

The interactional functions of *yinwei*-clauses
in Mandarin conversation

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Abstract

This thesis investigates the interactional functions of *yinwei*-clauses in Mandarin conversation. Adopting the methodology of Conversation Analysis and Interactional Linguistics, the present study explores the function of *yinwei*-clause in 11 hours of everyday Mandarin conversational data. *Yinwei*-clauses in the data mainly have three interactional functions: accounts for prior actions, parentheticals providing background information, and opening a storytelling. The last two interactional functions have not been documented in previous studies. A detailed examination of the data shows that when used as accounts for prior actions, *yinwei*-clauses are observed to immediately follow and account for two types of actions: disagreement and assertion. When used as parenthetical, *yinwei*-clauses occur in two kinds of sequential environments: in the middle of an ongoing turn-constructual unit (TCU), and between TCUs in a multi-unit turn. As a parenthetical, the *yinwei*-clause provides background information for the speaker's prior talk. At the possible completion of the parenthetical, the speaker usually deploys repetition and conjunctions to resume or continue the utterance prior to the *yinwei*-clause. The *yinwei*-clause also can be used to open a storytelling in the middle of a speaker's turn. This study contributes to our understanding of the interactional functions of *yinwei*-clauses in everyday Mandarin conversation.

Key words: *yinwei*-clauses; interactional functions; Conversation Analysis; Interactional Linguistics; Mandarin Conversation

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Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1. *Yinwei* in Mandarin conversation

Yinwei means *because* when translated into English. In *Xiandai Hanyu Babai Ci* ‘Eight Hundred Words in Modern Chinese’ (Lü 1980:622-623), *yinwei* has two usages. It can be used as preposition (*yinwei* + NP), or conjunction (*yinwei* + clause). These two different usages are demonstrated by the following examples. The first example shows *yinwei* as preposition and the last two examples illustrate *yinwei* as conjunction.

(1) (Lü 1980:622)

小田 因为 这件事 还 受到 了表 扬.

xiaotian yinwei zhejian shi hai shoudao le biaoyang

litte tian because this CL event also get PFV praise

‘Little Tian was praised because of this event.’

In example (1) *yinwei* is used as preposition. *Yinwei* + NP (because of + NP) can be put either before or after the subject. In this example, *yinwei* + NP (*zhejian shi* ‘this event’) is placed after the subject *xiao Tian* (Little Tian).

(2) (Lü 1980:623)

因为 治疗 及时 所以 他 的 伤 很 快 就 好 了

yinwei zhiliao ji shi suoyi ta de shang hen kuai jiu hao le

because cure timely so 3SG POSS injury very quick just good PFV

‘Because cured in a timely manner, he recovered from injury quickly.’

(3) 昨 天 我 没 去 找 你 因 为 有 别 的 事

zuotian wo mei qu zhao ni yinwei you bie de shi

yesterday I NEG go find you because have other POSS thing

‘I didn’t go to find you yesterday, because I have some other things to do.’

In the second usage, *yinwei* is used as conjunction that introduces the clause of reason. The *yinwei*-clause can be positioned either before or after its associated main clause. In example (2), the *yinwei*-clause is at the beginning of the sentence offering a reason for its main clause; in example (3), the *yinwei*-clause is positioned after the action it provides a reason for.

This study focuses on the interactional use of *yinwei* as conjunction in Mandarin conversation.

1.2 Research questions

So far most research has focused on the positioning of *yinwei*-clauses in relation to the main clause. Traditional grammar describes that *yinwei*-clauses at the beginning are canonical in Mandarin unless they are an afterthought (Chao, 1968: 113; Li & Thompson, 1981). Based on

Mandarin spoken data, Biq (1995), Wang (2002, 2006), Song & Tao (2008), Diessel & Katja (2011) have shown that post-positioning of *yinwei*-clauses are dominant in Mandarin spoken discourse. Song & Tao (2008) also compare the post-positioned *yinwei*-clauses in Mandarin conversation with *because*-clauses in English conversation and discover similarities in their usages. However, most of the previous studies focus on the usage of *yinwei*-clauses in expressing reason or cause from a syntactic perspective but have not looked at the interaction. Although some have addressed the function of *yinwei* (Song & Tong 2008; Su 2002; Wang 2002, 2006; Biq 1995), few of them have systematically examined the function of *yinwei*-clauses in Mandarin conversation. Based on previous research, this study intends to explore the interactional functions of *yinwei* and how *yinwei* is used to accomplish interactional tasks. This research is significant because the interactional functions of *yinwei*-clauses have never been systematically explored. Therefore, a systematical examination of the interactional functions of *yinwei*-clauses in this study will contribute to our better understanding of *yinwei*-clauses in Mandarin face-to-face conversation.

1.3 Organization of the thesis

This thesis is composed of 5 chapters. This chapter introduces *yinwei* in Mandarin conversation and the research questions of the study. Chapter 2 reviews the relevant studies of *yinwei*-clauses in Mandarin. Chapter 3 offers an overview of the data, transcription system and methodology adopted in this study. Chapter 4 examines the interactional functions of *yinwei*-clauses. Chapter 5 summarizes the major findings in this study.

Chapter 2 Literature review

This chapter provides an overview of the previous research on *yinwei*-clauses in Mandarin.

Section 2.1 outlines the research on *yinwei*-clauses from the traditional grammar perspective.

Section 2.2 discusses *yinwei*-clauses in Mandarin spoken discourse. Section 2.3 summarizes the discussions in this chapter.

2.1 *Yinwei*-clauses in Mandarin

Yinwei is a conjunction that introduces the clause of logical reason or cause (Lü 1980: 623).

Traditional grammar describes that *yinwei*-clauses at the beginning of a sentence is canonical in Mandarin unless they are an afterthought (Chao, 1968: 113; Li & Thompson, 1981). In Chao (1968:113), he claims that people usually use *yinwei...suoyi* (because...so) clause to provide reason, and the *yinwei*-clause cannot be put in the post position unless it is an afterthought. If the *yinwei*-clause is an afterthought, the beginning of the *yinwei*-clause is always produced quickly. Kirkpatrick (1993) and Young (1982,1994) point out that Chinese speakers tend to start off their exposition by producing a series of causes, reasons, evidences, motivations, or justifications, but wait till the end to reveal what all these are arguing for. The main point is often not presented early to let the hearer grasp the idea. Young (1982, 1994) claims that the use of the connector pair, *because* and *so*, appears to play an important role in discourse sequencing and management. She further argues that speakers of Chinese tend to place causes and reasons before the main argument. Young (1994) does acknowledge the other possibility, i.e., the “main point before

reason” pattern, but she nonetheless claims that the “reason before main point” sequence is canonical in Chinese. Kirkpatrick (1993) focuses on how Chinese speakers present their main points and supporting material in Mandarin. He finds that Chinese speakers prefer to present material supporting the main point before they explicitly deliver that point, so reason-preceding-main point is the preferred order in Chinese.

2.2 *Yinwei*-clauses in Mandarin spoken discourse

“Since traditional studies of *yinwei*-clauses lack corpus-based investigation of its actual use, descriptions of *yinwei*-clauses tend to be based on the individual linguist’s impressions and generalizations, which in turn tend to be biased by the written language” (Biq 1995:50). Thus many linguists begin to focus on its use in daily conversational data (e.g., Biq 1995; Tsai 1996; Su 2002; Wang 2002, 2006; Song & Tao 2008). These conversational data-driven empirical studies have mainly explored two main aspects of the use of *yinwei*: its position in relation to the main clause (Section 2.2.1), and its function in Mandarin spoken discourse (Section 2.2.2).

2.2.1 Positioning of *yinwei*-clauses

So far most research of *yinwei* in spoken discourse has focused on the positioning of *yinwei*-clauses in relation to the result clause. Biq (1995), Tsai (1996), Su (2002), and Wang (2002, 2006) suggest that unlike other types of adverbial clauses, causal clauses do not always precede their main clauses in Chinese spoken discourse in the same way. Song & Tao (2008) have also shown that post-positioning of *yinwei*-clauses are dominant in Mandarin spoken discourse.

Based on the conversation data and press reportage data, Biq (1995:55) finds that the “main point before reason” order (i.e., post-positioning of *yinwei*-clauses) is the preferred sequencing in conversation data and is at least as popular as the “reason before main point” order, if not more, in press reportage data. She suggests that it is erroneous to assume that the “*yinwei* reason before main point” order is the canonical causal sequence. Similarly, based on an examination of adverbial clauses in a Chinese corpus, Tsai (1996) finds that causal clauses can be both pre-positioned and post-positioned in relation to their main clauses. She concludes that the argument that adverbial clauses should be considered topics and precede main clauses does not always hold true for causal clauses.

Wang (2002, 2006) also suggests that the placement of causal clauses is quite different from that of other types of adverbial clauses. In her spoken data, the post-positioned causal clauses outnumber the pre-positioned ones; but in the written data, the pre-positioned and post-positioned causal clauses are more or less evenly distributed.

Song & Tao (2008) also claim that post-positioned *yinwei*-clauses are dominant in both Mandarin conversation data and written data.

The data in this research supports Biq (1995), Tsai (1996), Su (2002) and Song & Tao (2008)’s conclusion that post-positioning of *yinwei*-clauses are dominant in Mandarin conversation. The specific findings of this study will be reported in Chapter 4.

2.2.2 Function of *yinwei*-clauses

Whereas most previous research mainly focuses on the positioning of *yinwei*-clauses, the function of *yinwei*-clauses in Mandarin spoken discourse has only been briefly addressed in a

few studies. Biq (1995) documents five functions of *yinwei*-clauses. The first type of the *yinwei*-clause is used to mark “ideationally causal relation”. Other four functions are about the *yinwei*-clause as elaboration, discourse reflexive device, justification for request/question and topic resumption. She argues that, functionally, *yinwei* is not always used to preface a stretch of talk that is ideationally related to the prior talk as the reason, cause, motivation, or justification of whatever is said in that prior talk. In other words, the link that *yinwei* establishes between two stretches of talk may not be directly concerned with the content of talk. Rather, the link may be concerned with the discourse structure in which the talk is situated. But Biq (1995) has only listed these functions without discussing them in detail. Su’s (2002) study of Chinese connectives shows that *yinwei* can be used to provide further explanation to prior talk. The speaker also employs *yinwei* to hold the floor. Wang (2006) presents three functions of *yinwei*-clauses in her data. Firstly, *yinwei* is commonly used as an interactive device which signals that the speaker intends to further elaborate on a prior statement. Secondly, *yinwei*-clauses can be employed as a means to provide an account for the dispreferred response by the speaker. Finally, the *yinwei*-clause serves as an account for a question or an added explanation to the speaker’s prior answer.

Song & Tao (2008) conduct comparative study of *yinwei*-clauses in Mandarin and *because*-clause in English, and discover similarities in their usage. First, they report that post-positioning of *yinwei*-clauses occur more frequently in both Mandarin conversation data and written data. Second, they find that, similar to English, preference organization (see Levinson 1983:333-345; Pomerantz 1984) can also be applied to Mandarin conversation. *Yinwei*-clauses serve as accounts for dispreferred response and some sensitive first actions such as assertions, requests, reproaches, and negative assessments. Song & Tao (2008) further mention that the difference between the

use of because-clauses and *yinwei*-clauses in English and Mandarin conversation is that *yinwei*-clauses can be deployed in ‘preferred’ context. That is, participants may use *yinwei*-clauses to show their understanding of the speaker’s prior turn, which has also been mentioned in Couper-Kuhlen’s (2011) study of because-clauses in English conversation.

The previous research has made an important contribution to our understanding of the function of *yinwei*-clauses in Mandarin spoken discourse. However, most of them have mainly focused on the position of *yinwei*-clauses, and its interactional function has not been systematically explored. This study intends to fill this gap by exploring the interactional function of *yinwei*-clauses in a systematic way in everyday Mandarin conversation.

2.3 Summary

This chapter introduced *yinwei*-clauses from a traditional grammar perspective and discussed the studies of *yinwei*-clauses in Mandarin spoken discourse. In the next chapter, we will look at the methodology adopted in this study.

Chapter 3 Methodology

3.1 The Data

The data for this study consist of 11 hours of audio and video recordings of everyday face-to-face Mandarin conversation collected at University of Alberta. There are 26 participants in total, including 13 females and 13 males. An advertisement was posted on campus to recruit the participants. The first 26 participants who have contacted me were recruited as participants in the study. They are undergraduate and graduate students from the same university. All the participants are Chinese native speakers from mainland China and have stayed in Canada more than a year. Their ages range from twenties to thirties. The participants in each conversation are friends or at least acquaintances who have known one another before the recording. There are 9 conversations in total. The type of constellations of the participants include dyads (three) and multiparty conversations (including four triads, and two quartet). Different settings, including lunch conversations, tea conversations, cooking, chit-chatting, playing games and project discussion, are selected to ensure that the result is not context-specific. Two cameras at different angles and two audio recorders are used to record each conversation. Speakers' visual body movements are clearly captured by the cameras, and their voices were recored by the audio recorders. The researcher was not present during the recording. All the data used in this study are transcribed by the researcher.

3.2 Data transcription

Three transcription systems are commonly used in transcribing conversational data: Jefferson's Conversation Analysis transcription system (Jefferson, 1984), Du Bois et al.'s transcription system of spoken discourse (Du Bois et al., 1993), and GAT-2 (Gesprächsanalytisches Transkriptionssystem 2) transcription system in interactional linguistics (Selting et al., 2009). The conversations in this study were transcribed according to GAT-2 (Selting et al., 2009) with modifications adapted to Mandarin. GAT-2 is "a transcription system for notating, first and foremost, the wording and prosody of natural everyday talk-in-interaction" (Couper-Kuhlen and Barth-Weingarten, 2011:2). By using this system, interactional phenomena such as overlap and laughter can be transcribed (Couper-Kuhlen and Barth-Weingarten, 2011:3). Thus, GAT-2 transcription system is used in the current study. Transcription symbols are provided in the Appendix. The lines in the transcripts are organized based on intonation units. Intonation unit is defined as "a stretch of utterance produced under a single coherent intonation contour" (Du Bois et al., 1993:47; Tao, 1996:35; Li, 2014:72). In some cases where an intonation unit cannot be put in one line due to limited space, it will be divided into two lines. The segmentation of lines and the transcription symbols are exemplified as follows:

01 我 这 是 我 我 记 具体 的 记 不 清楚 了.

wo zhe shi wo wo ji juti de ji bu qingchu le

I this be I I remember detail ASSC remember NEG clear PRT

‘I can’t remember clearly in detail.’

02 因为 有 一 次 去 大使馆;

yinwei you yi ci qu dashiguan

because have one time go embassy

‘Because once I went to the embassy,’

03 那 个 常 龙 远 在 那 儿 做 一 个 讲 座.

na ge Chang Longyuan zai naer zuo yi ge jiangzuo

that CL Chang Longyuan at there do one CL lecture

‘Chang Longyuan gave a lecture there.’

The data is presented in a four-line format. The first line is Chinese characters; the second line provides *pinyin* for each corresponding character; the third line presents English gloss for each Chinese character; and the fourth line is free English translation.

3.3 Research Methodology

The methodologies used in this study include Conversation Analysis (CA) and Interactional Linguistics (IL). Conversation analysis focuses on the sequences organization and how sequences of actions are generated. Interactional linguistics is used to examine how linguistic

structure are shaped by interaction and how interactional practices are formed through some particular linguistic structures.

3.3.1 Conversation analysis

Conversation analysis is an approach to the study of talk in interaction. CA was developed by Harvey Sacks in collaboration with Emanuel Schegloff and Gail Jefferson. “Principally, CA aims to discover how participants understand and respond to one another in their turns at talk, with a central focus on how sequences of actions are generated. It seeks to uncover the organization of talk from the perspective of how the participants display for one another their understanding of ‘what is going on’.” (Hutchby and Wooffitt 2008:12). As Schegloff and Sacks put it in an early summary:

“We have proceeded under the assumption (an assumption borne out by our research) that in so far as the materials we worked with exhibited orderliness, they did so not only to us, indeed not in the first place for us, but for the co-participants who had produced them. If the materials ... were orderly, they were so because they had been methodically produced by members of society for one another, and it was a feature of the conversations we treated as data that they were produced so as to allow the display by the co-participants to each other of their orderliness, and to allow the participants to display to one another their analysis, appreciation and use of that orderliness.”

(Schegloff and Sacks, 1973:290)

“This is what underlies the focus on sequences: throughout the course of a conversation or other bout of talk-in-interaction, speakers display in their sequentially ‘next’ turns an understanding of what the ‘prior’ turn was about. It is described as a *next-turn proof procedure*, and it is the most

basic tool used in CA to ensure that analyses explicate the orderly properties of talk as oriented to accomplishments of participants, rather than being based merely on the assumptions of the analyst.” (Hutchby & Wooffitt 2008:13) The ‘next turn proof procedure’ will also be employed in this study.

3.3.2 Interactional linguistics

Interactional Linguistics is the other methodology adopted in this study. Interactional Linguistics takes an interdisciplinary and cross-linguistic perspective on language. It is developed from the convergence of discourse functional linguistics, conversation analysis and anthropological linguistics. Its goal is to gain a better understanding of “how languages are shaped by interaction and how interactional practices are moulded through specific languages” (Coupler-Kuhlen & Seliting 2001:3). The specific research questions for interactional linguistics are (Coupler-Kuhlen & Seliting 2001):

“what linguistic resources are used to articulate particular conversational structures and fulfil interactional functions? And what interactional function or conversational structure is furthered by particular linguistic forms and ways of using them?”

(Coupler-Kuhlen & Seliting 2001:3)

Interactional linguistics can help us have a clear observation of how *yinwei*-clauses are shaped by interaction and how interactional functions fulfilled through *yinwei*-clauses. Based on the methodologies of Conversation Analysis and Interactional Linguistics, this study investigates the

interactional functions of *yinwei*-clauses in turn organization in Mandarin face-to-face conversation.

3.4 Summary

This chapter introduced the data used for this study and discussed the data transcription method. The methodology of Conversation Analysis and Interactional Linguistics described in this chapter is used in the empirical analyses in the following chapter.

Chapter 4 The interactional functions of *yinwei*-clauses

This chapter reports on my findings of the interactional functions of *yinwei*-clauses in my data. An examination of the data shows that most *yinwei*-clauses in Mandarin conversation are used to account for some prior actions. But *yinwei*-clauses also have other interactional functions, such as being used as parenthetical to provide background information, opening a telling, and turn holding. Because there is only one instance of the ‘turn-holding’ use of *yinwei*, only the first three interactional uses will be reported in this paper. Below is the summary of the qualitative analyses of the data. The detailed accounts of the analyses will follow.

Table 1. An overview of the interactional functions of *yinwei*-clauses in the data

<i>yinwei</i> -clause	occurrence	percentage
accounts for previous actions	238	89.81%
parenthetical insertion	15	5.66%
open a storytelling	6	2.26%
turn holding	1	0.38%
others	5	1.89%

Total

265

100%

4.1 *Yinwei*-clauses as accounts for speakers' prior actions

Yinwei-clauses is usually used as an account for certain types of actions, such as disagreements, assertions, assessments, rejections etc. In the data, *yinwei*-clauses are often used as accounts for two types of actions: disagreement and assertion.

4.1.1 Accounts for disagreement

In the data, the *yinwei*-clause serves as a device to provide an account for a disagreement against a claim made by a speaker in an immediately preceding turn. When a speaker performs the action of asserting and a recipient disagrees, the recipient often employs the *yinwei*-clause to provide an account for his disagreement of the speaker's assertion.

In the following extracts, the *yinwei*-clause is produced by a recipient to provide an account for a disagreement against a claim made by a speaker in an immediately prior turn. Extract 1 is taken from a conversation between three friends Bai, Hei, and Lu. They are discussing why some companies' employees will choose first class flights and luxury hotels when they go on business trips.

Extract 1 (First class and luxury hotels)

01 Bai: 有些 公司 啊,

youxie gongsi a

some company PRT

‘Some companies,’

02 他们 那些 出差 的 人员 每 坐 飞机 头等 舱-

tamen naxie chuchai de ren yuan mei zuo feiji toudeng cang

they those official business ASSC staff every take plane first-class cabins

‘their employees take first class flights when they go on business trips,’

03 然后 什么 几 星 级 的 宾馆 就 这 种 嗯 [这是;

ranhou shenme ji xing ji de bingguann jiu zhe zhong en [zhe shi

then what several star level ASSC hotel just this kind um [this is

‘and stay in luxury hotels.’

04 Hei: [嗯;

[en

[mm

‘Mm.’

05 Bai: 不 能 如 果 住 住 得 低 了 或 是 飞 机 坐 的 舱 舱 等 (.) 低 了 .

buneng ruguo zhu zhu de di le huoshi feiji zuo de cang cang deng (.) di le

NEG can if live live CSC low PRT or plane take ASSC cabin cabin (.) low PRT

‘If employees stay in standard hotels or take economy flights,’

06 这 是 影 响 公 司 形 象 的 嘛 ;

zhe shi yingxiang gongsi xingxiang de ma

this be influence company image PRT PRT

‘it will affect the company’s image.’

07 Hei: 那 不 是 公 司 形 象 ;

na bu shi gongsi xingxiang

that NEG be company image

‘That’s not about the company’s image,’

08 → 因为 我们 公司 是 两 个 小时 以内 都 是 经济 舱-

yinwei women gongsi shi liang ge xiaoshi yinei dou shi jingji cang

because our company be two CL hour within all be economy cabin

‘because our company (requires employees to) take economy class for the flights that are less than two hours.’

09 然后 超过 两 个 小 小时 就是:[商务 [或者 什么 的 嗯.

ranhou chaoguo liang ge xiao xiaoshi jiu shi:[shangwu [huozhe shenme de en

then more than two CL hour just be:[business [or what PRT PRT

‘And if it’s more than two hours it’ll be business (class), or something like that.’

10 Bai: [头等 舱 嗯 商 嗯.

[toudeng cang en shang en

[first-class cabin uh business uh

‘First-class, uh, business class.’

11 Lu:

[商务 舱;

[*shangwu cang*

[business class

‘Business class.’

From line 1 to line 3, Bai mentions that some companies’ employees will take first class and stay in luxury hotels when they are on business trips. After Hei’s acknowledgement *en* ‘Mm’ (line 4), Bai claims that if the employees stay in standard hotels or take economy class, it will affect the company’s image (lines 5 to 6). After the claim, agreeing and affiliative responses from recipients are preferred (Sidnell and Stiver 2012). However, Hei displays her disagreement, a dispreferred response (Heritage 1984; Pomerantz 1984) to Bai’s claim in line 7. She employs *yinwei* to introduce an account for her disagreement by stating that it is not about the company’s image but rather the duration of the flight (lines 8 to 9).

This example shows that the *yinwei*-clause is used directly after a recipient’s disagreement to provide an account for the dispreferred response. Extract 2 is another example in which the *yinwei*-clause is used to serve the same function.

Extract 2 (Chinese Card Game)

‘What is this?’

'Zhushang Biansanlun'⁴ is Ace-Ace-King.'

⁴ *Zhushang Biansanlun* is a hand that can be played in the game that denotes Ace-Ace-King.

03 Zha: [边 三 轮.
 [bian san lun
 [bian san lun
 ‘*Biansanlun*⁵.’

04 A (.) AAK KKA 都 可以 呀,
 jian(.) jianjianK KKAjian dou keyi ya
 ace(.) ace ace king king king ace all ok PRT
 ‘Both Ace-Ace-King and King-King-Ace are okay.’

05 Yan: 不 行.
 bu xing
 NEG way
 ‘No.’

06 → 因为 如果 如果 你 出 了 如果 你 出 了 这 个 这 个 A-
 yinwei ruguo ruguo ni chu le ruguo ni chu le zhe ge zhe ge jian
 because if if you out PFV if you out PFV this CL this CL ace
 ‘Because if you play this Ace,’

⁵ *Biansanlun* is an abbreviation of *Zhushang Biansanlun*.

- 07 别人 出 个 别 的;
bieren chu ge bie de
others out CL another ASSC
‘and someone else plays another card’
- 08 然后 你 这 一对 K 什 么 的;
ranhou ni zhe yidui K shenme de
then you this one pair ing what PRT
‘Then this pair of Kings you have’
- 09 你 你 这 样 子 的 话 不 能 保证 你 是 最 大 的 呀 可 是.
ni ni zheyangzi de hua bu neng baozheng ni shi zuida de ya keshi
you you this way if NEG can ensure you be biggest ASSC PRT but
‘cannot ensure that your hand is the best one if you play it like this (King-King-Ace).’

In line 1, Cha challenges the hand that Zha played (KKA) with a question ‘What is this’. Yan then turns to Zha and asserts that ‘*Zhushang Biansanlun* is Ace-Ace-King’ (line 2) implying that Zha played the the wrong hand. Zha explains that *Biansanlun* is both AAK and KKA (line 4). Yan immediately disagrees with Zha with *buxing* ‘No’ (line 5). Yan’s disagreement is a dispreferred response to Zha’s claim. She immediately produces the *yinwei*-clause to provide an account for her disagreement that *Biansanlun* is AAK, not KKA (lines 7 to 9).

Once again this example shows that the *yinwei*-clause is used by the recipient to produce an account for a disagreement against a claim made by the speaker.

It can be seen from Extract 1 and Extract 2 that the *yinwei*-clause is employed to provide an account for a recipient's disagreement. The disagreement is a dispreferred response to the speaker's prior claim, and the recipient usually provides accounts for his or her disagreement, introduced by *yinwei*.

4.1.2 Accounts for assertion

Making an assertion or a claim is a common action that people undertake in conversation. My data show that the *yinwei*-clause is used to account for the speaker's previous assertion. In this section we will examine two extracts in the data where the *yinwei*-clause is used to account for a speaker's previous assertion.

Extract 3 is taken from a conversation between Min, Per, and Li who are comparing the room layout of Li's apartment with their own.

Extract 3 (Dorm)

01 Per: 我 这 边 整 个 没 插 座;

wo zhe bian zheng ge mei chazuo

I this side whole CL NEG socket

'I have no electric sockets on this side.'

(18 lines omitted regarding the discussion about the different position of the electric sockets, tables and beds in their rooms.)

19 Min: 那 我 那 个 是 不 是 也 应 该 那 样,

na wo na ge shi bu shi ye yinggai na yang

then my that CL be NEG be also should that

‘Whether that (thing) (in my room) is placed like that?’

20 我 不 知 道.

wo bu zhidao

I NEG know

‘I don’t know.’

21 因 为 我 那 边 没 用 过.

yinwei wo na bian mei yong guo

because I that side NEG use PFV

‘Because I didn’t use that side’

22 我 那 边 床-;

wo na bian chuang-

I that side bed-

‘That side in my room has the bed’

23 我 这 是 柜 子 [然 后 这 是 床.

wo zhe shi guizi [ranhou zhe shi chuang

I this be cabinet [then this be bed

‘(In my room) this is where the cabinet goes, and this is where the bed goes.’

24 Per: [哦 那 个 是 那 样 的.]

[o na ge shi nayang de

[oh that CL be that way PRT

‘Oh. That is placed like this.’

25 Li: 你肯定也是这边有;

ni kending ye shi zhe bian you

you must also be this side have

‘Your room definitely has it on this side’

26 → [因为 咱俩 是 一个 走 向 的 屋子.

[yinwei zanlia shi yi ge zouxiang de wuzi

[because we be same trend PRT room

‘Because our rooms are the same style.’

27 Per: [对 对 对 对 嗯.]

[*dui dui dui dui en*

[right right right right en

‘Right, right, right, right. Mm.’

28 Min: 嗯 有 可能.

en you keneng

mm have maybe

‘Mm, it might be.’

In line 01, Per points out that the electric sockets in her room are in a different layout with those in Li’s room. Min is uncertain whether the electric sockets are placed on the same wall as the ones in Li’s room (lines 19 to 21). After Min’s report on the position of the furniture in his room (lines 22 to 23), Li asserts that the electric sockets in Min’s room are definitely on the same wall as those in her room (line 25). The word *kending* ‘definitely’ in her turn shows a highly assertive tone (An & Ni 2002:378). Strong assertion is usually accountable and makes relevant an account. Li provides an account introduced by *yinwei* (line 26) stating that Min’s room has the same design as hers. The four *duis* ‘right’ displays Per’s agreement with Li’s assertion. Min also partially agrees with Li’s assertion in line 28.

That the *yinwei*-clause provides an account for assertion can also be observed in the following example. In Extract 4 Nan, Lin, Che, and Shi are talking about why males always find younger females more attractive.

Extract 4 (Male and Female)

01 Lin: 男 生 为什么 总是 喜欢 比 自己 小 的,
nansheng weishenme zongshi xihuan bi ziji xiao de
male why always like more self young PRT
'Why do males always like the younger females?'

(16 lines omitted regarding the discussion about human nature.)

18 Nan: 人类 之前 是 一 种 群居 的 物种 嘛.
renlei zhiqian shi yizhong qunju de wuzhong ma
human before be one kind sociable ASSC specie PRT
'Before, human beings are a sociable species.'

19 群居 物种 他 是 这样 的;
qunju wuzhong ta shi zhe yang de
sociable species 3SG be this kind PRT
'Sociable species are like this.'

20 永 远 会 喜欢 那个 年轻 的;
yong yuan hui xihuan nage nianqing de
always will like that CL young PRT
'(They) always like the younger females.'

21 → 因为 年轻 的 雌性 生殖力 强,
yinwei nianqing de cixing shengzhili qiang
because younger ASSC femina fertility strong
‘Because younger females have better fertility.’

22 Lin: 对 [好 好.
dui [hao hao
right [ok ok
‘Right, ok ok.’

23 Nan: [繁殖 力 强,
[fanzhi li qiang
[fertility strong
‘Good fertility.’

24 Lin: [那 我 我 承 认 你是-;
[na wo wo chengren ni shi-
[then I I admit you be-
‘Then I admit you are...’

25 Nan: [请 听 我 请 听 我 说 完.
[qing ting wo qing ting wo shuo wan
[please listen I please listen I say finish

‘Please let me finish my words.’

26 那 雌性 为什么 喜欢-

na cixing weishenme xihuan

then femina why like

‘Then why females like...’

27 就是 女性 为什么 说 喜欢 就是 成熟 的 呢-

jiu shi nǚxing weishenme shuo xihuan jiushi chengshu de ne

just be female why say like just be mature ASSC PRT

‘Why do females like mature males?’

At the beginning of the sequence, Lin raises a question ‘Why do males always like younger females’ (line 1)? Nan answers Lin’s question from the perspective of human nature (omitted lines). In line 18, Nan mentions that ‘human beings are a sociable species’. The lexico-syntactic structure *shi zheyang de* ‘...is like this’ (line 19) indicates that Nan will do a further explanation about ‘sociable species’ (Guo 2012; Wang 2014). In his subsequent utterance, Nan makes an assertion that ‘sociable species always like the younger female’ (line 20). The word *yongyuan* ‘always’ makes Nan’s utterance a strong assertion (An & Ni 2002:632). In line 21, through the *yinwei*-clause, Nan provides an account for his prior assertion that younger females have better fertility. After Lin’s agreement (line 22), they continue another discussion about why females like mature males (lines 26 to 27).

The previous extracts have shown that the *yinwei*-clause is used to provide an account for the speaker's prior assertion. When the speaker makes an assertion, especially a strong assertion, he or she will give an immediate account for that action.

4.2 *Yinwei*-clauses as parentheticals to provide background information

In Section 4.1, I presented one interactional use of *yinwei*-clauses in providing accounts for the speaker's prior action. Besides accounts for prior actions, *yinwei*-clauses in my data also perform some other functions which have not been documented in previous studies. For example, *yinwei*-clauses can be used as parentheticals to provide background information and to open a storytelling. This section explores the interactional function of *yinwei*-clauses as parentheticals, and Section 4.3 will discuss the function of *yinwei*-clauses in opening a storytelling.

4.2.1 Parenthetical insertion

Parenthetical insertions are constructions which temporarily suspend the progression of another syntactic construction or wider action sequence (Duvallon & Routarinne, 2005). My data show that *yinwei*-clauses can also be used as parentheticals. When speakers begin a turn, they will insert the *yinwei*-clause into the turn at some point, and then return to it after the parenthetical. Parentheticals introduced by *yinwei* serve to provide background information.

My data show that *yinwei*-clauses as parentheticals occur in two different kinds of sequential environments: (i) *yinwei*-clauses are inserted within an ongoing TCU; (ii) *yinwei*-clauses are

inserted between TCUs in a multi-unit turn. *Yinwei*-clauses as parentheticals providing background information will be examined in the following three extracts. Whereas Extract 5 and Extract 6 show *yinwei*-clauses inserted within an ongoing TCU, Extract 7 demonstrates the *yinwei*-clause inserted between TCUs in a multi-unit turn.

Extract 5 is a conversation between two friends Min and Per. They are discussing the famous magician Liu Qian and his magic shows.

Extract 5 (Magic)

01 Per: 反正 他 我知道 在 北京 卫视 老 看到 他-

fanzheng ta wo zhidao zai beijing weishi lao kandao ta

anyway 3SG I know at Beijing TV always see 3SG

‘Anyway, I always see him (Liu Qian) on Beijing TV,’

02 就 中午 那 段 时间-

jiu zhongwu nan duan shijian

just noon that period time

‘during lunch time.’

03 他 [老 走在大街上大街上 给 [给 群众 变 魔术;

ta [lao zou zai dajie shang dajie shang gei [gei qunzhong bian moshu

3SG[always walk in the street street give [give audience show magic

‘He always shows magic to the audience in the street.’

04 Min: [北京 卫视?

[beijing weishi

[beijing TV

‘Beijing TV?’

05 [哦哦对对 那些 街头 街头 魔术 那个;

[o o dui dui naxie jietou jietou moshu nage

[oh oh right right those street street magic that CL

‘Oh yeah, right, that street magic.’

06 是有的 特 神奇.

shi youde te shenqi

Right some very magic

‘Right, some magic is very miraculous.’

07 真的 真的 吓 吓 吓 人 那 种 呵 (sniff);

zhende zhende xia xia xia ren na zhong he (sniff)

really really scary scary scary that kind PRT (sniff)

‘Really scary.’

08 他 他 在 台 湾 那 边 做 得 特 别 多 嘛.

ta ta zai tai wan na bian zuo de te bie duo ma

he he at Tai wan there do CSC very much PRT

‘He does a lot of this kind of magic in Taiwan.’

09 然 后 在 台 湾 就 那 个: 就 是(.) 那 个 现 场 的 气 氛-

ranhou zai Tai wan jiu na ge: jiu shi(.) na ge xianchang de qifen

then at Tai wan just that CL just be(.) that CL on-site ASSC atmosphere

‘The atmosphere in Taiwan,’

10 → 因为 台 湾 人 比较 信 鬼 嘛.

yinwei Tai wan ren bijiao xin gui ma

because Taiwanese fairly believe ghost PRT

‘because Taiwanese believe in superstition.’

11 Per: 嗯.

en

hm

‘Hm.’

12 Min: 现场 气氛 烘托 得 真 真 真的 跟 就是 出现 灵异 现象 似的;

xianchang qifen hongtuo de zhen zhen zhen de gen jiu shi chuxian lingyi xianxiang

shide

spot atmosphere contrast CSC really really really as just be emerge supernatural
phenomenon

‘The atmosphere is like some supernatural phenomenon occurred.’

13 比 如 说 他 拿 一 个 可 乐 瓶 捏 扁 了 的 ；

bi ru shuo ta na yi ge ke le ping nie bian le de

for example he take one CL bottle pinch flat PFV PRT

‘For example, he takes a pinched flat cola bottle,’

From line 1 to line 7, Per and Min are talking about the street magic performed by Liu Qian on Beijing TV. In line 8, Min says that Liu Qian performs a lot of this kind of magic in Taiwan. In his following turn (line 9), he continues by discussing *xianchang de qifen* ‘the atmosphere’ of the magic show. A subject (in this case, ‘the atmosphere’) has a ‘doing’ or ‘being’ relationship with the verb (predicate) in the sentence (Li & Thomson 1981). However, before producing the predicate, Min disrupts his ongoing TCU with a parenthetical introduced by *yinwei* ‘because Taiwanese believe in superstition’ (line 10). Here, the *yinwei*-clause serves as a parenthetical insertion. It offers background information that Taiwanese believe in superstition, which helps Per have a better understanding of why Liu Qian has so many scary magic performances in Taiwan. After Per’s acknowledgement *en* ‘Mm.’, Min returns to the host TCU by repeating the

subject *xianchang qifen* ‘the atmosphere’ and continuing with the predicate of his prior utterance (line 12).

Extract 6 is another case in point. Prior to the segment, Nan, Lin, Che and Shi are talking about the issue of girls finding a sugar daddy. In this excerpt, Lin gives an example of a famous female star who finds a sponsor.

Extract 6 (Sugar Daddy Issues)

01 Che: 我 们 我 们 无 法 约 束 一 个 人 的 道 德.

women women wufa yueshu yi ge ren de daode

we we can't restrict one CL person ASSC morality

‘We can't restrict one's morality.’

02 她 的 她 这 是 她 自 己 的 问 题.

ta de ta zhe shi ta ziji de wenti.

3SG POSS 3SG this be 3SG self ASSC question

‘This is her own business.’

03 Nan: 嗯 哼.

enheng

uh huh

‘Uh huh.’

04 Che: 然后我是 ::(.) 持中立状态 应该是中 [立的.

ranhou wo shi ::(.) chi zhongli zhuangtai yinggai shi zhong[li de

then I be hold neutral status should be neutral PRT

‘Then I’m going to keep a neutral stance.’

05 Lin: [我也 是.

[*wo ye shi*

[me also be

‘Me

too.’

06 我觉得 就(.) 就(.) 打个比方 像 说-

wo juede jiu(.) jiu(.) da ge bifang xiang shuo

I think just just beat CL instance like say

‘I think, for instance’

07 如果 就(.) 她-

ruguo jiu(.) ta

if just(.) 3SG

‘If she...’

08 这个人 这个 女生 很(.) 意志 还 蛮 坚定 的话;

zhe ge ren zhe ge nüsheng hen(.) yizhi hai man jianding dehua

- this CL person this CL girl very (.) volition still quite firm if
 ‘if this girl has a firm volition,’
- 09 就 好像 范 冰冰-
jiu haoxiang Fan bingbing
 just seem Fan bingbing
 ‘just as Fan Bingbing.’
- 10 我 觉得 她 就 蛮 厉害 的.
wo juede ta jiu man lihais de
 I think 3SG just quite great PRT
 ‘I think she (Fan Bingbing) is very successful.’
- 11 那(.) 她 有 能力 找到 她 的 靠山(0.2)-
na ta you nengli zhaodao ta de kaoshan
 then she have ability find 3SG POSS sponsor
 ‘She has ability to find her sponsor.’
- 12 然后 她 靠着 她 这个 靠山--
ranhou ta kao zhe ta zhe ge kaoshan-
 then 3SG rely DUR 3SG this CL sponsor-
 ‘Then, she relies on this sponsor,’

- 13 她 也 不 是 说 一 直 都 靠 这 个 靠 山-
ta ye bu shi shuo yizhi dou kao zhe ge kaoshan
 3SG also NEG be say always all rely this CL sponsor
 ‘but she doesn’t rely on her sponsor completely.’
- 14 然后(.) 就 (0.5)-;
ranhou jiu (0.5)-
 then just (0.5)-
 ‘Then, just...’
- 15 → 因 为 她 之 前 最 初 的 靠 山 肯 定 是 可 以 养 活 她-;
yinwei ta zhiqian zui chu de kaoshan kending shi keyi yang huo ta
 because 3SG before first ASSC sponsor definite be can support 3SG
 ‘Because her first sponsor is definitely able to support her’
- 16 肯 定 是 没 有 问 题 的.
kending shi mei you wenti de
 must be NEG have problem PRT
 ‘there’s no problem for him to do that.’
- 17 但 是 她 (.) 很 [不 想.
dan shi ta (.) hen [bu xiang
 but 3SG (.) very [NEG want

‘But she doesn’t want to rely on that sponsor all the way.’

18 Shi: [太 少 了 吧.
[*tai shao le ba*
[too few PRT PRT
‘Few people like her’

19 Lin: 嗯.

en

um

‘Huh?’

20 Shi: 我 说 这 个 [自 自 制 力 强 的 人 太 少 了;

wo shuo zhe ge [zi zizhi li qiang de ren tai shao le

I say this CL [self-control ability ASSC people very less PRT

‘I mean there’s few people with strong willpower.’

21 Lin: [我 的 意 思 是 说 对 对.

[*wo de yisi shi shuo dui dui*

[my meaning be say right right

‘Right, right.’

22 我的意思就是说 嗯 有 也 有 例子 嘛.

wode yisi jiu shi shuo en you ye you lizi ma

my meaning just be say mm have also have example PRT

‘I mean (although not too many people can do that), there are still some examples.’

In this extract, Che first expresses his opinion about the issue that girls face when looking for a sugar daddy (lines 1 and 2). After Nan’s continuer *enheng* ‘Uh huh’ (line 3) (Schegloff 1982), Che explicitly articulates his neutral stance towards this issue (line 4). In overlap with the last two syllables of Che’s turn (line 4), Lin’s *wo ye shi* ‘me too’ (line 5) displays her affiliation with Che’s stance. In line 6, the use of the epistemic stance marker *wo jude* ‘I feel/think’ marks that Lin will state her opinion about the event under discussion (Endo 2013). She gives an example about Fan Bingbing (a famous actress in China) in her turn (lines 7 to 13). The temporal conjunction *ranhou* ‘then’ (line 14) after Lin’s self-repair (line 13) indicates the continuation of her turn. However, at this point, Lin halts the ongoing TCU after *jiu* ‘just’ with a cut-off (line 14), making the ongoing TCU syntactically incomplete. Then she inserts a parenthetical in line 15. Here, the *yinwei*-clause functions as the parenthetical providing background information for the recipient’s better understanding of why Lin thinks Fan Bingbing is successful in courting a sugar daddy. At the possible closure of the parenthetical, Lin uses a conjunction *danshi* ‘but’ to tie the subsequent talk back to the TCU before the parenthetical in line 13.

The prior two examples have shown that *yinwei*-clauses can be used as parentheticals. The last excerpt exemplifies that the *yinwei*-clause may be used as parenthetical inserted between TCUs in a multi-unit turn. In Extract 7, Jia, Wei, and Zhi are members of the Chinese graduate student

association. Prior to this segment, they are talking about how to get funding for an event held by their association. Here, Jia is calling a potential sponsor, Dong Moving Company, to get funding support to print the Instructional pamphlet for new students.

Extract 9 (Editor)

15 Jia: 另 外 一 个 保 证 就 是 说 我 们 只 放 你 的.

lingwai yi ge baozheng jiu shi shuo women zhi fang ni de

another one CL promise just be say we just put you POSS

‘In addition, I promise that we just put yours,’

16 就 是 搬 家 的 我 们 只 放 你.

jiu shi ban jia de wo women zhi fang ni

just be move house ASSC I we just put you

‘that is, we just put your advertisement.’

17 就 是 不 会 有 任 何 的 竞 争 在 我 们 这 个 新 生 手 册 里.

jiu shi bu hui you renhe de jingzheng zai women zhe ge xing sheng shouce li

just be NEG can have any ASSC compete at we this CL new student pamphlet in

‘That is to say, there is no competition in this Instructional pamphlet.’

18 然 后 这 个 手 册 呢(.) 还(.) 还 包 括 了 很 多 方 面;

ranhou zhe ge shouce ne(.) hai(.) hai baokuo le hen duo fangmian

then this CL pamphlet PRT(.) also(.) also include PFV very many aspect

‘This pamphlet also includes many aspects.’

19 → 因为 我 是 (.) 也 是 编辑 之 一 嘛.

yinwei wo shi (.) ye shi bianji zhi yi ma

because I be (.) also be editor of one PRT

‘Because I’m also one of the editors of the pamphlet.’

20 然后 我们 都 是 关于 爱 城 (.) 爱(.)

ranhou women dou shi guanyu ai cheng(.) ai (.)

then we all be about ai city (.) ai (.)

‘We are all about,’

埃德蒙顿 的 吃 喝 玩儿 乐 啊-

aidemengdun de chi he wanr le a

Edmonton ASSC eat drink play fun PRT

‘Edmonton’s food, drinks, and entertainment.’

21 衣 食 住 (.) 住 行 (.) 全部 都 有.

yi shi zhu (.) zhu xing (.) quanbu dou you

clothes food live (.) live travel (.) entire all have

‘The basic necessities of life are all included.’

At the beginning of the sequence, Jia tries to persuade the moving company to provide funding to print their pamphlets. In return, they would only put Dong's information in the advertisement section of the pamphlet. Thus there would be no competition (lines 15-17). Then she begins to describe the pamphlet's contents to the sponsor from line 18. The parenthetical 'because I'm also one of the editors of the pamphlet' (line 19) is delivered as an independent TCU in her multi-unit turn. It is placed at a point at which the preceding TCU is possibly complete (line 18). However, the activity implemented in Jia's turn as a whole—a description of the contents of the pamphlet—is not yet complete at this point. Jia's utterance before the parenthetical (line 18 'then this pamphlet also includes many aspects') suggests she will describe what these 'aspects' are in the subsequent talk. However, the *yinwei*-clause as a parenthetical is inserted into Jia's turn after line 18, which provides background information that is relevant to persuade the sponsor. At the completion point of the parenthetical, Jia uses a connector *ranhou* 'then' to resume the description about the 'aspects' in the pamphlet (lines 20-21).

4.2.2 Interim summary

In this section, I have discussed the interactional use of *yinwei*-clauses as parentheticals providing background information. Based on my data, *yinwei*-clauses occur in two different kinds of sequential environments. One is within an ongoing TCU, shown in Extract 5 and Extract 6; and the other is inserted between TCUs in a multi-unit turn, which can be seen in Extract 7. *Yinwei*-clauses as parentheticals render the entire TCU (Extract 5 and Extract 6) or the whole activity (Extract 7) incomplete. As a parenthetical, the *yinwei*-clause serves to provide background information for the previous talk. We have also observed that the utterance prior to

the *yinwei*-clause as parenthetical is resumed or continued afterwards. The resumption usually involves the use of (full or partial) repetition and conjunction words.

4.3 *Yinwei*-clauses in opening a storytelling

In this section, I will discuss another interactional use of *yinwei*-clauses—opening a storytelling. My data show that the speaker employs *yinwei* to open a storytelling in the middle of his/her turn. This function of *yinwei*-clauses can be observed in the following three examples.

Extract 8 is taken from a conversation between a couple Fu and Mao. Prior to this fragment, they discuss good skiing locations in Alberta. In this extract, they are talking about skiing injury.

Extract 8 (Skiing)

78 Fu: 滑雪 还 是 挺 危险 的-

huaxue hai shi ting weixian de

skiing still be very dangerous PRT

‘Skiing is dangerous.’

79 Mao: 是 啊 你 看 那些 那些 经常 有-,

shi a ni kan naxie naxie jingchang you-

be PRT you see those those often have-

‘Yeah, you can see those-’

80 就 是 每 年 冬 天 都 有 人 报 道.

jiu shi mei nian dongtian dou you ren baodao

just be each year winter all have people report

‘That each winter there are reports about’

81 哪 个 明 星 啊 或 者 哪 个 什 么,

na ge mingxing a huozhe na ge shenme

that CL star PRT or that CL what

‘Some stars,’

因 为 滑 雪 死 了.

yinwei huaxue si le

because ski die PRT

‘dying because of skiing.’

(5 lines omitted regarding to the discussion about the reports.)

87 Fu: 欸 我 我 各 种-,

ei wo wo ge zhong-

INTJ I I all kinds-

‘I have all kinds-’

(8 lines omitted regarding to the description about the equipments Fu has when she skiing.)

96 Fu: 我 各 种 [齐全 呵 呵].
wo ge zhong [qiquan he he
I various kinds [complete he he
'I have all kinds of (protective gears). haha.'

97 Mao: [护 膝-
[*hu xi*
[protect knee
'Knee protector.'

98 Fu: 我 估计 我 不 会 受伤-
wo guji wo bu hui shoushang
I estimate I NEG will injure
'I think I won't get injured.'

99 → 因为 [我 有 一 次 受 伤 [最 最 严重.
yinwei [wo you yi ci shoushang [zui zui yanzhong
because [I have one time injure [most most serious
'Because I was once badly injured, '

100 Mao: [恩. [但是 但是 穿 上 以后.
[en [danshi danshi chuan shang yihou
[en [but but waer on after
'uh-huh, but after wearing (them),'

我 觉得 你 都 动 不 [动 不-
wo juede ni dou dong bu [dong bu
I think you even move NEG [move NEG
'I think you can't move anymore.'

101 Fu: [动 不 了 了.
[dong bu liao liao
[move NEG CRS PRT
'Can't move anymore.'

102 Mao: [(laughing)

103 Fu: [(laughing)

104 [我 有 一次 最 严重 的.
[wo you yici zui yanzhong de
[I have once most serious PRT
'I was once badly (injured).'

105 Mao: [完 全 能 能 能 长 20 斤 我 觉得=;

[*wan quan neng neng neng zhang ershi jin wo jue de*=

[completely can can can grow twenty pound I think=

‘(you) will be twenty pounds heavier I think’

106 Fu: =听 我 说 啊,

=*ting wo shuo a*

Listen to me say PRT

‘Listen to me.’

107 我 有 一 次 最 严 重 的 就 是 蹲--

wo you yici zui yanzhong de jiu shi dun

I have once most serious NOM just be crouch

‘I was once badly injured from bending down’

[蹲 了 一 下 嘛.

[*dun le yi xia ma*

[crouch PFV once CL PRT

(I got a shock when I) bent down

(7 lines omitted regarding to the details of Fu’s injury.)

115 从 那 以 后 (.) 就 不 太 敢;

cong ne yihou (.) jiu bu tai gan

from that on (.) just NEG too dare

‘From then on, I don’t dare’

116 不 太 敢 滑 了.

bu tai gan hua le

NEG too dare ski PRT

‘I don’t dare to ski.’

From line 78 to line 86, Fu and Mao are talking about how dangerous skiing is. Fu begins to report that she uses all kinds of protective gears when she skis (lines 87 to 95). After her report, Fu concludes that ‘I reckon I won’t get injured’ (line 98), which shows that Fu’s report may come to a possible completion. In line 99, the *yinwei*-clause seems to start something new, i.e. open a storytelling about Fu’s injury, despite being in the middle of her turn. Here, *you yici* ‘once’ is an entry device of storytelling (Jefferson 1978), and the word *shoushang* ‘injured’ has already appeared in prior talk (line 99). The lexical devices of ‘once’ and the word repetition of *shoushang* ‘injured’ signal that *yinwei* opens a storytelling in line 99. What is interesting here is that, the speaker Fu faces some turn-taking competition and fails two times to continue her storytelling (lines 99 to 101; lines 104 to 105). After a request *tingwo shuo a* ‘Listen to me’ (line 106), Fu finally gets the floor and successfully tells her story from lines 107 to 116.

Extract 9 provides another example where the speaker uses the *yinwei*-clause to start a storytelling in the middle of his turn. In this extract, Min and Per are gossiping about

professor Chang Longyuan and his wife. Prior to this fragment, Min mentions that a lot of male professors are very involved in their research, but still manage to have a harmonious life with their wife. He then mentions that Chang Longyuan is a typical example of this.

Extract 9 (Professor Chang Longyuan)

01 Per: 他 怎么 典型 了 我 还 不 知道 呢-

ta zenme dianxing le wo hai bu zhidao ne

3SG how typical PRT I even NEG know PRT

‘How typical is he?’

02 Min: 常 龙 远 啊 常 龙 远 那 个 常 龙 远,

Chang Longyuan a Chang Longyuan na ge Chang Longyuan

Chang Longyuan PRT Chang Longyuan that CL Chang Longyuan

‘Chang Longyuan...’

03 老婆 不 是 那 个 哪 儿 做 生 意 的 吧;

laopo bu shi na ge naer zuo shengyi de ba

wife NEG be that CL where do business PRT PRT

‘(his) wife does business somewhere....’

04 对 阿 是 不 是- 是 什 么 商 务 的 还 是 哪 儿 的-

dui a shi bu shi- shi shenme shangwu de haishi naer de

right PRT be NEG be- be some business ASSC or where PRT

‘(She) is in the Commerce (Department).’

05 反正 就很 很 有 能耐 的 一 女的;

fanzheng jiu hen hen you nengnai de yi nü de

anyway just very very have ability ASSC one woman

‘(She) is an ambitious woman.’

06 Per: 商务部 的 不是 部里 的 不是 说 自己 自己 做生意=;

shangwu bu de bu shi buli de bu shi shuo ziji ziji zuo shengyi=

commerce department ASSC NEG be department PRT NEG be say self self do
business=

‘(She) is in the Commerce Department but does not do business herself, right?’

07 Min: = 嗯 自己 做 生意 的;

= en ziji zuo shengyi de

= mm self do business PRT

‘Mm, (she) does business herself.’

08 我 这 是 我 我 记 具体 的 记 不 清楚 了.

wo zhe shi wo wo ji juti de ji bu qingchu le

I this be I I remember detail ASSC remember NEG clear PRT

‘I can’t remember what she does in detail.’

09 → 因为 有 一 次 去 大使馆,

yinwei you yi ci qu dashiguan

because have one time go embassy

‘Because once I went to the embassy,’

10 那 个 常 龙 远 在 那 儿 做 一 个 讲 座;

na ge Chang Longyuan zai naer zuo yi ge jiangzuo

that CL Chang Longyuan at there do one CL lecture

‘Chang Longyuan gave a lecture there.’

11 讲 讲 讲 讲 托 马 斯 曼 的 一 个 讲 座.

jiang jiang jiang jiang tuo ma si man de yi ge jiangzuo

speak speak speak speak Thomas Mann ACCS one CL lecture

‘A lecture about Thomas Mann.’

12 然 后 他 老 婆 去 了;

ranhou ta laopo qu le

then 3SG wife go PFV

‘Then his wife showed up.’

13 真 的 跟 大 使 馆 的 所 有 人 都 熟.

zhende gen dashiguan de suoyou ren dou shu

really with embassy ASSC all people all familiar

‘She is really familiar with everyone in the embassy.’

14 Per: [什么 什么—

[*shenme shenme*

[what what

‘Pardon me.’

15 Min: [嗯.

[*en*

[hm

‘Mm.’

16 跟 所有 的人 所有 的 大使馆 大使馆 的 人 都 特 别 熟；

gen suoyou de ren suoyou de dashiguan dashiguan de ren dou te bie shu

with all ASSC people all ASSC embassy embassy ASSC people all very familiar

‘She is familiar with everyone in the embassy.’

At the beginning of the sequence, Per asks a question about ‘why Chang Longyuan is a typical example’ (line 1). In response to Per, Min introduces that Chang Longyuan’s wife does business herself (lines 2 to 5). In line 5, the use of connective lexical device *fanzheng* ‘anyway’ indicates that Min intends to close the previous part of the conversation (Lin 2009). However, Per is still not clear about what Chang Longyuan’s wife does. So she raises another question in line 6. After

responding to Per (line 7), Min claims that he cannot remember what she does in detail (line 8), which shows a possible completion of his turn. In line 9, Min uses *yinwei* to open a storytelling in the middle of his turn. Same as the previous example, *you yici* ‘once’ is also employed in this extract, which serves as an entry device of a storytelling (Jefferson 1978). In what follows, Min provides some details about how capable Chang’s wife is (lines 10-16).

The last example of the use of the *yinwei*-clause in opening a storytelling will be examined in the following extract. Extract 10 is taken from the same conversation as Extract 4 and Extract 6.

Here, Nan, Lin, Che, and Shi have a debate about whether a girl should choose to marry a rich but old man. Prior to this segment, Lin just expresses her idea that it might be better for a girl to find a man whose is financially wealthy. In this extract, Lin uses *yinwei* to open a storytelling about her past experience with a wealthy man who wanted to marry her.

Extract 10 (Will you marry me)

01 Nan: 你 的 意 思 应 该 就 是 说—

ni de yisi yinggai jiu shi shuo

you ASSC meaning might just be say

‘You mean.’

02 作 为 一 个 女 性 的 角 度;

zuowei yige nũ xing de jiaodu

as one CL woman ASSC view

‘From a woman’s view.’

03 就 抛 抛 开 [感情因素;
 jiu pao pao kai [ganqing yinsu
 just cast cast aside [emotional factor
 ‘Put aside emotions.’

04 可能 最好 的 选择 是 找 一 个 有 钱 的;
 keneng zui hao de xuanze shi zhao yi ge youqian de
 maybe best ASSC choice be find one CL rich ASSC
 ‘Maybe the best choice is to find a rich man.’

05 [你 是 这 个 意 思 吗-
 [*ni shi zhege yisi ma*
 [you be this CL meaning PRT
 ‘Is that what you mean?’

06 Lin: [对 意 思 就 是 说-
 [*dui yisi jiushi shuo*
 [right meaning just be say
 ‘Yes, I mean.’

07 不 不 不 我 我 不 是 我 就 想 看 看 你 们 是 怎 么 看 的 对.

bu bu bu wo wo bushi wo jiu xiang kankan nimen shi zenme kan de dui

NEG NEG NEG I I NEG be I just want see you be how see PRT yeah

‘No no no, I don’t mean that. I just want to know what you guy think about this.

Yes.’

08 → 因为 就 之前 很久 很久- 也 没 有 很久 以前;

yinwei jiu zhiqian henjiu henjiu- ye meiyou henjiu yiqian

because just before long long- too NEG have long before

‘Because before, long ago... It’s not that long (actually).

09 就是 有 一 个 比我大 很多 的 男人 男人;

jiushi you yi ge bi wo da henduo de nanren nanren

just be have one CL more I old much ASSC man man

‘A man who is much older than me.’

10 说 要 不 要 跟 我 一起 结婚-

shuo yao bu yao gen wo yiqi jie hun

say want NEG want with me together marry

‘Asked me if I would marry him.’

11 我 说 等 我 就 我 说-

wo shuo deng wo jiu wo shuo

I say wait me just I say

12 你死了之后我 自己要 一 个人 待 很久。
 ni si le zhihou wo ziji yao yi ge ren dai henjiu
 you die PFV after I self will one CL person stay long
 ‘I would live alone by myself long after you died.’

hehe [*he* (sniff)]

15 Shi: [对.
[*dui*
[righ
‘Right.’

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self-correction and expresses that she just wants to know what the other participants think about a girl who chooses to marry a rich but old man (line 7). Lin's self-confirmation *dui* 'Yes' at the end of line 7 indicates that her turn comes to a possible completion point. However, rather than passing the turn to other participants, Lin continues her turn and employs *yinwei* to open a storytelling in the middle of her turn (line 8). *zhiqian* 'before' and *henjiu henjiu* 'long (ago)' (line 8) are entry devices of a storytelling (Jefferson 1978). After a self-repair 'It's not that long (actually)' (line 8), Lin tells of her past experience of an older man who wanted to marry her (lines 9 to 14).

The previous three extracts show that the speaker uses *yinwei* to open a storytelling in the middle of his/her turn. Some entry devices of storytelling can be observed in the *yinwei*-clause, such as 'once', 'long ago', and repeating words which appeared in prior talk.

4.4 Summary

This chapter reports on some interactional functions of *yinwei*-clauses that have not been documented in the previous research. In this chapter, we mainly discussed three interactional functions of *yinwei*-clauses in the data: accounts for prior actions, parentheticals to provide background information, and opening a storytelling.

When used as accounts for prior actions, *yinwei*-clauses are observed to immediately follow and account for two types of actions: disagreement and assertion. Speakers usually offer accounts after these kinds of actions to attenuate an anticipated trouble in interaction. When used as

parenthetical, *yinwei*-clauses occur in two kinds of sequential environments: within an ongoing TCU; and between TCUs in a multi-unit turn. In both environments, the *yinwei*-clause as a parenthetical renders the entire TCU or the whole activity incomplete and it provides background information for the speaker's prior utterance. Finally, speakers use the *yinwei*-clause to open a storytelling in the middle of their turns.

Chapter 5 Conclusion

This chapter summarizes the findings of this study. Section 5.1 outlines the major findings of this study. Section 5.2 discusses the significance and implication of the study.

5.1 Findings

Adopting the methodologies of Conversation Analysis and Interactional Linguistics, the present study explores the interactional function of *yinwei*-clauses in everyday Mandarin face-to-face conversation.

The data in this study show that the post-positioning of *yinwei*-clauses are dominant in Mandarin conversation, which supports the discourse study of *yinwei* in the literature. It is observed that the *yinwei*-clause is mainly used to serve three interactional functions in the data: accounts for prior actions, parentheticals to provide background information, and opening a storytelling.

When used as accounts for prior actions, *yinwei*-clauses are often discovered to account for two types of actions in the data: disagreement and assertion. The recipient's disagreement is a dispreferred response to the speaker's prior claim, and the recipient usually provides an account for his or her disagreement, introduced by *yinwei*. When used as parenthetical, the *yinwei*-clause is produced in two kinds of sequential environments: within an ongoing TCU; and between TCUs in a multi-unit turn. As a parenthetical, the *yinwei*-clause provides background information for the speaker's prior utterance. The speaker usually resumes or continues the utterance prior to the *yinwei*-clause through the use of repetition and conjunction words. Finally, *yinwei*-clauses can be used to open a storytelling in the data. Speakers usually use *yinwei* together with some storytelling entry devices to start a storytelling in the middle of his or her turn.

5.2 Significance and implications of the study

This study is significant in three aspects. First, it is the first attempt to systematically explore the function of *yinwei*-clauses in everyday Mandarin conversation from an interactional perspective. Most studies of *yinwei*-clauses have been conducted from a traditional grammar perspective, and they mainly focus on the positioning of *yinwei*-clauses in relation to the main clause. Thus, this study contributes to our understanding of the function of *yinwei*-clauses in everyday Mandarin interaction.

Second, a few studies have briefly addressed the function of *yinwei*-clauses, but they still mainly focus on the positioning of *yinwei*-clauses in Mandarin spoken discourse and written data. There is a lack of research on the real-life interactional use of *yinwei*-clauses in everyday Mandarin conversation. Therefore, the current study exploring *yinwei*-clauses in everyday Mandarin face-to-face conversation fills this gap.

Finally, this research is also an attempt to show how Conversation Analysis and Interactional Linguistics can be adopted to study *yinwei*-clauses and bring attention to its interactional function. Through turn-by-turn examination, the study shows a dynamic picture of how participants deploy *yinwei*-clauses to accomplish different interactional tasks in everyday Mandarin face-to-face conversation.

This study examined three interactional functions of *yinwei*-clauses in the current data. However, this research does not claim to investigate all the possible interactional uses of *yinwei*-clauses. Other interactional functions could be further explored through investigating more data. The data recorded in Edmonton, an English-speaking city, may have some limitations. It is an open question if the English-speaking environment has an effect on the speaker's use of *yinwei*-

clauses. Also, the interactional functions of *yinwei*-clauses are worth examining from a multimodal perspective in future studies.

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Appendix A: Transcript symbols

The transcription system in this study is mainly based on GAT2 (Selting et al, 2009).

Symbol	Meaning
[]	Overlap
=	Latching
(.)	Micro-pause
(-), (--), (---)	Short, middle or long pause if ca. 0.2-0.8 seconds
(1.0)	Pause 1.0 second
((laughing))	Description of laughter
:,::,:::	lengthening of ca. 0.2-0.8 seconds
.h,.hh,.hhh	Breathing in, according to its duration
(XX)	Presumed wording
wor-	Truncated/cut-off word

Appendix B: Glossing Conventions

3SG	Third person singular
ASSC	Associative (<i>de</i>)
NOM	Nominalizer
CL	Classifier
CRS	Currently relevant state (<i>le</i>)
CSC	Complex stative constrction (<i>de</i>)
DUR	Durative aspect (<i>-zhe</i>)
NEG	Negative (<i>bu</i>)
PFV	Perfective aspect
POSS	Possessive (<i>de</i>)
PRT	Particle
INT	Interjections in speech