and is therefore spelled out at the end of the sentence in the form of a fully-fledged lexical NP. It is interesting to notice that the pronoun is produced with contrastive intonation, activating a contrast between the referents denoted by *tamen* and other possible competing ones, for example *wǒmen* 我们 'we' (including the speaker and *Wenliang*). The spelling out of the referents serves to further illustrate this point.

136. A: 你有[温良]ᵢ的电话？ [吴仪珍]ⱼ问我要[温良]ᵢ的电话.

'Do you have [Wenliang's]ᵢ number? [Wu Yizhen]ⱼ has asked for [his]ᵢ number.

A: 哎哟,我说- 我说- 我说我- Oh, I said- I said- I said I-'

因为[他们]ⱼ 好像还蛮熟的 [温良和吴仪珍]ⱼ

Yīnwéi [tāmen]ⱼ hǎoxiàng hái mán shú de, [Wēnliáng hé Wú Yízhēn]ⱼ
Because 3PL apparently also rather familiar SFP Wenliang and Wu Yizhen

'Because <u>they</u> seem to know each other pretty well, Wenliang and Wu Yizhen.'

(CallFriend/zho-m/5949)

As shown in Figure 30 below, the referential topic in (136) performing a referential integration function is produced with a flat contour and reduced intensity, and without a visible pause to set it apart from the host utterance, on a par with topics performing an emphatic function:
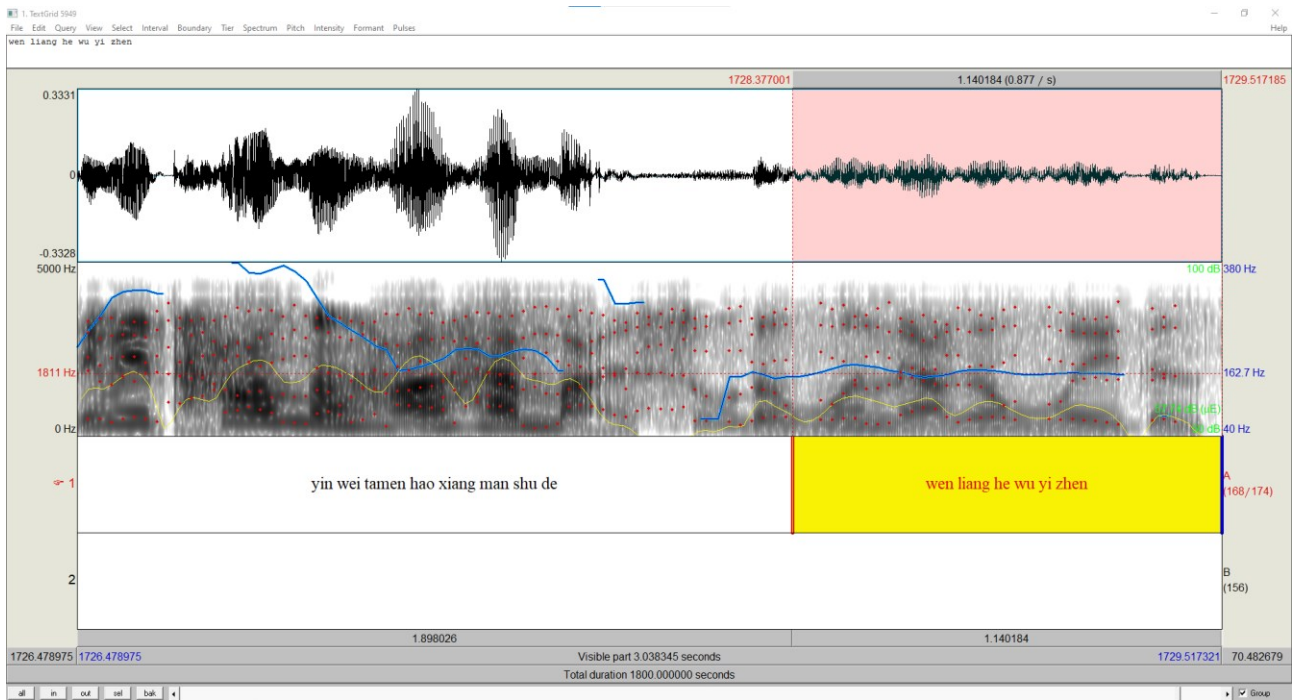
Figure 30: Intonation contour of a resumed referential SFE

In (137), the topic referent is first mentioned sentence-internally too by means of the demonstrative NP *nà-ge* 那个 'that' and then spelled out at the end of the utterance by means of a more informative place NP, i.e. *nǐ nà'r* 你那儿 'your place'.

137. A:　[那个]ᵢ离多大那个不是很近吗, [你那儿]ᵢ?

　　　　[Nà-ge]ᵢ　lí　　Duōdà nà-ge　　　　bú　shì　hěn　jìn　　ma, [nǐmen　nà'r]ᵢ?
　　　　That　　from　University.of.Toronto　not　be　very close　SFP, 2LP　　there
　　　　'Isn't that close to the University of Toronto, your place?'　　　(CallFriend/zho-m/5542)

Moreover, the referential integration function is available not only for referential topics, but also for frames. As one can observe from (138), a framing referent can also be first introduced by a more continuous lexical form and then repeated in the form of a more informative expression. Specifically, the utterance in (138) represents a sudden shift to a new topic – as also indicated by the presence of the interjection *aī* 哎 introducing a reminder – and the framing PP *zài na'r* 在那儿 'there' denoting an identifiable but unused referent is introduced at the left periphery out of the blue, posing a possible problem of referent identification for the hearer.[192] Hence, the referent is resumed sentence-finally by

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a fully-fledged lexical NP – not by a PP – *Yàtèlándà* 亚特兰大 'Atlanta'. It is important to notice that this instance of topic shift too intersects with the use of a framing SFE.

138. Context: A asks B whether he noticed that A's brother gained a lot of weight the last time they met. B didn't notice anything and doesn't seem to believe that A's brother gained that much weight.

> A: 我哥很胖了. 'My brother got really fat.'
>
> […]
>
> A: 他真有那么多. 'He gained that much (weight) for real.'
>
> B: 是吗? 'Is it so?'
>
> B: 哎, 你们[在那儿]ᵢ玩儿得多吗, [亚特兰大]ᵢ?
>
> Āi, nǐmen [zài nà'r]ᵢ   wán'r   de   duō   ma, [Yàtèlándà]ᵢ?
>
> Hei, 2PL   at   there   have.fun DE   much   SFP Atlanta?
>
> 'Hei, (by the way), do you go out often over there, in Atlanta?'

(CallFriend/zho-m/5636)

The intonational contour of the framing PP in (138) shown in Figure 31 is similar to the one observed for the referential topic in (136) performing a similar referential integration function:
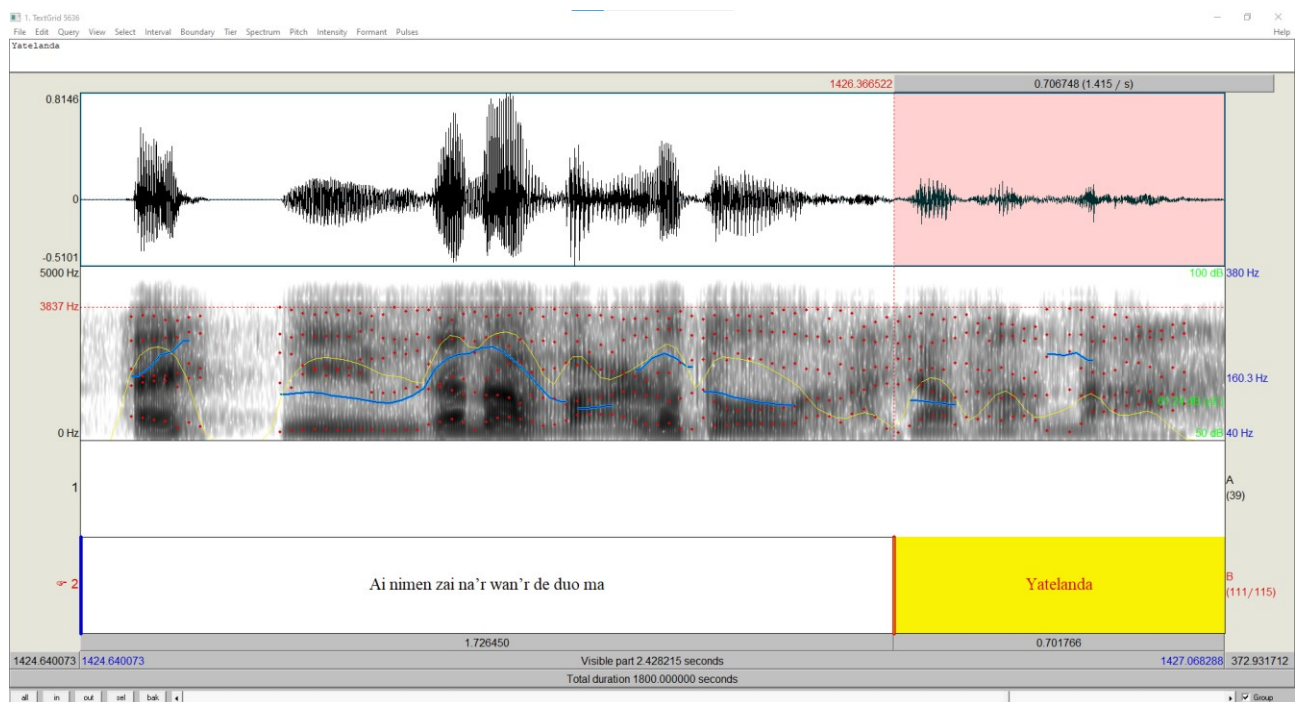
Figure 31: Intonation contour of a resumed frame SFE

However, the majority of framing expressions performing a referential integration function – i.e. a post-hoc realization that an expression, produced either as a zero or as a lexically continuous form (e.g. pronouns or deictics), is not accessible enough for the hearer and must be further specified or clarified – are not resumed, unlike referential topics. This can easily be observed in example (139), wherein the framing PP *zài Měiguó* 在美国 'in the United States' specifies the field within which the focus should be interpreted, that is to say, B is affirming that the EE program is ranked 18th in the United States and not for example just within one state or at the international level.

139. B:这边清华物理系无数啊, 我操. 都挤在 Double E, 我操.

　　'Those from the Tsinghua Physics Department are countless over here, fuck. They're all crowded in the EE [program], fuck.'

　　明大 Double E 排十八名么, (0.09) 在美国.

Míngdà	Double E	pái	shíbā	míng	me,	zài	Měiguó.
Minnesota.University	EE	rank	eighteen	name	SFP,	at	United.States

　　'Minnesota University's EE program is ranked 18th, in the United States.'

<div align="right">(CallFriend/zho-m/5784)</div>

This time, the prosodic contour of the SFE, although showing pitch range and intensity reduction, presents a visible short pause of 0.09 seconds between the host utterance and the sentence-final topic:
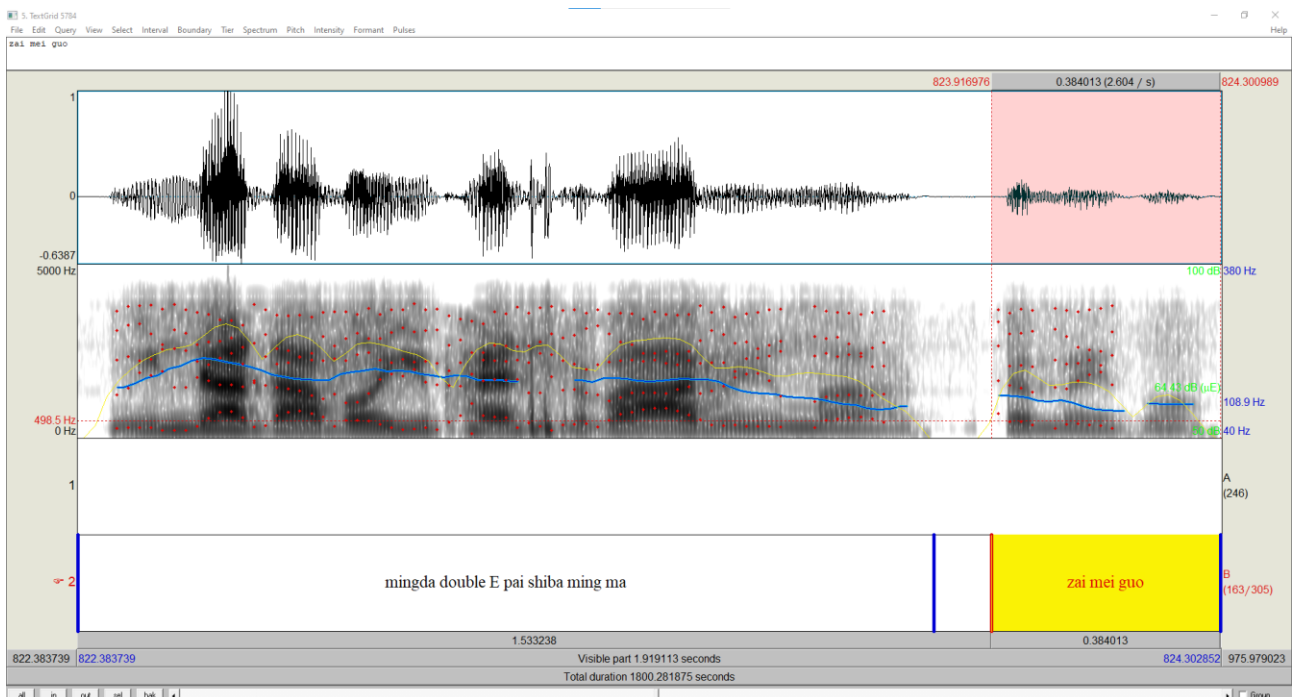
Figure 32: Intonation contour of a frame SFE in a narrow focus utterance

In addition to place PPs, a wide array of expressions can be used to limit the field of applicability of the utterance focus in terms of time and space, mostly, but also in terms of quantity, frequency, domain, etc.

To give a few examples, (140) illustrates a time phrase being used to specify the time frame for the utterance focus, (141) clarifies the time quantity to which the focus applies through a quantifier NP, whereas the hypothetical clause in (142), additionally containing a second evaluative SFE, retrospectively limits the effect of the focal complement to the eventuality it describes.

140. B:那你在那边除了打工^干什么呀, 天天都?

    Nà   nǐ   zài nà-biān chú-le   dǎgōng   gàn shénme ya, tiāntiān   dōu?
    Then 2SG at   there   apart.from work.part-time do   what   SFP, every.day all
    'What do you do over there apart from your part-time job, every day?'

(CallFriend/zho-m/4447)

141. A:你 Fellow 也是四门课吧, 一周.

    Nǐ   Fellow   yě shì sì-mén   kè   ba, yī zhōu.
    2SG fellow   also be   four-CLF class SFP one week

    'If you're a Fellow you have four classes too, per week.'   (CallFriend/zho-m/5784)

142. A: 就是挺亏的, 你要那样的话, 就.

    Jiùshi   tǐng   kuī de,   nǐ yào   nà-yàng dehuà, jiù.
    Just.be quite hard NMLZ, 2sg if   that-way COND just.
    'It would be quite a loss, in that case, simply.'   (CallFriend/zho-m/5195)

Formally, non-resumed frames performing a referential integration function are not distinguishable from those in which framing expressions perform an emphatic function, as in (125). It is only the context and the prosodic cues of the utterance that can point us into the right direction. In the example below, the sentence-final production of *zhè-cì* 这次 'this time', rather than being used (only) to specify that it is this time (as opposed to other times) that the interlocutors had good luck, appears to have more of an emphatic flavour reinforcing the exclamatory mood and the positive evaluation. In fact, its production at the end of the utterance has the effect of rendering the adjectival predicate expressing a positive stance *zhēn hǎo ya* 真好呀 'really good' prosodically more prominent.

143. A: 手气真好呀, 这次。

    Shǒuqì zhēn hǎo   ya, zhè-cì.
    Luck really good SFP, this-time

'We had such good luck, this time!' (CallFriend/zho-m/5982)

4.3.3. Discourse-driven integration

If highly accessible referents are generally produced in sentence-final position as a means to emphasize and enhance the speaker's stance, and referents with a low accessibility status are generally spelled out after a significant pause in sentence-final position to facilitate their correct identification on the part of the hearer, SFEs denoting fully active referents and intersecting with a pause appear to be more interaction-driven, that is to say, their production is motivated by contingencies of the ongoing discourse such as interruptions or overlappings, response-soliciting or agreement-seeking. In other words, the need for their production arises in real-time interactions during the production or towards the completing phase of the production of an utterance.

As an example, (144) illustrates the repetition of a fully active referent in sentence-final position to ensure the hearer's attention. In this specific scenario, there is a slight misunderstanding between the interlocutors: since speaker B does not fully grasp the meaning of A's stretch of talk, she interrupts her to request a clarification, which she further reinforces through the production of the SFE as a further stretch of talk – after a short pause of 0.23 seconds – to make certain that A delivers the information requested rather than continuing with the original talk.

144. A: 然后反正, 现在我的公司[给我]ᵢ提了职称么, 工资也提上去了.所以我是八个小时, 我就正规的生活.

'And anyway, now my company has given [me]ᵢ my title, and my salary's gone up as well. So I [work] eight hours and I have a regular life.'

B: [你]ᵢg-现在[给你]ᵢ提的什么 公司, (0.23) [给 你]ᵢ?

[Nǐ]ᵢ   xiànzài [gěi nǐ]ᵢ tí   de   shénme gōngsī,   [gěi nǐ]ᵢ

2SG   now   to 2SG promote REL   which   company to 2SG

'What company did they give you?' (CallFriend/zho-m/5906)

To further illustrate this point, example (145) shows the production of a framing SFE on the part of speaker B after 0.44 seconds of pause to tighten the relationship with the hearer and solicit her response. The production of the topic NP *fángjiān lǐ* 房间里 'in [your] room' can hardly be motivated by the need to clarify or specify the reference of a discourse entity, for this has already been introduced in sentence-internal position through the space NP *wòshì lǐmiàn* 卧室里面 'in [your] bedroom' and the two expressions can be said to be synonymic in the given context, i.e. the latter does not add either referential or attributive information to the former.

145. B: 哎你[卧室里面]ᵢ有-都有些什么东西[房间里]ᵢ?

Āi nǐ   [wòshi lǐmiàn]ᵢ yǒu dou yǒu xiē   shénme dōngxī, [fāngjiān lǐ]ᵢ

Hei 2SG   bedroom inside have all   have some   which   things   room   in

'What   things   do   you   have   in   your   bedroom,   in   your   room?'

(CallFriend/zho-m/5982)

A similar function of rapport enhancement and relation tightening performed by the SFE can be observed in (146), which contains a non-resumed vocative NP produced after a pause of 0.21 seconds. The NP denotes one of the conversation participants and therefore has a highly accessible status, hence its production does not serve the purpose of integrating referential information. Rather, since A is trying to convince B that the best thing to do is to make his wife take on a part-time job, the vocative SFE – which refers attributively to the hearer – serves to convey an intimate and affectionate tone to the utterance and performs an alignment-seeking function.

146. A: 就是啊, 你们那儿有人打工不吧？

'That's right, there are people working part-time over there, aren't there?'

B: 有. 'Yes.'

A: 这 不 就 结 了 嘛. 'Then that's it.'

B: 嗯 . { breath } 'Mhm.'

A: 攒   点儿 钱, (0.21) 小伙子.

Zǎn   diǎn'r qián,   xiǎohuǒzi

Save   some money   young.man

'Save some money, young man.'   (CallFriend/zho-m/5905)

Figure 33 below shows the prosodic features of the utterance contained in the last example, wherein the vocative NP, although characterized by a flat intonation contour, is produced after a very visible pause following the host utterance:
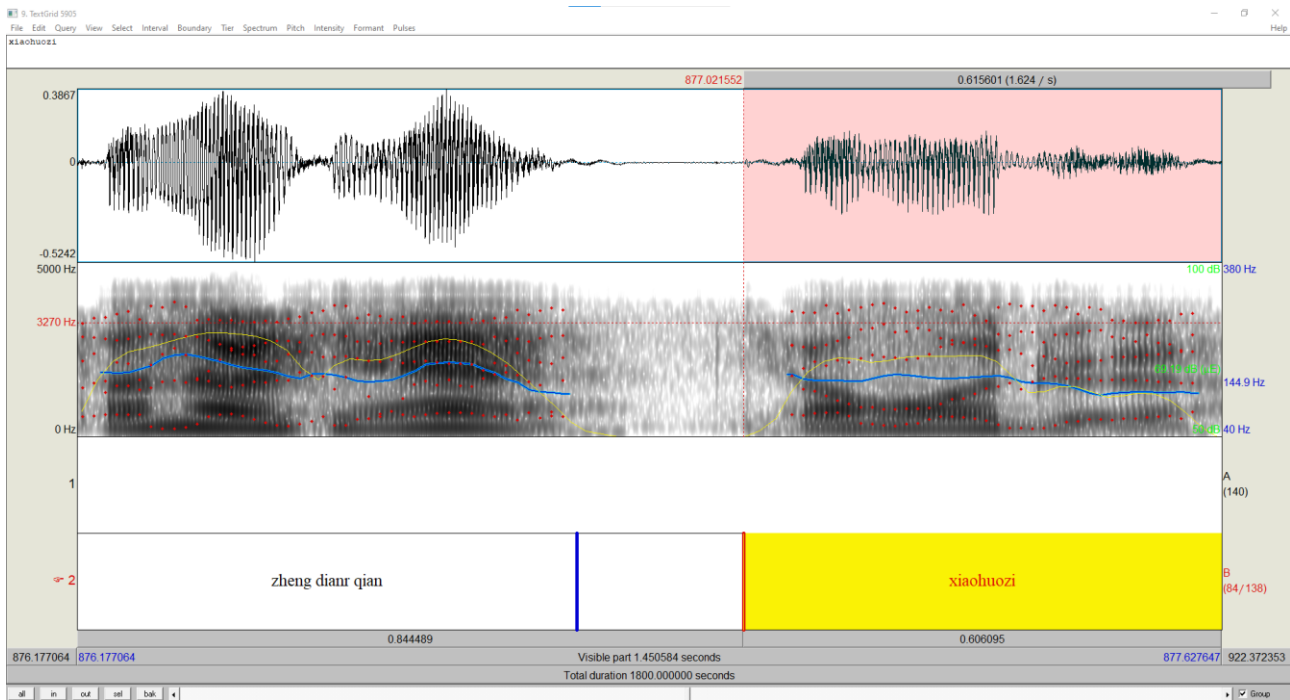
Figure 33: Intonation contour of a non-resumed vocative NP

5. Discussion

Based on the results of the quantitative analyses and their qualitative interpretation, the last part of this chapter will be devoted to summarizing and discussing the findings in order to provide a response to the research questions (RQs).

5.1. Types of expressions used at the sentence right periphery

The first RQ was concerned with the types of SFEs that the speakers in the sample use at the end of their utterances. Sections 3 and 3.1 argued that the most frequent type of expression used in sentence-final position is the topical one, suggesting a predominant use of the post-sentential slot to perform information-structural functions. In fact, a non-neglectable portion of my data set is connected to the need to focalize a specific (sub)constituent in the clause whose position is not sentence-final. Nonetheless, as was argued repeatedly throughout § 4 and 5, a non-neglectable amount of *other* SFEs was found to be produced in order to conceal the speaker's responsibility for the introduction of face-threatening material. In addition, the great majority of the referential and framing topics occurring at the right periphery refer to already active or highly accessible referents whose enunciation at the end of the utterance becomes redundant from a propositional point of view, but not from a pragmatic stand. In fact, they are often used for emphatic purposes or for reasons related to the interlocutors' face, rapport management and relationship-reinforcing. In addition, several instances of framing

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expressions were also found to be used in sentence-final position to mitigate and reduce the abruptness of a change of topic. In other words, in spite of the conspicuous amount of what Beeching & Detges (2014) call dialogual material, i.e. topical expressions, being produced in the post-sentential slot, they are for the most part used to convey meanings regulating the relationship between the interlocutors during the conversation.

Moreover, more than one third of the SFEs belong to the interpersonal type, i.e. they too are used to establish and maintain social relations, either performing a subjective or intersubjective grounding. Specifically, it was found that with respect to subjective grounding, the distribution of SFE types is conditioned by the gender of the speaker and his/her interlocutor, with female speakers producing more modal expressions, and male speakers frequently employing swear words at the end of utterances directed towards same-gender addressees. The finding, which to the best of my knowledge has never been discussed in the literature on Mandarin right-hand topics or discourse markers, is nevertheless supported by sociolinguistic studies on gender and language (e.g. Lakoff, 1975 on English and Chan, 1997 on Mandarin), as well as by a number of studies on Chinese sentence-final particles evidencing a different use between the two genders (e.g. Chan, 1999 on Cantonese, Wamsley, 2019 on Mandarin). This could be indicative of the fact that female and male speakers co-construct their relationship with their interlocutor in different ways: while female speakers mark their utterances as a product of their subjective stance, hence pre-emptively acknowledging the possibility of their addressee to hold a different opinion, male speakers tend to use strongly emphatic taboo expressions in order to create an intimate and inclusive relationship with their interlocutor wherein certain views are shared as pertaining to a specific group identity (Carter, 2004).

Finally, only a small amount of textual connectors and other elements used to organize the discourse was found in the sample, amounting to less than 5% of the total. However, unlike connectors employed at the sentence left periphery, those included in this study are either used retrospectively to close a topic, or are connected to turn-yielding or response-inviting functions, confirming Beeching & Detges (2014)'s and Detges & Waltereit (2014) claims concerning the asymmetry between left and right periphery. Lastly, but not least importantly, some uses of the textual connectors analysed in this chapter were also found to have an additional interpersonal-oriented function, contributing to rapport maintaining and face-preserving.

One the one hand, the datum concerning the preponderant use of SFEs to perform interpersonal functions on the part of both female and male speakers supports Bourgerie (1981; 1989)'s claim that the post-sentential slot in (Mandarin) Chinese is being grammaticalized for the expression of non-propositional meanings, although not necessarily modal. In fact, as evidenced by the data in my sample, modals – either overtly encoding the speaking subject through a 1st person pronoun or not –

only represent 9% of the SFEs. On the other hand, it also supports Beeching & Detges (2014)'s claim that the right periphery of the utterance tends to host *dialogic* elements attending to the needs of (two) interacting points of view rather than just to those of two interacting speakers.

All in all, the findings of this study on Mandarin Chinese are in line with research on the right periphery of Indo-European languages, in spite of a strikingly more redundant marking of the (inter)subjective dimensions through both SFPs and SFEs: while Indo-European languages employ mainly periphrastic strategies at the sentence periphery, Mandarin Chinese frequently employs both highly specialized and crystalized items such as sentence-final particles and periphrastic chunks to signal the acknowledgement by the speaking individual of the interlocutor's persona.

5.2. Functions of the SFEs

With respect to the specific functions that different types of SFEs perform at different linguistic levels, the data employed for the current study confirmed the considerations of Schiffrin (1987) and Lim (2014) on the multifarious nature of the elements occurring at the sentence right periphery and the difficulty in assigning a single, unambiguous function to each of the expressions under investigation. In fact, while some cases might be easier to pinpoint as pertaining to the interpersonal, textual or information-structural plane, the majority of them are able to act on more than one plane simultaneously. What is more, some expressions might convey more than one type of interpersonal meaning at the same time.

As far as the interpersonal functions are concerned, it was argued that the production of the SFEs on the part of the speakers has the main purpose of avoiding their utterances being challenged by their interlocutors, either by grounding the illocutionary force of their utterances to their subjective persona or by anchoring it to what is intersubjectively shared between the speaker and the addressee, or, alternatively between the speaker and a third external party belonging to the social community.

Among the SFEs performing (mainly) an interpersonal type of function, the swearing group is the more conspicuous, together with the modal and evaluative groups, followed by the evidential type. As a distinctive feature of male to male talk, the former SFEs are emphatic expressions that can be seen both as expressing a strong subjective stance and as creating a certain degree of intimacy and "group membership" between the interlocutors, confirming what already emerged in studies on the use of swearing (e.g. Jay & Janschewitz, 2008). While they are chiefly employed in turn-medial position to increase and maintain the hearer's attention, these same expressions can be used in turn-final position to invite an empathic reaction on the part of the hearer, especially when intersecting

with a negative evaluation of a state of affairs. In both turn-medial and turn-final position, the use of swear words intersects with an overtly coded negative evaluation in more than one third of the cases.

The category of modal expressions includes subjective expressions overtly or covertly coding the speaking subject. These expressions, distinctively appearing in women's speech, as already emerged from sociolinguistic studies as Lakoff (1975) and Chan (1997), can be considered – much like swearing expressions in men speech – as both subjective, i.e. coding the speaker's subjective evaluation regarding the truth of the proposition, and intersubjective, for they are in fact used to preserve both interlocutors' faces: by marking a proposition as the product of one's subjective cognitive process, the speaker avoids committing her/himself to the truth of the proposition and the "danger" of an eventual rebuttal from the hearer; on the other hand, this also signals that the speaker is well aware of and does not dismiss the possibility that the hearer might hold a different view from her/his own.

The third type of SFE in terms of frequency in the dataset is represented by evaluatives: these SFEs retrospectively project an element of evaluation on the part of the speaker on the attached utterance, which in turn may itself contain an explicit positive or negative evaluation of a state of affairs. Especially when the inherent SFE evaluation is negative, the function is to convey an element of disapproval or complaint in a "covert" way, with reduced prosodic salience and presupposed rather than asserted status.

Lastly, evidential expressions are the less frequent type of interpersonal SFEs. In addition to simply being used as a mark of "acquired knowledge", such expressions are able to perform an intersubjective function in part overlapping with that of modal expressions, i.e. they allow the speaker not to commit to the truth of her/his proposition; in addition, however, the speaker also avoids committing towards her/himself being the conceptual source of the evaluation therein contained, in line with what has been argued in Tantucci (2013, 2016). A second intersubjective function of evidential expressions coincides with the emphatic stance conveyed by repetitions (Hsieh, 2011), which can reinforce the speaker's dissociation from the source of evaluation of the utterance or underline the extraordinary content of what is being said.

Among these four types of interpersonal SFEs, the first three were found to perform a subjective grounding of the illocutionary force of the utterance, i.e. they anchor the utterance focus to the speaker's persona, i.e. in her/his subjective belief, evaluation, attitude or emotion, while evidential expressions perform an intersubjective grounding of the illocutionary force, i.e. they anchor it to the universe of discourse shared by the interlocutors or to an external source of knowledge belonging to the social community.

Although not strictly belonging to the group of interpersonal expressions, topical SFEs also appear to perform a subjective or intersubjective grounding of the utterance illocutionary force: a number of framing SFEs expressing speaker coordinates belong to the former type, whereas referential and *other* topics represent instances of the second type.

Framing SFEs encoding speaker coordinates or subjective evaluation anchor the illocutionary force of the utterance to the speaking subject. They can be used to either strengthen the illocutionary force of the utterance or to retrospectively limit the field of application of the focus and thus, implicitly, also the extent to which the speaker can be held responsible for producing the utterance. On the opposite, referential and *other* expressions ground the utterance into the universe of discourse co-constructed by the interlocutors, presenting the information as shared between the speaker and the hearer. When *other* SFEs represent information that has not been previously introduced into the discourse, the speaker is arguably concealing her/his responsibility for its introduction, whereas referential topics with a highly accessible status being produced in sentence-final position create a presumption of sharedness and solidarity between the interlocutors, which are both called upon as co-sources of the conveyed information.

All in all, what all the interpersonal meanings expressed by the different types of SFEs have in common appears the be the continuous monitoring of the speaker's utterances being effectively received and accepted by the addressee.

Lastly, some textual elements are also used in connection with instances of rapport challenge in order to mitigate the illocutionary force of an utterance by dismissing a preceding utterance to which they retrospectively refer as irrelevant, in perfect line with Haselow (2012)'s study on English final particles. They can be described as sharing some features with the intersubjective grounding group, for they anchor the illocutionary force of the utterance to the universe of discourse shared by the interlocutors, but also as introducing an element of subjectivity when explicitly guiding the addressee's inferential process. However, the basic function of these expressions is to contribute to the coherent organization of discourse: rather than merely linking one utterance or longer stretch of talk to another, textual connectors used in sentence-final position generally signal a topic closure and fulfil a turn-yielding function.

Other expressions performing a function at the level of discourse organization are referential topics and frames: the former are frequently employed to maintain or re-instantiate a previously introduced topic, while the latter are found to be sometimes employed in correspondence with (sudden) shifts of topic, contributing to a more coherent organization of discourse. While the former aspect is well-grounded in literature on right dislocations (e.g Lambrecht, 1994; Frascarelli, 2017), the latter has not been yet mentioned in such literature, to my knowledge.

Lastly, the three SFEs pertaining to the level of the utterance information structure by definition, i.e. referential, framing and *other* topics found in sentence-final position are frequently employed to convey an emphatic stance. Especially in the case of referential topics, they were found to correlate with a positive or negative evaluation (presumably) shared by the interlocutors, as already argued in relation to English tails (e.g. Aijmer, 1989; Timmis, 2015). The expressions intersecting with this function tend to denote referents with an active or highly accessible status, while SFEs with less accessible referents are generally produced to integrate ambiguous, unclear or insufficient referential information, again confirming all the previous claims in the literature. However, the present study also argues that referents characterized by a highly accessible status and co-occurring with a (significant) pause from the main utterance, be they referential topics or frames, are not necessarily motivated by performance errors or unclear reference, but appear to be related to face-preserving and rapport management needs.

5.3. SFEs and their interaction with other linguistic dimensions

The third RQ focuses on the interaction between SFEs and other linguistic dimensions in carrying out the pragmatic functions identified above. The first element taken into consideration are sentence-final particles (SFPs), with which SFEs share the capacity of acting (simultaneously) at different linguistic levels. As emerged from the literature concerning final-particles from a cross-linguistic perspective (Hancil et al., 2015), Chinese already has a standardized set of small expressions conveying the pragmatic meanings expressed through formulaic or periphrastic chunks in most Indo-European languages. Nonetheless, it was found that the two types of expression constantly co-occur in spoken Mandarin, interacting both at the interpersonal level of communication and at the level of discourse organization and coherence.

From the interpersonal standpoint, it has been repeatedly pointed out that SFEs can perform a supporting function with respect to the (pragmatic) meaning conveyed by the SFPs. This can translate into the reinforcing of a strong illocutionary act, or into the downgrading of an already week illocutionary commitment, as observed in § 4.1.1. However, in other cases, especially connected to the use of swearing expressions, it is the SFEs themselves that take over the intersubjective role and SFPs become redundant. Clearly, not only SFEs and SFPs are tightly interconnected, but they also intersect with the dimensions of rapport orientation and face work, confirming the illocutional convergences described in Tantucci & Wang (2018). In fact, SFEs co-occurring with overtly marked instances of the latter dimensions behave in a similar way to SFPs, softening face-threatening acts which may challenge their rapport with the interlocutor. In the case of swear words and – to a minor

extent – referential topics, the intersection with rapport neglect – and absence of SFPs – suggests that the SFEs themselves may fulfil the task of intersubjectively reaching out to the addressee in order to maintain or even enhance the rapport between her/him and the speaker.

A further important dimension interacting with SFEs in carrying out the pragmatic functions described in the sections above is evaluation. As suggested by previous literature on English tails (Aijmer, 1989; Timmis, 2015), the SFEs in my data sample were also found to occur with a lexically coded positive or negative evaluation, with differences according to the SFE types, in almost 40% of the cases. While negative evaluation is generally speaking more frequent than positive – a finding which importantly supports Guo (1999)'s claim also in relation to non-child speech – all the SFE types but evidentials were found to co-occur with either a negative or positive evaluation. When co-occurring with a positive evaluation, the production of the SFE arguably has a strengthening effect, while the opposite is true for negative evaluation, which appears mitigated or downgraded. What is more, referential topics were found to occur in a significantly higher proportion than the others with an evaluating structure in the form (X) (be) good/bad. Although representing a rather explicit kind of evaluation, the latter is nonetheless presented as co-constructed by the interlocutors and thus less likely to be challenged by their interlocutors precisely because of the sharedness effect created by the very production of already given referential topics in sentence-final position.

Conclusions

The incipit of this thesis ushered information structure as a fundamental force shaping the linguistic structure of discourse, one which is capable of acting as a bridge between thoughts and words, one which allows the speaker to modulate her/his words in the most efficient way for these to be "effortlessly" understood by the hearer. Two main implications follow naturally from this definition of information structure: the first is the belief that language represents a privileged way to access human thought, an idea brilliantly described by Wallace Chafe.

> The sounds exist in the service of the thoughts, and follow wherever the thoughts may take them. It is the thoughts that drive language forward. A basic challenge for discourse analysis is to identify the forces that give direction to the flow of thoughts. (Chafe, 2007: 334)

The second implication resides in the conception of human language as a means to achieve communication between (at least) two parties and the consequent centrality of the context within which the linguistic exchange is generated. The latter view transpires from Van Valin and LaPolla's description of the encoding and decoding processes:

> In order to decrease the chance of misunderstanding, the speaker, in creating the sentence, tailors the form of the sentence to allow the hearer to create the proper context for interpretation with minimal processing effort. For his part, the hearer assumes that the sentence will be tailored in just this way, and so takes the first proposition that comes to mind as the one the speaker intended to communicate, and the first associated set of contextual assumptions that come to his mind as the intended background assumptions. (Van Valin & LaPolla, 1998: 199)

The expressions under analysis in this thesis are a magnificent embodiment of these two aspects of human language: As Detges and Waltereit (2014) suggested in their study on French left and right periphery, elements occurring at the utterance right periphery are the speakers' last chance to re-negotiate both the way in which the communicative purpose is achieved propositionally, i.e. the utterance focus, and the way in which this is "imposed" upon the hearer, i.e. the illocution. Yet, as Traugott (2015) remarked in her investigation into the functionalist models of the utterance periphery, these two sides of the post-sentential slot have been addressed separately by different lines of research, investigating either one or the other, or treating the two as sharply distinct or distinguishable. If this is true as far as English and other Indo-European languages are concerned, Mandarin Chinese does not represent an exception. *Au contraire*, although most studies acknowledged the manifold nature of the elements that can occur at the utterance right periphery (i.a. Lu, 1980; Tai & Hu, 1991; Hu, 1995; Zhang & Fang, 1996; 2020; Guo 1999), very few accepted the daunting challenge of analysing their

functions at both the information-structural and interpersonal-oriented level, and perhaps none attempted doing so by relying on both naturalistic conversations and large-scale quantitative analyses. In fact, if naturalistic oral interactions are not new in the investigation of either right dislocations or pragmatic markers, the adoption of an explicit operational framework to gather and analyse elements occurring at the utterance right periphery based on the statistical significance of their context-dependent features represents a novel approach and, I believe, the main contribution of this study. Drawing on a number of theoretical models in the context of information structure (i.a. Lambrecht, 1994; Lombardi Vallauri, 2000, 2009a, 2014; Frascarelli, 2017) and in that of illocution and intersubjectivity (i.a. Lombardi Vallauri, 2009a; Cresti, 2000, 2009, 2018; Tantucci, 2013 and following works; Traugott and Dasher, 2002; Traugott, 2009), and adapting different operationalizing criteria from a number of contributions (i.a. Guo, 1999; Timmis, 2015; Tantucci & Wang, 2018), the current work set out to provide an integrated account of the pragmatic functions these expressions fulfil, in intersection with a number of different linguistic dimensions pertaining to contextual conditions and pragmatic effects.

The study led to a number of important results. First, in the context of telephone conversations among friends, Mandarin spontaneous interactions evidenced a gender-based usage of the utterance-final slot: not only is women's and men's speech is characterized by the use of different types of expressions and by a different distribution of the expression types in terms of frequency, but the expressions used in sentence-final position appear to be modulated differently also according to the interlocutor's gender. The finding is meaningful not only from a sociolinguistic perspective, but potentially also from the acquisitional and pedagogical standpoints. Secondly, this study also confirmed the Mandarin sentence-final slot being biased towards the expression of interpersonal meanings, as argued by scholars working mostly on Indo-European languages: not only do the expressions used in this position frequently have an inherently interpersonal nature, targeting the management of the (social) relationship between the speaker and the hearer, but also non-inherently interpersonal expressions tend to become hallmarks of the speaker's attention toward the addressee when occurring at the right periphery, be it from the point of view of face-preserving and rapport-maintenance, or from the perspective of processing guidance. In fact, all the expressions taken into account can be viewed as a post-sentential instruction from the speaker to the hearer on how the utterance should be interpreted, either in terms of propositional content or procedural meaning. The result is important both from a cross-linguistic perspective and from a language specific stance, since Mandarin Chinese already possesses a rather rich inventory of conventionalized sentence-final particles expressing (inter)subjective meanings. One additional finding concerns the frequent interplay between different elements of evaluation converging in the same utterance: not only do

sentence-final expressions frequently intersect with sentence-final particles, but they can also co-occur with elements of positive or negative evaluation overtly coded in intra-sentential position, syntactically specific evaluative structures, as well as propositionally coded face work, either positive or negative, confirming the illocutional complexity already observed in Tantucci & Wang (2018) with respect to modalised utterances in Mandarin Chinese. Lastly, significant associations between meaning and form were detected in the context of what are generally known as right dislocations and afterthoughts: although referential, framing and *other* topics in the sample were found to behave differently with respect to coreferentiality and activation, discontinuous coreferential forms and prosodic discontinuity are more likely to correlate with discourse-contingent occurrences, while prosodically and syntactically more integrated forms can be generally attributed to more conventionalised functions, either interpersonal-oriented or discourse-organizing.

However, although striving to explore the right periphery from multiple angles and perspectives and to encompass as many variables and observations as possible, given the complexity of the object under consideration, a number of issues remain unresolved or unaddressed for reasons of time, space and opportunity. First, in spite of aiming to analyse a homogeneous data sample, the corpus from which the analysed conversations are extracted lacked important information concerning the speaker's age, provenance within Mainland China, linguistic background, etc., making it impossible to draw more finer-grained socio-linguistic considerations and generalizations on the use of SFEs. Secondly, a number of expressions contiguous to the ones investigated in this work such as question tags and general extenders such as *shénme de* 什么(的) 'and so on' were unfortunately excluded from the study in order to keep the sample size manageable. Third, a number of variables taken into consideration during the annotation process were also excluded from the facts addressed and commented upon in this thesis. These include the sequential relationship between sentence-final expressions, a more detailed sketch of their syntactic status and prosodic properties, as well as their co-occurrence with sentence-internal or sentence-initial expressions of modality and intersubjectivity.

More importantly, single patterns or forms emerging at the right periphery were overlooked in order to draw higher-level considerations. For the latter purpose, a number of *ad-hoc* categorizations were adopted or adapted, first and foremost the one concerning the variable *pragmatic function*. As frequently happens when dealing with pragmatic annotation of highly contextualised naturalistic productions, despite all due care, the identification and subsequent labelling of each observation remains highly subjective. No less importantly, the annotation process is further biased by the difficulty to assign a single, unambiguous function to each of the expressions, and by the difficulty of analysing the prosodic features of spontaneous, unscripted speech with "noisy" audio recordings.

Moreover, given the formal and contextual complexity characterizing the linguistic data at issue, some of the variables employed in the analysis can only represent a largely simplistic representation of the actual situation.

Despite the shortcomings of which I am fully aware and those I might still not be aware of, this thesis tried to shed light on the multifarious phenomena occurring at the utterance right periphery by adopting a functionalist perspective and a quantitative method. In addition to the findings described above, other generalizations are only tentative and much work remains to be done in order to reach a full understanding of the forces driving the adoption of specific linguistic forms in sentence-final position.

An undoubtedly appealing idea is to compare the data concerning right periphery and left periphery. Since most of the expressions occurring sentence-finally can first and foremost occur sentence-initially or sentence-internally, looking into the (a)symmetries between the two peripheries in the context of the exact same conversations might shed more light on the factors triggering the production of certain expressions in one position rather than another. In fact, as Detges and Waltereit (2014)'s study on French has suggested, not only parenthetical expressions can perform a different function according to the position where they occur, but propositional expressions such as personal pronouns may also differ in the pragmatic effect their occurrence achieves at the two peripheries.

Another possible way to develop the work presented in this thesis further is to focus on the collocational preferences of specific expressions occurring in the right periphery. In fact, since this thesis focused on the co-occurrence of (macro-)types of sentence-final expressions and a number of other dimensions of evaluation, broadly intended, specific collocations were overlooked. Nonetheless, not only could the collocational analysis lead to a better understanding of the functions performed by sentence-final expressions, but a comparative analysis of their collocational profile at the left and the right periphery might bring about unexpected results.

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