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中文的個性語：以語尾助詞啊、呀、嘛、呢為例

Character Language in Mandarin Chinese: A Case Study of

Sentence-final Particles *A* 啊, *Ya* 呀, *Ma* 嘛, and *Ne* 呢

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在台大語言所的這三年，說長不長，說短也不短。從大學時期開始，就一直朝著要考進語言所這個目標前進，當知道考上的時候，想說總算是完成一個小小的目標。但是等到真正進入語言所就讀時，才發現，哇！真的不是在開玩笑的。每個同學都有自己的專長，對於語言學也擁有豐富的知識，對於每個概念都能清楚地表達出自己的看法。這時覺得自己真的是進入到一個不得了的地方。因此，從碩一就開始努力尋找自己碩士論文想做的題目。雖然一開始早已有初步的大方向，但為了做出有價值的研究，不斷構思整個論文的架構和方向。從開始到真正確定題目的這段時間，真的是蠻煎熬的。每次報告都在跟老師和同學討論題目的可行性。

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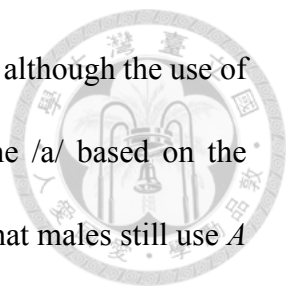
Abstract



Character language, i.e., a speech style but flexibly changeable according to situations by a speaker, is proposed as an indicator of indexing the features of the speaker (Sadanobu, 2006). It has been argued that Japanese is abundant in character language, while Chinese relatively lacks such a marking system. In this sense, character language is highly pragmatic in use. Another highly pragmatic category in language is the sentence-final particle. Do the sentence-final particles share some functions of character language? Since the studies of sentence-final particles in Mandarin Chinese mostly concerned about their grammatical or discourse functions in use, in order to clarify the question mentioned above, this paper aims at investigating Chinese sentence-final particles *A* 啊, *Ya* 呀, *Ma* 嘛, and *Ne* 呢 from the perspective of character language.

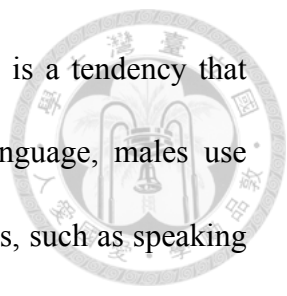
In this paper, all data are systematically collected from three variety shows and four TV dramas produced in Taiwan and China. Three age groups are set as our research targets: under 30 as group I, 31 to 50 as group II, and above 51 as group III. There are 60 males and 60 females in total. The transcriptions of the excerpts are based on the concept of intonation unit proposed by Du Bois et al. (1993) and Tao (1996). The data of sentence-final particles *A* 啊, *Ya* 呀, *Ma* 嘛, and *Ne* 呢 will be discussed and analyzed from two aspects, i.e., gender and age.

The results of the present study show a gender difference and age differences in character language in terms of the usage of sentence-final particles *A* 啊, *Ya* 呀, *Ma* 嘛, and *Ne* 呢 which are seldom recognized in the previous literature.



For gender difference of sentence-final particles *A* 啊 and *Ya* 呀, although the use of *A* 啊 and *Ya* 呀 can be categorized as variants of the same phoneme /a/ based on the phonological rule, i.e., /a/ → [ja]/ [i]__#. However, there is a tendency that males still use *A* 啊, and females still use *Ya* 呀 regardless of the phonological rule. Also, as character language, *A* 啊 and *Ya* 呀 can be used flexibly by females and males for special purposes in certain contexts. For age difference, as a kind of character language, only males under age 30 and from 31 to 50 sometimes use character language *Ya* 呀 in certain contexts for special purposes, while all the three age groups of females use *A* 啊 for special purposes in certain context.

For gender difference of sentence-final particle *Ma* 嘛, males tend to use “indicating obvious information *Ma* 嘛”, while females tend to use “indicating the speaker’s opinion *Ma* 嘛”. As a kind of character language, these two kinds of *Ma* 嘛 can be used flexibly by males and females for special purposes in certain contexts. For age difference of sentence-final particle *Ma* 嘛 of males, as a character language, all of the three age groups only use “indicating the speaker’s opinion *Ma* 嘛” in certain contexts for special purposes. For age difference of sentence-final particle *Ma* 嘛 of female, females over 51 years old tend to use “indicating obvious information *Ma* 嘛,” while females under 30 years old and from 31 to 50 years old tend to use “indicating the speaker’s opinion *Ma* 嘛.” The phenomenon that females change their style of speaking when getting older is also an example of *Ma* 嘛 as a character language.



For the gender difference of sentence-final particle *Ne* 呢, there is a tendency that females use *Ne* 呢 more than males do. As a kind of character language, males use “questioning and declarative *Ne* 呢” in particular contexts and situations, such as speaking to females, elders, or people that are not so familiar with. For the age difference of *Ne* 呢 of male, all of the three age groups only use character language *Ne* 呢 in special contexts and situations. For the age difference of *Ne* 呢 of female, females over 51 years old use *Ne* 呢 less than females under 30 years old and those from 31 to 50. The phenomenon that females change their style of speaking when getting older indicates that *Ne* 呢 has the property of character language.

In sum, the present thesis investigates Chinese sentence-final particles from a sociolinguistic perspective and discusses a phenomenon which is often overlooked by linguists but is vital in our lively conversations. The results of this study show that not only Japanese has the feature of character language, Mandarin Chinese also has the feature of character language in terms of sentence-final particles. This investigation is expected to shed new light on the area of character language research.

Keywords: Character language; Role language; Sentence-final particle;

Sociolinguistics; Gender; Age; Intonation unit



摘要

個性語 (Character language) 被學者定義為一種可以根據說話者所處的不同情境和目的而自由變換的說話風格，同時也是顯現出說話者身分地位的指標 (Sadanobu, 2006)。日文存在著許多個性語，相較之下，中文被認為缺乏這種語言現象。雖然中文的語尾助詞 (Sentence-final particle) 研究頗豐，然而很多關於中文語尾助詞的研究主要是把重點放在語尾助詞的文法和語用功能上。因此，為了釐清中文是否有個性語的現象，本論文旨在以中文語尾助詞 *A* 啊、*Ya* 呀、*Ma* 嘛和 *Ne* 呢為研究對象，探討其是否有個性語的現象。

本論文為以實際語料為本的研究，語料來源為台灣和中國的三部綜藝節目和四部電視劇。我們觀察三個年齡組：30歲以下、31歲到50歲、51歲以上，隨機挑選60個男性和60個女性進行系統性觀察。語料轉寫的方法是根據 Du Bois et al. (1993) 和 Tao (1996) 對於語料轉寫的理論。對於四個中文語尾助詞的分析會分成性別和年齡這兩個方面來探討。

本論文結果顯示中文語尾助詞 *A* 啊、*Ya* 呀、*Ma* 嘛和 *Ne* 呢的用法上存在著性別差異和年齡差異。本論文先從 *A* 啊和 *Ya* 呀入手。在性別差異的層面上，雖然 *A* 啊和 *Ya* 呀的用法是根據發音規則，也就是在 [i] 之後，理論上 /a/ 會變成 [ja]，但是研究發現，男生還是傾向於使用 *A* 啊，而女生還是傾向於使用 *Ya* 呀。作為個性語，*A* 啊和 *Ya* 呀會根據不同情境和目的而被男生和女生靈活運用。在年齡差異的層

面上，作為一種個性語，只有30歲以下和31歲到50歲的男性在特別的情境或目的之下使用 *Ya* 呀，但是三組年齡的女性在特別的情境或目的之下都會使用 *A* 啊。

接下來是 *Ma* 嘛的分析。在性別差異的層面來說，男性傾向於使用表達顯而易見的事實的 *Ma* 嘛，而女性傾向於使用表示建議或表達情緒和期望的 *Ma* 嘛。作為個性語，這兩種功能的 *Ma* 嘛可以根據特別的情境或目的被男性和女性靈活運用。在年齡差異的層面來說，作為個性語，三組年齡的男性都只在特別的情境下使用表示建議或表達情緒和期望的 *Ma* 嘛。女性的情形則是，51歲以上的女性傾向於使用表達顯而易見的事實的 *Ma* 嘛，而30歲以下和31歲到50歲的女性傾向於使用表示建議或表達情緒和期望的 *Ma* 嘛。這種隨著年齡增長而改變說話方式的情形也是作為個性語的一個例子。

最後是 *Ne* 呢的分析。在性別差異的層面來說，女性比男性傾向於使用 *Ne* 呢。作為個性語，男性會根據不同的情境或目的來使用 *Ne* 呢，像是和女性或年長者說話時。在年齡差異的層面來說，三組年齡的男性都只在特別的情境下使用 *Ne* 呢。女性的情形則是，51歲以上的女生比30歲以下和31歲到50歲的女生少使用 *Ne* 呢。這種隨著年齡增長而改變說話方式的情形也是作為個性語的一個例子。

本論文從社會語言學的觀點來研究中文語尾助詞，並且討論常被學者忽略但在我們日常對話中很重要的角色語的現象。本研究不但指出不只日文當中有個性語的現象，在中文的語尾助詞當中也存在著個性語的特色，也為個性語的研究盡了一份心力。

關鍵詞：個性語（**Character language**）；角色語（**Role language**）；語尾助詞；社會
語言學；性別；年齡；語調單位（**Intonation unit**）

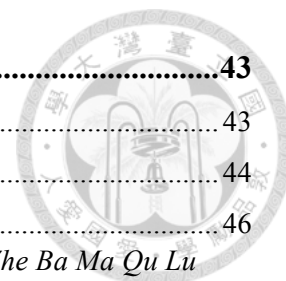


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Transcription Convention



Vocal noises

Laughter @

Quality

Laugh @@

List of Abbreviations



ADV	adverb
ASP	aspect marker
CL	classifier
COP	copula
DUR	duration mark? (p. 35 有出現)
NEG	negative morpheme
PL	plural
PREP	preposition
Q	question
V	verb

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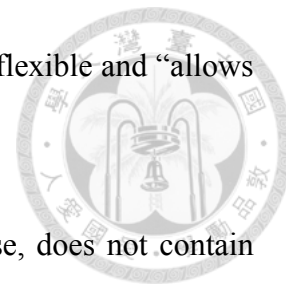
Chapter 1 Introduction



‘Yakuwarigo’ or role language, proposed by Kinsui (2000), refers to “sets of speech features that are closely related to the speakers’ personal images” (Kinsui, 2003). There are about six subgroups of role language, briefly categorized as gender, age, social class, region, pre-modern, and imaginary creatures (Kinsui, 2014; Kinsui & Yamakido, 2015). These speech features are mostly used in Japanese fictions like novels or comics and easily appear in personal pronouns and final particles (Kinsui, 2007). The fiction creators use these speech features to make the audience get into the storyline around the characters quickly and also make readers know more about the characters about their gender, age, social status, personality, etc. According to Teshigawara and Kinsui (2011), “role language is used to develop the story effectively, by relying on knowledge shared between the creator and the audience.” Besides, “the research of ‘role language’ is essentially interdisciplinary. Apart from syntax, lexicology, phonology, semantics, pragmatics, etc. which take internal views of language and form the core of the discipline, various adjacent areas, e.g., dialect studies, history, literature, sociology, developmental psychology, popular culture studies, etc., also have strong relationships with role language research (Kinsui, 2012: abstract).”

Besides role language, another term called *character language*, i.e., a speech style but flexibly changeable according to situations, such as different participants, personality of speakers, or contexts, etc., by a speaker, is proposed as an indicator of indexing the features of the speaker (Sadanobu, 2006). The term *character language* starts to be used because researchers found that the definition of role language “excludes some fictional characters who speak in a somewhat peculiar manner that is neither role language nor the standard

language” (Kinsui & Yamakido, 2015:32). Character language is more flexible and “allows for various types” (Kinsui & Yamakido, 2015:29).



Mandarin Chinese, according to our observation, unlike Japanese, does not contain many remarkable speech features of role language and character language in both fiction and actual language use, especially in the use of sentence-final particles. However, in Mandarin Chinese, personal pronouns possess obvious speech features of role language. Taking first personal pronoun for example, in Modern Chinese, 我 *wǒ* is used to indicate ‘I’, 咱 *zán* for expressing dialectal ‘I’, 鄙人 *bǐrén* for the humble form of ‘I’, etc. As to role language in Mandarin Chinese, Kawasaki (2013) investigated it in traditional texts. For the research of character language of Mandarin Chinese, Zhang & Li (2015) investigated the salutation of Chinese 媽媽 *māmā* and 媽 *mā*, both indicating ‘mother’. They pointed out that in childhood, children tend to use 媽媽 *māmā*, while adults tend to use 媽 *mā*. Also, Luo (2012) investigated character language in Chinese modal verbs (語氣詞 *yǔqìcí*), 捏 *niē*/ 捏 *niè*/ 逆 *nì*, 呵呵 *hēhē*/ 哈哈 *hāhā*/ 吼吼 *hǒuhǒu*, and 的說 *deshuō*.

Although there are some studies concerned about character language of Mandarin Chinese, there is still little research related to this topic. To fill the research gap, we investigate the phenomenon of character language of Mandarin Chinese in this study. When we are observing whether there are other phenomena of character language in Chinese, we found that sentence-final particles show some interesting phenomena of character language. Also, the studies of sentence-final particles *A* 啊, *Ya* 呀, *Ma* 嘛, and *Ne* 呢 in Mandarin Chinese are seldom examined from the aspect of character language, and mostly concerned about their grammatical and pragmatic functions in usage (Chao, 1968; Lu, 1980; Alleton,

1981; Li & Thompson, 1981; Dow, 1983; King, 1986; Chappell, 1991; Shie, 1991; Chu, 1984; 1985a; 1985b; 1998; 1999; 2002; Wu, 2000; 2004).

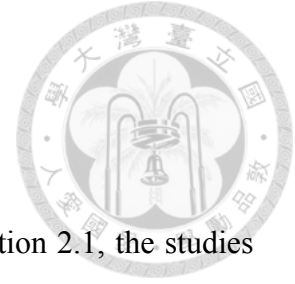


In order to enrich the study of Chinese sentence-final particles, this paper aims at investigating Chinese sentence-final particles *A* 啊, *Ya* 呀, *Ma* 嘛, and *Ne* 呢 from the perspective of character language. The following are the research questions of this paper. Through these research questions, this study hopes to shed new light on the research of character language in terms of Chinese sentence-final particles.

1. How can the phenomena of character language be connected with the use of sentence-final particles *A* 啊, *Ya* 呀, *Ma* 嘛, and *Ne* 呢 in Mandarin Chinese?
2. Is there any empirical evidence to indicate the above-mentioned phenomena?
3. How can the current study benefit the character language studies in the future?

This paper is organized as follows: Section 2 reviews previous studies that are related to the issue of the current paper. Section 3 will introduce the methodology of this paper, including the source of the data. Detailed analysis and discussion of the data will be presented in section 4. Section 5 provides the concluding remarks of the paper.

Chapter 2 Literature Review



We review some important related studies in this chapter. In section 2.1, the studies that compared role language and character language will be reviewed. In section 2.2, the central concepts of Japanese role language including some related studies of other languages will be introduced before we introduce character language. In section 2.3, character language, which is our main focus in this thesis, will be discussed in detail. In section 2.4, we will include the studies of final particles *A* 啊, *Ya* 呀, *Ma* 嘛, and *Ne* 呢. In section 2.5, gender issues and age issues discussed in sociolinguistics will be introduced. Finally, in section 2.6, related studies of sound symbolism will be introduced.

2.1 Comparison of Role Language and Character Language

In this section, we provide some comparative studies in terms of role language and character language first. In 2.1.1, it includes the differences between role language and character language that are given by Kinsui (2013) and Sadanobu (2011b; 2011c). In 2.1.2, Li (2013) organized the idea of role language and character language into two figures to show their differences.

2.1.1 Kinsui (2013a) & Sadanobu (2011b; 2011c)

Role language “refers to sets of speech features that are closely related to the speakers’ personal images” (Kinsui, 2003), and it is relatively stable so that it cannot be changed

flexibly and is shared among most of the people in the society. On the contrary, character language is a speech style that is flexibly changeable according to situations, such as participants, personality of speakers, or contexts, etc., by a speaker (Sadanobu, 2006). Also, different from role language which is based on social stereotypes, such as gender, age, social status, etc., character language includes social stereotypes and personal characters (Kinsui, 2013a). Thus, based on the definitions and features of role language and character language, we conclude that character language can include more various types, and role language is included in character language, such as Figure 1.

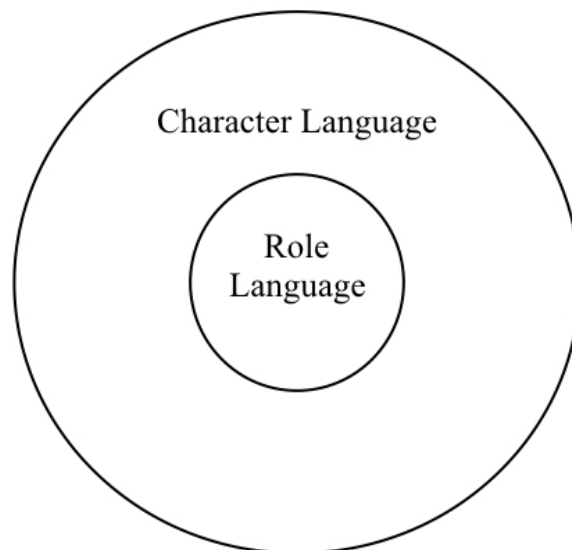
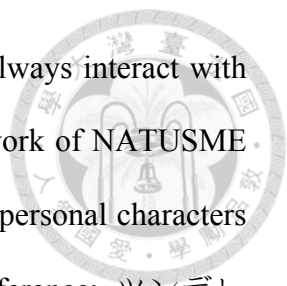


Figure 1. Relationship between Role Language and Character Language

According to Kinsui (2013a), social stereotypes can be considered as role languages, but it is inappropriate to say that personal characters are role languages. In Sadanobu (2011b), social stereotypes are like Tokyoite (東京人) and people live in Osaka (大阪人). On the other hand, personal characters are such as いい人 *ii-hito* ‘nice guy(s)’ and 坊っちゃん



bocchan ‘preppy’ (Sadanobu, 2011c). The former means people who always interact with others with a smile. The latter implies the title of the famous literary work of NATUSME Soseki, and the story is about an egocentric teacher. More examples of personal characters of character language are introduced in 2.3, but are listed here for reference: ツンデレ *tsundere* ‘sometimes cold but sometimes lovey-dovey’ (Togashi, 2009), ボク少女 *boku shoujo* ‘boku-girl’ or ボクっ娘 *boku musume* ‘boku-girl’ (Togashi & Asano, 2012; Nishida, 2011), and オネエ言葉 *o-nee-kotoba* ‘feminine talk’ (Kawano, 2016).

2.1.2 Li (2013)

In addition to the comparative studies of role language and character language of Kinsui (2013a) and Sadanobu (2011b; 2011c), Li (2013) also studied role language and character language. She called role language 静的なキャラクタ ‘static character’ which “refers to sets of speech features that are closely related to the speakers’ personal images” (Kinsui, 2003) and which is more stable and cannot be changed easily. Character language, by contrast, she called it 動的なキャラクタ ‘dynamic character’ which means it is flexibly changeable according to situations by a speaker. Below are the figures proposed by Li(2013) in her research.

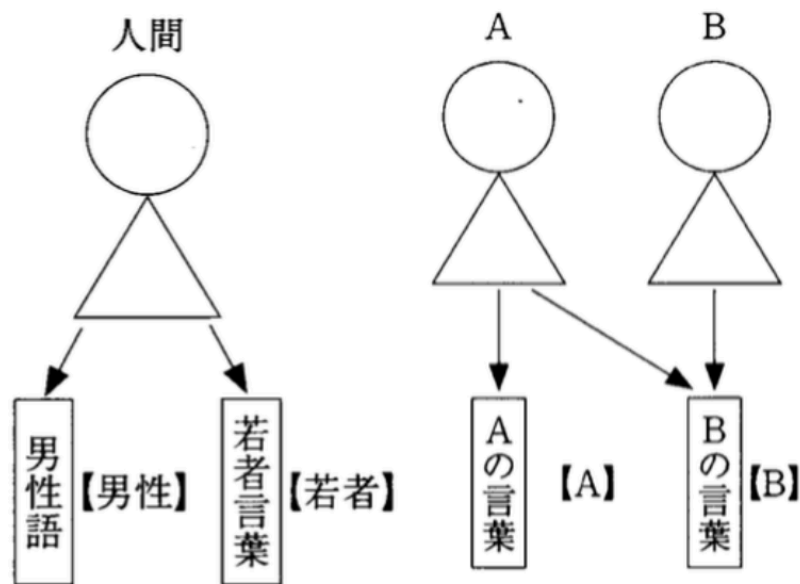
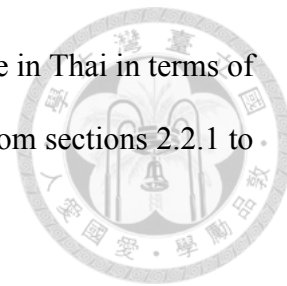


Figure 2. Left: Role language: static character; Right: Character language: dynamic character (Li, 2013:151)

2.2 Role Language

After the comparison of role language and character language, we go into the details of role language in section 2.2. When it comes to role language, the pioneering researcher is Satoshi Kinsui. He is the first researcher who introduced the concept of role language in Japanese (Kinsui, 2000). Besides Kinsui, there are also other researchers who have done some studies on role language. For instance, Kawasaki (2013), Zhang & Luo (2010), Wan (2006), Zhao (2009), and Sadanobu & Zhang (2007) conducted studied Chinese role language. Jung (2005, 2007, 2008) compared role language of Japanese and Korean. Yamacuji (2006) indicated ways to produce role language in English. Fukushima (2012) investigated role language in Spanish. Tanaka (2012) studied role language in German

spoken by immigrants from Turkey, and Ito (2016) studied role language in Thai in terms of first personal pronoun *pǒm*. These studies will be introduced in detail from sections 2.2.1 to 2.2.3. In 2.2.4, there will be a brief summary of section 2.2.



2.2.1 Japanese Role Language

According to Kinsui (2003), “*yakuwarigo* refers to sets of speech features that are closely related to the speakers’ personal images.” The definition given by Kinsui (2003) is as follows:

ある特定の言葉遣い(語彙・語法・言い回し・イントネーション等)を聞くと特定の人物像(年齢・性別・職業・階層・時代・容姿・風貌・性格 等)を思い浮かべることができるとき、あるいはある特定の人物像を提示されると、その人物がいかにも使用しそうな言葉遣いを思い浮かべることができるとき、その言葉遣いを「役割語」と呼ぶ。(Kinsui, 2003: 205)

Role language ("yakuwarigo"): a set of spoken language features (such as vocabulary, grammar and phonetic characteristics) that can be psychologically associated with a particular character type. (Character's attributes include age, gender, occupation, social status, appearance and personality.) (Kinsui, 2003: 205)

The speakers’ personal images are related to age, gender, social status, occupation, place of residence, nationality, and personality (Kinsui, 2007). Based on these images, there are about six subgroups of role language, e.g., gender, age, social class, region, pre-modern, and imaginary creatures (Kinsui, 2014; Kinsui & Yamakido, 2015). Firstly, in gender subgroup,

it can be further divided into male language (男のことば) and female language (女のことば). In male language, shown in the example (1), the first personal pronouns ボク *boku* 'I (m.)' and オレ *ore* 'I (m.)' are mostly used by males. For sentence-final particles of male language, there are particles ぜ *ze*, ぞ *zo* or using imperative forms. For female language (女のことば), as shown in example (2), the sentence-final particles, e.g., わ *wa*, のよ *noyo*, and かしら *kashira*, are easily seen in female speech.

(1) [男のことば 'male language']

a. うん、そうだよ、ぼく が 知ってる よ

un sou da yo boku ga shitteru yo

'Yes. That's right. I know.'

b. おれ は、この 町 が 大好き だ ぜ。

ore wa kono machi ga daisuki da ze

'I like this town very much.'

(Kinsui, 2013b)

(2) [女のことば ‘female language’]

あたし は、この 町 が大好きな のよ。

atashi wa kono machi ga daisuki na noyo

‘(Because) I like this town very much.’



(Kinsui, 2013b)

Secondly, in the age subgroup, the most representative one is 老人語 ‘elderly male language’. In this kind of role language, for instance, in example (3), it contains words such as わし *washi* for the first personal pronoun, and じゃ *ja* for sentence-final particle.

(3) [老人語 ‘elderly male language’]

おお、そうじゃ、わし が知っておるん じゃ

oo sou ja washi ga shitte oru n ja

‘Oh, that’s right. I know.’

(Kinsui, 2013b)

Thirdly, in the social class subgroup, there are expressions such as わたくし *watakushi* ‘I’ and わ *wa* for noble/formal language as shown in example (4).

(4) [noble language of female]

わたくし は、この 町 が 大好き です わ
watakushi wa kono machi ga daisuki desu wa

‘I like this town very much.’



(Kinsui, 2013b)

Fourthly, in the region subgroups, we can see the sentence-final particle *じゃ ja* or *や ya* in Kansai language, such as *や ya* in example (5).

(5) [Kansai language]

そやそや

so ya so ya

‘That’s right. That’s right.’

(Kinsui, 2013b)

Fifthly, in the pre-modern subgroups such as Edo language and *samurai* language are spoken by the people who lived in that period, as shown in example (6).

(6) [*Samurai language*]

うむ、さよう、せつしゃ が 存じて おりまする。

umu sayou sessya ga zonzite orimasuru

‘Um. That’s right. I know.’



(Kinsui, 2013b)

The last one is expressions of imaginary creatures such as the language used by aliens and animals. For example, in example (7), ワン *wan* is used to indicate the utterance produced by a dog.

(7) [*language of dog*]

お手紙 も はいっていて、涙 が だそうです ワン...

otegami mo haitteite namida ga desou da wan

‘There is also with a letter in it. It’s about to tearing up *wan*.’

(Akizuki, 2012:47 (2a) ポチ武者こじゅーろう[宮城県白石市])

2.2.2 Chinese Role Language

Kawasaki (2013) investigated Chinese role language which includes Chinese dialects, traditional Chinese role language such as, 官腔 *guānqiāng* ‘bureaucratic jargon’, 學生腔

xuéshēngqiāng ‘student language’, nonverbal behavior or body language, and so on. For 官腔 *guānqiāng* ‘bureaucratic jargon’, when people hear such a language, they will know the speakers are government officials. The features of bureaucratic jargon are exaggerating and ambivalent. For 學生腔 *xuéshēngqiāng* ‘student language’, the feature is that those people love to use flowery expressions and idioms to show they are knowledgeable. These two Chinese role languages are of the subgroup of the social class of role language. The last one is nonverbal behavior or body language. It refers to those behaviors or gestures that can show people’s feature. For example, standing or walking with one’s hands clasped behind one’s back represents government officials, and flipping one’s hair indicates femininity.

Besides Kawasaki’s research of Chinese role language, Zhang & Luo (2010) also studied Chinese role language. They pointed out in Chinese novels and movies, the role language of foreign people is formed by mixing Chinese and English, and this kind of speech style usually appears in fictions.

Sadanobu & Zhang (2007) also indicated that final particles of Chinese dialects also belong to the phenomenon of Chinese role language. These particles fall in the subgroup of dialect of role language. For example, in example (8), 咩 *miē* in Cantonese is a kind of role language.

(8)

我 已經 習慣 了 咩！

wǒ yǐjīng xíguàn le miē !

I already be.accustomed.to le mie

‘I am already accustomed to it.’



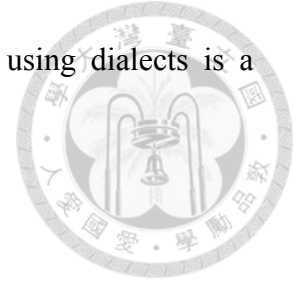
2.2.3 Role Language in Other Languages

In this section, we introduce studies on role language in Korean, English, Spanish, German, and Thai.

For role language of Korean, Jung (2005) conducted a study of role language in Japanese and Korean based on comparing the original version and translated version of *manga* 'comics'. She investigated the translations of manga both from Japanese to Korean and from Korean to Japanese. She found that in Japanese, there are more role language expressions than in the Korean version. Also, in Japanese role language, it contains more features of gender difference while it contains more features of age difference in role language of Korean. Jung (2007; 2008) proposed a study concerning the attitude of Korean learners of Japanese towards role language in Japanese. The results are as follows. Firstly, compared with Japanese native speakers, although Korean learners of Japanese have already reached a high level of Japanese proficiency, their knowledge of Japanese role language is still far removed from the level of Japanese native speakers. Secondly, Korean learners have a relatively lower level of knowledge towards Japanese dialects, compared to Japanese native speakers; thirdly, for Korean learners, the image of Japanese dialects will be influenced by the image of Korean dialects due to the similarity of geographic environment. According to these studies, we conclude that the role languages of Korean fall in the subgroup of age and dialect of role language.

For role language of English, Yamacuji (2006; 2007) investigated how role language is produced in English. He said that it is difficult to produce role language in English. He

then indicated four ways of creating English role language. Firstly, using dialects is a common way to create it such as those boldfaced words in example (9).



(9)

‘**Las’ time** I saw you, you was only a baby,’ said the giant. ‘**Yeh** look a lot like **yer** dad, but **yeh’ve** got **yer** mum’s eyes.’

(J. K. Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s Stone*)

Secondly, using pidgin is another way. For example, deleting articles and *be* verbs can create a sense of a foreign-like accent. Thirdly, another way is replacing first and second personal pronouns with the names of the speaker and hearer, as shown in example (10) where Dobby is talking to Harry Potter, and using his name Dobby to replace first personal pronoun ‘I’ and using Harry Potter to replace second personal pronoun.

(10)

‘**Dobby** has known it for months, sir. **Harry Potter** must not put himself in peril.’

(J. K. Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*)

Lastly, manipulating phonological sounds is efficient such as baby talk in example (11). Originally, it must be ‘I thought I saw a pussycat. I did. I did see a pussycat.’

(11)

I **tought** I **taw** a **puttytat**. I did. I did **taw** (*or tee*) a **puttytat**.



For role language of Spanish, Fukushima (2012) conducted a contrastive study of role language in Japanese and Spanish. He investigated whether there are role languages in Spanish, and also observed how role languages in Japanese will be translated into Spanish. In his study, he found that in Spanish, there are no official role languages such as those indicating elderly male language, young-lady-from-a-good-family language, male language, and female language. However, it still performs some kinds of role languages, for example, making use of dialects, using pre-modern languages such as languages of medieval times and ancient times, adding English vocabulary when the speaker is the native speaker of English or replacing consonants r/l of the Orientals to show the speech of foreigners, and replacing or deleting the consonants to perform the speech of the speakers that have difficulty with phonation. Finally, he concluded that in Spanish, the types of role languages are less, and the degree of the use of role languages is lower than that in Japanese.

For role language of German, in Tanaka's (2012) research, he investigated whether German spoken by immigrants from Turkey can also be role language. He pointed out that when the comedians are acting as young immigrants from Turkey, they will speak the dialects of southern Germany and perform as an indelicate, uncouth countryman. Also, when the audience hears this kind of dialect, they will have the image of the immigrants from Turkey, and also link the image of indelicate, uncouth countryman to the immigrants from Turkey. So, the image of immigrants from Turkey is shared by both the actors and the audience. Since

Kinsui (2003) indicated that if a linguistic expression is taken as a kind of role language, this expression must contain some speech features that are related to the speakers' images, and the knowledge of the speech features need to be shared by the community widely, Tanaka (2012) proposed that the German spoken by immigrants from Turkey can also be counted as a kind of role language which belongs to the subgroup of dialect of role language.

For role language of Thai, Ito (2016) conducted a study on role language in Thai in terms of investigating first personal pronoun *pǒm*. He concluded that in standard Thai, there is a gender difference in personal pronouns, for example, *phǒm* for the first personal pronoun of male and *dichǎn* for the first personal pronoun of adult female. The first personal pronoun *pǒm* emerged recently. It cannot be found in dictionaries and grammar books; however, it can be found on the Internet, such as examples (12) and (13).

(12)

pǒm... fit rǎaŋkaay maa phrǒom

POM fit body come finish

'My body has become fit.'

(4ช่องเส้า#169:ป้อม..พร้อม:http://monhun.org/4koma/chapter169:最終アクセス2015年7月25日; Ito, 2016:112 (1))

(13)

wan dèk **pǒm** wǎaŋ

day child **POM** free

'I am free on the day of child.'

(GlitterGraphic:<http://glitter.kapook.com/content.php?lang=th&id=22601&category>

_id=23:最終アクセス2015年7月25日; Ito, 2016:113 (2))



In order to obtain more information about *pǒm*, the author interviewed the native speakers of Thai, and then three points were further concluded. Firstly, *pǒm* exists in modern Thai. Secondly, for Thai native speakers, the emergence of *pǒm* may be due to the mispronunciation of *phǒm* or loose pronunciation. Thirdly, *pǒm* can cause people to evoke the image of boys. From these three reasons, *pǒm* can be taken as a kind of role language, which falls in the subgroup of gender of role language, indicating baby talk of boys.

Also, he indicated that the emergence of *pǒm* may be because of the imbalance of the system of personal pronouns, as shown in Table 1. For the first personal pronouns of female, there are the first personal pronoun *nǐu* of children, and the first personal pronoun *dichǎn* of adults; however, for personal pronoun of male, the personal pronoun *phǒm* stands for both adults and children. In this case, *pǒm* emerged as the first personal pronoun of male children to make the system of personal pronouns become balance.

Table 1. 〈男ことば・女ことば〉と〈幼児語・大人語〉 [Male Language & Female Language and Child Language & Adult Language] (Ito, 2016:114, 表1)

	〈男ことば〉	〈女ことば〉
〈幼児語〉	phǒm	nǐu
〈大人語〉		dichǎn

2.2.4 Summary

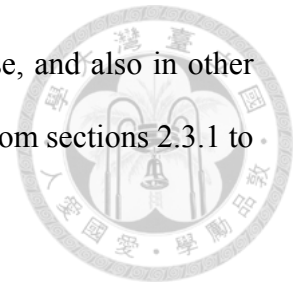


In this section, we have briefly introduced the position of role language of different languages and also the ways that some languages produce role language. In Japanese, role language tends to appear in personal pronouns and in sentence-final particles. In Chinese, although the use of role language is not as frequent as that in Japanese, we still can find some role languages in traditional Chinese, body language, and in sentence-final particles. In Korean, role language mostly appears to indicate age difference, such as the use of honorifics. In English, people produce role language by using dialects and pidgin, replacing first and second personal pronouns, and manipulating phonological sounds. In Spanish, the way of producing role language is similar to that in English, such as making use of dialects, using pre-modern languages, and replacing or deleting the consonants. In German, the phenomenon of role language lies in dialects. Dialects of German are treated as a kind of role language. In Thai, role language mostly appears in personal pronouns.

2.3 Character Language

After we introduced role language, we proceed to introducing the main focus of this paper, i.e., character language. The study of Sadanobu (2005; 2006; 2011b) is the most important one on character language. Besides Sadanobu, there are other researchers working on this topic, such as that in Togashi (2009) which investigated *tsundere* (ツンデレ), in Nishida (2011) and Togashi & Asano (2012) which studied on the topic of *bokushojo* (ボク少女), in Kawano (2016) which investigated *o-nee* (おネエ), in Zhang & Li (2015) and Luo

(2012) which studied the phenomenon of character language in Chinese, and also in other studies related to character language. These studies will be introduced from sections 2.3.1 to 2.3.3.



2.3.1 Japanese Character Language

Character language, i.e., a speech style but flexibly changeable according to situations, such as participants, personality of speakers, or contexts, etc., by a speaker, is proposed as an indicator of indexing the features of the speaker (Sadanobu, 2006). According to Sadanobu (2005; 2006; 2011b), キャラクタ ‘character’ can be changed on purpose according to different situations, purposes, and to different interlocutors. キャラクタ ‘character’ not only lies in spoken language, but also lies in people’s movement, facial expression, written language, and other actions relating to people’s behavior. Here we focus on two aspects, i.e., キャラクタ ‘character’ and ことば ‘language’. There are three points to be made in regard to the relationship of character and language (Sadanobu, 2011b; 2011c:61). The first one is “ことばがキャラクタを表すというものである,” which means the language can indicate people’s characters, such as *boucchyan* ‘坊っちゃん’ and the characteristic of egocentrism. The second one is “ことばが、ことばの内容だけでなく、ことばの発し手のキャラクタを暗に示す,” which means language expresses not only the propositional content, but also relates to the speakers’ personal images, such as that of elderly male language (老人語). Kinsui (2003) called this type of language *yakuwarigo* 役割語. The third one is “ことばが動作だけでなく、動作の行い手のキャラクタを暗に示す,”

which means that language not only implies the speaker's movement, but also hints the character of them, such as in the case of ニタリとほくそ笑む 'smile unkindly' referring to bad guys. Table 2 shows the involvements of キャラクタ 'character' and ことば 'language'.

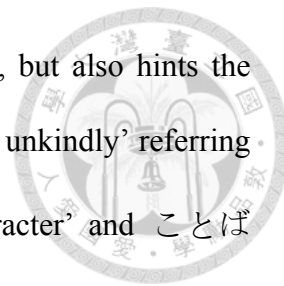



Table 2. The three kinds of Involvements of キャラクタ 'Character' and ことば 'Language' (Sadanobu, 2011c:62, 表 2)

	ことば 'Language'	関わり方 'Involvements'	キャラクタ 'Character'
Point I	キャラクタのラベル(例: 「坊っちゃん」) [Characters' label]	ことばが`キャラクタを直接表す [Language directly indicates the character.]	ラベルつ`けられたキャラクタ(例:自己中心的なキャラクタ) [Character that is attached a label.]
Point II	役割語 (例:「そうじゃ、わしが知って おる」) [Yakuwarigo]	ことばが、ことばの内容た`けて`なく、ことばの発し手のキャラクタを暗に示す [Not only about the content of the language but also imply the character of the speaker.]	発話キャラクタ (例:老人キャラ) [Utterance character]
Point III	キャラクタ動作の表現 (例:「ニタリとほくそ笑む」)	ことばが`動作た`けて`なく、動作の行い手のキャラクタを暗に示す	表現キャラクタ (例:悪い奴キャラ) [Performance character]

	[The performance of characters' behavior]	[Not only about the behavior, the language also implies the character of the performer.]	
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Besides Sadanobu, other researchers also conducted their research on the topic of Japanese character language, such as Togashi (2009; 2011), Nishida (2011), Togashi & Asano (2012), and Kawano (2016).

In Togashi (2009; 2011), he indicated that ツンデレ *tsundere* means people who do not express their feelings or emotions honestly. He pointed out that unlike role languages such as elderly male language or female language, this speech style can refer to a particular character. For example, the woman who speaks stammering in example (14), uses imperative sentences or speaks with the expressions for benefitting someone and giving permission as in example (15). This kind of speech style is only shared in a certain community such as fans of manga or animation (KINSUI & YAMAKIDO 2015). Thus, *tsundere* (ツンデレ) is a kind of character language since the knowledge is not widely shared by the whole society.

(14) [speak stammering]

成瀬川 「ち ちがうわよ ただ そのっ...

chi chigau wa yo tada sono

「れ 練習した だけ よ チョコ 作り の」

re renshushita dake yo choko tsukuri no

‘No, I just ... just practice to make the chocolate.’

(赤松健『ラブひな』第7巻, 講談社, 2000/04, p.114; Togashi, 2011:287 (23))



(15) [benefitting someone]

ついで だから あんた も 誘って あげる わ

tsuide dakara anta mo sasotte ageru wa

‘Then I give you an invitation by the way.’

(Kugimiya, 2007, 読み札「つ」; Togashi, 2011:291 (32))

According to Nishida (2011) and Togashi & Asano (2012), ボク少女 *boku shoujo* ‘girls who like to use the self pronoun *boku*’ or ボクっ娘 *boku musume* refers to girls use the first personal pronoun ボク *boku* ‘I’ of male, but use the sentence-final particles of female, such as もん *mon* and わ *wa*. This kind of speech style usually appears in manga and animation. If a girl uses *boku* ‘ボク’ to call herself, people will have the image that this girl is good at sports and is with a boyish style. Example (16) shows the speech of *boku shoujo* who is good at sports and is with the hairstyle of short hair, and she uses ボク *boku* of male and もん *mon* of female.

(16) [an utterance given by 平川 when she is walking under an umbrella with other two people]



平川「そんなこと ないよ ボク だって ぬれてる もん」

sonna koto nai yo boku datte nureteru mon

‘That’s not true. (Because) I am also getting wet.’

(『今日の5の2』講談社 2003/11 p.91; Nishida, 2011:17)

Kawano (2016) investigated オネエ言葉 *o-nee-kotoba* ‘sister language’ which is a speech style produced by males on purpose to create an image of female. She pointed that in Japan, males who speak *o-nee-kotoba* tend to use first personal pronouns of female such as あたし *atashi* ‘I (f.)’ and わたし *watashi* ‘I’ rather than first personal pronouns of male like ぼく *boku* ‘I (m.)’ and おれ *ore* ‘I (m.)’. As for sentence-final particles, they tend to use final particles which indicate female language such as わ *wa* and わよ *wayo* and avoid to use final particles of male language.

2.3.2 Chinese Character Language

Zhang & Li (2015) investigated the salutation of Chinese 媽媽 *māmā* and 媽 *mā*, both indicating ‘mother’. They pointed out that in childhood, children tend to use *māmā*, while adults tend to use *mā*, with a further explanation that these two words *māmā* and *mā* not only relate to the age of the speakers but also relate to the characters performed by the

speakers when they are speaking. When the speakers are making a request or being affectionate, they tend to use 媽媽 *māmā* to show intimacy. Adults tend to use 媽 *mā* when they are comforting, protesting, or doing something adult-like. These phenomena show the feature of character language in Chinese.

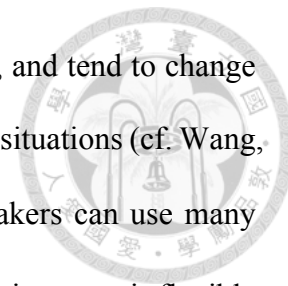
Luo (2012) also investigated character language in Chinese modal verbs (語氣詞 *yǔqìcí*). In his study, he found that 捏 *niē*/ 捏 *niè*/ 逆 *nì*, 呵呵 *hēhē*/ 哈哈 *hāhā*/ 吼吼 *hǒuhǒu*, and 的說 *deshuō* are mostly used by young females on the internet in order to perform different characters.

Furthermore, there is the phenomenon of character language in personal pronouns of Mandarin Chinese. Taking 人家 *rénjiā* ‘other; I or me’ for example, it is used to mention the speaker herself, and it is mostly used by young females (Wan, 2006; Zhao, 2009). Since the use of *rénjiā* is for acting cute and showing the distance between each other is close, when people hear the sentences with the first personal pronoun 人家 *rénjiā*, they will know the sentences are most likely expressed by females. When males want to act with a sense of femininity, they will choose to use 人家 *rénjiā* as his first personal pronoun.

2.3.3 Other Studies of Character Language

Besides the studies mentioned above, there are other studies related to character language. Ueno (2006) pointed out that in *manga*, females use the masculine form to express their strong emotion or that teachers use the masculine form when speaking to male students. Campbell & Mokhtari (2003) pointed out that in daily conversations, Japanese women tend to speak with a louder voice when talking to the daughter than to the husband. Some social

psycholinguists reported that people play many characters in social life, and tend to change their ways of speaking based on their characters in different contexts and situations (cf. Wang, Chen, & Yao, 1995; Chen, 1999). This phenomenon shows that speakers can use many kinds of expressions to present their characters so that character language in nature is flexible and changeable according to different situations.



2.4 Chinese Sentence-final Particles

Sentence-final particles, as the term suggests, appear in the position of sentence-final (Li & Thompson, 1981). Li (2006:1) mentioned that “most of them do not have a denotative or referential meaning, but are mainly used to convey emotive and/or epistemic nuances within a particular discourse context.” Simpson (2014:156) gives a more detailed definition as follows:

in Chinese there is both a general, high frequency of occurrence of particles in sentences and significant diversity in the types of particles available for use, with particularly interesting and complex patterns instantiated by the range of elements collectively referred to as ‘sentence-final particles’. (snip) Sentence-final particles are “phonologically small elements which typically occur in sentence-final position” and are used for a lot of functions in conversations (Simpson, 2014:157).

According to Li & Thompson (1981), there are many kinds of sentence-final particles in Mandarin Chinese such as *le*, *ne*, *ba*, *ou*, *a/ya*, and *ma*. Although Li & Thompson (1981) investigated these seven sentence-final particles, in this thesis, we only choose three sentence-final particles *A* 啊, *Ya* 呀, and *Ne* 呢, and add another sentence-final particle *Ma*

嘛 which is not mentioned by Li & Thompson (1981). The reasons for choosing these four sentence-final particles are as follows. Firstly, according to Word List with Accumulated Word Frequency in Sinica Corpus¹, *A* 啊, *Ya* 呀, and *Ne* 呢 are the most frequently used sentence-final particles in the contemporary Chinese. However, as we can see in Table 3, the frequency of *le* 了 is the highest, but we did not choose it to investigate. The reason is that in our data, *le* 了 is usually followed by other sentence-final particles, such as *A*, *Ya*, *Ma*, and *Ne*, in this case, we only focus on those that are in the final position of the sentence. Secondly, although *Ma* 嘛 only appears with the frequency of 994, we found that there is a phenomenon worthy of investigating. This observation leads us to include these four particles as our research targets.

Table 3. Word List with Accumulated Word Frequency in Sinica Corpus

Word	Frequency
<i>Le</i> 了	11499
<i>Ne</i> 呢	5575
<i>A</i> 啊/ <i>Ya</i> 呀	5126
<i>Ma</i> 嗎	2553
<i>Ba</i> 吧	1948
<i>Ma</i> 嘛	944
<i>Ou</i> 喔	500

¹ Sinica Corpus: 「中央研究院漢語平衡語料庫」 ‘Academia Sinica Balanced Corpus of Modern Chinese’, simplified as Sinica Corpus which with 10 millions words, collected from the articles from 1981 to 2007.

Different from our focus, the previous studies of sentence-final particles are mostly concerned about the grammatical and pragmatic functions of them in usage. Table 4 is the related studies of sentence-final particles *A* 啊, *Ma* 嘛, and *Ne* 呢. The details will be specified in sections 2.4.1, 2.4.2, and 2.4.3. Section 2.4.4 will be the summary of this section.

Table 4. Related Studies of Sentence-final Particles *A* 啊, *Ma* 嘛, and *Ne* 呢

Research interests and approaches	<i>A</i> 啊	<i>Ma</i> 嘛	<i>Ne</i> 呢
Traditional descriptive grammar	Chao (1968) Lu (1980) Dow (1983)		Chao (1968) Lu (1980)
Semantic analysis		Chappell (1991)	
Functional approach	Li & Thompson (1981) Chu (1998)	Chu (1998)	Li & Thompson (1981) Chu (1984, 1985a, 1985b, 1998)
Discourse analysis			Alleton (1981) King (1986) Chu (1999)
Conversation analysis	Shie (1991) Wu (2000, 2004) Chu (2002)		

2.4.1 *A* 啊

For traditional descriptive grammar, Chao (1968) pointed out ten functions of sentence-final particles, ranging from use as “a marker of questions, commands, exclamations, reminders, warnings, to occurrence in topic enumeration, and vocative address” (cited from Simpson, 2014:161). Lu (1980) indicated four categories of *A* 啊. Firstly, at the

end of declaratives for explanation or reminding. Secondly, at the end of imperatives for request, command, or warning. Thirdly, at the end of exclamatory sentences. Fourthly, at the end of questions to make the sentence with a mild tone. Dow (1983: 149-151) listed eight functions which are similar to those proposed by Chao (1968).

As for the functional approach, Li & Thompson (1981) proposed that *A* 啊 is with the core function of reduced forcefulness of the sentence. They also pointed out five uses of *A*, which are confirmation question, vocative particle, command, impatient statement, and warning. Chu (1998) mentioned that *A* is used to convey that the utterance of the speaker is speaker's personal concern.

In the field of conversation analysis, Shie (1991) classified *A* 啊 into two kinds: '*A*₁' for higher tone, and '*A*₂' for lower tone (1991: 6). '*A*₁' has the function of response marker, such as the functions of "puzzlement-clearance, request-noncompliance, request-compliance, question-answer, accusation-defense, assertion-endorsement, and assertion-challenge" (Wang, 2008: 10). '*A*₁' also marks the function of summarization and abstraction. '*A*₂' "appears in questions and exclamations for an accusation, challenge, asking for information, and asking for confirmation" (Wang, 2008: 11). Wu (2000; 2004) pointed out two kinds of *A* 啊: lower pitch *A* 啊 and higher pitch *A* 啊. Lower pitch *A* occurs in questions. In yes/no questions, *A* is used to make confirmation. In *wh*- and *A-not-A* questions, *A* is "associated with what the speaker perceives as a problematic and/or unexpected aspect of a situation in the local conversation environment" (Wu 2004: 153). Higher pitch *A* occurs in declaratives, and is used to make disagreement. Chu (2002) proposed that *A* 啊 is a discourse marker

which is used to indicate the utterance of the speaker is related to the discourse context, and also has an emotive and expressive function.



2.4.2 *Ma* 嘛

In the dictionary of ZDIC 《漢典》², *Ma* 嘛 is described as mainly having the function of indicating obvious information. For semantic analysis, Chappell (1991) proposed two uses of *Ma*. The first is to remind the listener that the information is obvious. The second one is used to disagree with the hearer's viewpoint.

From the functional approach, Chu (1998) investigated *Ma* 嘛 from two different levels. On the semantic level, *Ma* indicates that the current information is factual. For example, *Ma* 嘛 in example (17) is used to indicate the situation of having a napkin is factual. On the discourse level, *Ma* is used by the speaker to make the hearer to accept the speaker's opinion, such as example (18). In example (18), *Ma* 嘛 is used to make the hearer to accept what the speaker said.

² ZDIC 《漢典》: It is a free online Chinese dictionary. In this dictionary, it introduced the Chinese words' evolution, and listed the explanation from Kangxi Dictionary and Shuowen Jiezi. <http://www.zdic.net>



(17)

A: (Holding his nose at the dinner table)

我 是 怕 會 打 噴 嚏 。

wǒ shì pà huì dǎpēnti

I COP afraid will sneeze

B: (Turning to C)

Napkin 拿 一 張 給 他 。

napkin ná yì zhāng gěi tā.

napkin take one CL give him

A: Napkin 我 有 嘛 。

Napkin wǒ yǒu ma

napkin I have MA

A: I am afraid I would sneeze.

B: Get a napkin for him.

A: Napkin, I've got one.



(18)

你 自 己 決 定 的 嘛 。

nǐ zìjǐ juéding de ma

you self decide DE **MA**

‘You made the decision by yourself.’

(Chu 1998: 152)

Du & Zhang (2011) further indicated that *Ma* possesses the function of giving advice or expressing a hope that can make the sentence with a mild tone (cf. Li, 2008; Du & Zhang, 2011; and Hu, 2014). *Ma* 嘛 in example (19) makes the sentence with a mild tone.



(19)

C: 誰 帶 你 去 玩?

shuí dài nǐ qù wán

who take you go play

不 帶，你 姥姥 不 讓 去。

bú dài , nǐ lǎolǎo bú ràng qù

NEG take you grandmother NEG let go

E: 姥姥， 我 想 去 嘛。

lǎolǎo , wǒ xiǎng qù ma

grandmother I want go MA

A: 不 讓 去。

bú ràng qù

NEG let go

E: 讓 我 去 嘛。

ràng wǒ qù ma

let me go MA

C: Who will take you out? No, your grandmother doesn't let you go out to play.

E: Grandmother, I want to go out.

A: No, you can't go out.

E: Let me go out.



Du & Zhang (2011:148 (6))

2.4.3 *Ne* 呢

Described in the dictionary of ZDIC 《漢典》, *Ne* 呢 has three functions. The first one is questioning, as shown in example (20). The second one is declarative, as shown in example (21). The third one is indicating continued action, such as in example (22).

(20) [*Ne* 呢 of questioning function]

他 要 吃 什麼 呢？

tā yào chī shíme ne ?

he want eat what **NE**

‘What does he want to eat?’

(Li and Thompson, 1981:305 (219))



(21) [*Ne* 呢 of declarative function]

他們 有 三條 牛 呢。

tāmen yǒu sāntiáo niú ne。

they exist three cattle **NE**

‘They have three cattle.’ (with a surprise)

(Li and Thompson, 1981:301 (203b))

(22) [*Ne* 呢 indicates continued action]

張三 說 著 話 呢。

Zhāngsān shuō zhe huà ne。

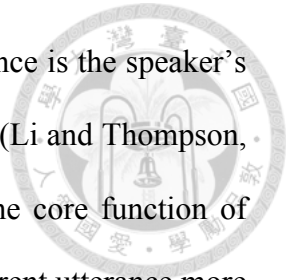
Zhangsan speak DUR utterance **NE**

‘Zhangsan is speaking.’

(Li and Thompson, 1981:302 (205))

Regarding the traditional descriptive grammar, Chao (1968) mentioned that *Ne* 呢 can show the state of the event is continued, the degree of significance, and also the interest of the speaker. Lu (1980) pointed out that *Ne* 呢 is used for showing the state of the event is continued, indicating the fact with exaggeration, questioning, and pausing in the middle of the sentence.

From the functional approach, according to Li and Thompson (1981), *Ne* can be used in declaratives and questions. They pointed out that declarative *Ne* “has the semantic function



of pointing out to the hearer that the information conveyed by the sentence is the speaker's response to some claim, expectation, to belief on the part of the hearer" (Li and Thompson, 1981:300). Chu (1984; 1985a; 1985b; 1998) mentioned that *Ne* has the core function of marking relevance. This observation means using *Ne* is "to make the current utterance more relevant to the discourse unit" (Li, 2006: 8).

From the approach of discourse analysis, Alleton (1981) mentioned that *Ne* occurs in the context of interrogative, suspensive, and assertive. The similarity is to make the hearer respond to the speaker's question or agree with the speaker's opinion (Alleton, 1981: 115). King (1986: 29-33) said that *Ne* is used to highlight the background information, and also concluded four contexts that *Ne* occurs in: 1) repetition of the information that is previously mentioned; 2) rhetorical questions; 3) explanation towards the previous information; and 4) directly address the topic to the hearer. Chu (1999) further proposed that *Ne* has the discourse function of sentential-linking.

Lin (1981) pointed out that we can make the tone of the question softer by adding *Ne* 呢. Alleton (1981) said that in face-to-face interaction, *Ne* plays the mitigating role and makes the sentence being more politely (Chu, 1984). Chang (1994) also claimed that sentence-final particle *Ne* has the function to express politeness.

2.4.4 Summary

After reviewing the literature by these researchers, we have identified many kinds of uses of *A* 啊, *Ma* 嘛, and *Ne* 呢. Based on these insights, we aim to integrate these uses into a simplified version since some uses introduced in the previous sections are very similar to

each other. The integration of the usage of *A* 啊, *Ma* 嘛, and *Ne* 呢 is summarized in Table 5.



Table 5. The Integration of the usages of *A* 啊, *Ma* 嘛, and *Ne* 呢

<i>A</i> 啊	<i>Ma</i> 嘛	<i>Ne</i> 呢
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Questioning ● Declarative ● Reducing forcefulness ● Conveying speaker's concern (such as confirmation, disagreement, noncompliance, challenge, summarization) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Obvious information ● Speaker's opinion (such as giving advice or expressing a hope) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Questioning ● Declarative ● Topic marker ● Relevance marker ● Making hearer involve in the conversation

We considered that those uses of *A* 啊 can be integrated into the functions of question and declarative which can convey the speaker's concerns. *A* 啊 also has the function of "reduce forcefulness," and can make the utterance with a milder tone. Thus, in this study, we examine our data with two main functions, that is, the function of questioning, as shown in example (23) and the function of declarative shown in example (24).

(23) [*A* 啊 and *Ya* 呀 of questioning function]

誰 啊/呀？

shuí ā /ya ?

who A/YA

‘Who is it?’



(Chao, 1968:398)

(24) [*A* 啊 and *Ya* 呀 of declarative function]

別 害怕 啊/呀。

bié hàipà ā /ya 。

not afraid A/YA

‘Don’t be afraid.’

(Chao, 1968:398)

As for *Ma* 嘛, we summarize those uses into two, indicating obvious information as shown in example (25) and indicating the speaker’s opinion, such as giving advice or expressing a hope as in example (26).



(25) [*Ma* 嘛 indicates obvious information]

別 灰心， 這 是 頭 一 回 嘛 。

bié huī xīn , *zhèshì tóu yīhuí* *ma* 。

not discouraged this.is first once **MA**

‘This is the first time. Don’t be discouraged.’

(《現代漢語詞典》，2003:673)

(26) [*Ma* 嘛 with the function of indicating the speaker’s opinion]

你 快 一 點 嘛 。

nǐ kuàiyīdiǎn *ma* 。

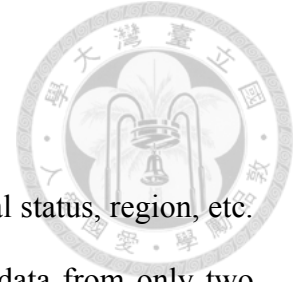
you hurry.up **MA**

‘Please hurry up.’

(《現代漢語詞典》，2003:673)

For *Ne* 呢, in this these, those different uses are merged into questioning, declarative, topic marker, relevance marker, and making the hearer involve in the conversation. In this study, we examined our data with two functions: questioning and declarative.

2.5 Sociolinguistics-Gender and Age



Although it includes social stereotypes, such as gender, age, social status, region, etc. in role language and character language, we decided to examine our data from only two aspects, gender and age. Since other aspects, such as social status and region of the participants in variety shows and TV dramas are difficult to know, we choose to discuss gender, and age differences of our data in our study. Thus, in this section, we will introduce the gender issue and the age issue in sociolinguistics.

2.5.1 Gender

According to Wardhaugh (2010:333), “a major topic in sociolinguistics is the connection between the structures, vocabularies, and ways of using particular languages and the social roles of the men and women who speak these languages.” Gender concerns that males and females possess psychological, social, and cultural differences (Giddens, 1989; Wodak & Benke, 1997; Wardhaugh, 2010; Xu, 2015). Cameron (2006:724) mentioned that “*gender* refers to the cultural traits and behaviors deemed appropriate for men or women by a particular society.” The gender studies of sociolinguistics investigated men and women’s different speech styles. These language differences can indicate “how gender-related concepts are represented by linguistic forms” (Xu, 2015:626). Also, it is said that “gender played an important role in conversation and was different in every situational context” (Wodak & Benke, 1997:131; Ochs, 1992; Henley and Kramer, 1991).

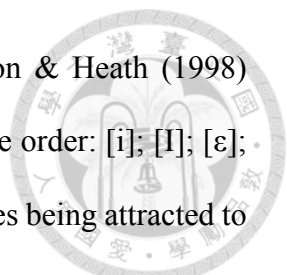


2.5.2 Age

According to Eckert (1997:151), “age stratification of linguistic variables can reflect change in the speech of the community as it moves through time, and change in the speech of the individual as he or she moves through life.” However, age in sociolinguistics may be the one that is seldom examined (Llamas, 2006). Llamas (2006:69) indicated that “unlike gender, ethnicity or social class, age is often approached uncritically and treated as a biological fact with which to categorize speakers.” Nevertheless, age is an essential aspect of our identities. Age will have an influence on events that we can do or cannot do, and will also influence “how we perceive and treat others, all of which is mediated through language” (Llamas, 2006:69). Moreover, the effect of age toward our behavior in terms of language is worthy to be investigated (Coupland, 2001; Llamas, 2006).

2.6 Sound Symbolism

“Speech sounds encode not only lexical information but also social identity such as gender, age, geographic origin, ethnicity, formality and so on.” (Li, Kong, Beckman, & Edwards, 2008) According to Kong, Yoneyama, & Beckman (2014), “in Japanese, overall lower pitch and a less breathy voice quality are also related to less feminine styles.” Men’s stimuli mostly had low F0 values and were more masculine; however, women’s stimuli showed a larger variation in F0 values and more femininity (Kong, Yoneyama, & Beckman, 2014). Also, based on frequency code hypothesis (Ohala, 1983; 1994; Newman, 1933; O’Boyle and Tarte, 1980), Shinohara & Kawahara (2010) said that “the F2 values (from high



to low) follow the reserve order: [i]; [e]; [a]; [u]; [o]. Besides, Gordon & Heath (1998) claimed that the vowel-quality sequence, from light to heavy, follows the order: [i]; [I]; [ɛ]; [æ]; [a]; [ɔ]; [o]; [u]. Gordon & Heath (1998:432) mentioned that “females being attracted to the “light” [i] while males are, if anything, pulled toward the “dark/ heavy” back rounded vowels.” The reason for these phenomena is that as Sachs (1975:154) pointed out, “men and women may produce voices that aim toward male-female archetypes.” The male-female archetypes are the notions that the social stereotypes toward the image of male and female. For example, females need to attract males, and also with the role of caregivers, while males need to deter rivals, and also with “the symbolic expression of physical power” (Gordon & Heath, 1998:432). In this case, light vowels will be associated with females, and heavy vowels will be associated with males.

Chapter 3 Methodology

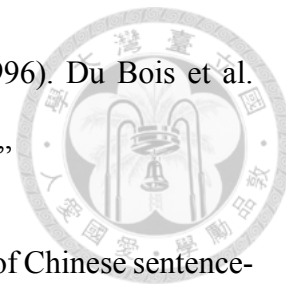


The linguistic data used in this study are collected from two sources, i.e., variety shows and TV dramas. In order to investigate the phenomena of our research target, we examined these variety shows and TV dramas produced in both Taiwan and China. In the following subsections, we present the research method of this study. In section 3.1, the research framework is first illustrated. In section 3.2, the basic information of the research method is introduced. Further, in 3.2.1 and 3.2.2, we give the details of the data source of variety shows made in Taiwan and China. Finally, the information of another data source, TV dramas of Taiwan and China, is introduced in 3.2.3 and 3.2.4.

3.1 Research Framework

To probe into the issue of sentence-final particles, the data of this research is mainly from oral speech. We adopted both quantitative and qualitative approach. In terms of quantitative research, we counted the number of the tokens of sentence-final particles *A* 啊, *Ya* 呀, *Ma* 嘛, and *Ne* 呢 in our data sets. For qualitative research, we give some excerpts that include the four sentence-final particles for a clear illustration and discussion. The transcription of the excerpts follows the guidelines of the intonation unit (IU) proposed by Du Bois et al. (1993) and Tao (1996). The intonation unit (IU), according to Tao (1996:9), “has been taken as the natural unit of discourse” and “is an auditory unit that can be identified in naturally-occurring speech.” It is usually recognized by the intonation contour, and there

is a pause precedes it (Chafe, 1987:22; Du Bois et al., 1993; Tao, 1996). Du Bois et al. (1993:46) also said that “each intonation unit appears on a separate line.”



Note that since this paper aims at investigating character language of Chinese sentence-final particles, in order to focus on our research targets, we used a simplified version of the conventions and symbols in our study. We focus on transcribing oral speech into intonation units and leave out those detailed conventions and symbols presented in *Talking Data* (Du Bois et al., 1993).

3.2 Basic Information on Research Methods

In order to collect rich data of Chinese sentence-final particles, we collected the data from variety shows and dramas produced in Taiwan and China. The variety shows are *Yi Dai Nu Wang* 《一袋女王》, *Hua Er Yu Shao Nian* 《花兒與少年》, and *Dai Zhe Ba Ma Qu Lu Xing* 《帶著爸媽去旅行》. The TV dramas are *Suan Tian Zhi Wei* 《酸甜之味》, *Jiang Lao Shi Ni Tan Guo Lian Ai Ma* 《姜老師妳談過戀愛嗎》, *Wei Wei Yi Xiao Hen Qing Cheng* 《微微一笑很傾城》, and *Shan Shan Lai Le* 《杉杉來了》. The reasons that we choose variety shows and TV dramas from both Taiwan and China are as follow. Firstly, choosing two genres of TV programs. Since variety shows are more closely to natural speech, and TV dramas are based on the script, in order to make the data more natural, we examine these two kinds of TV programs. Secondly, choosing TV programs from both Taiwan and China. This design is because we want to make sure that the phenomena we decide to investigate exist in these two areas. The age groups we observed in these shows are divided into three categories:

those under 30 years old, those in 31 to 50 years old, and those over 51 years old. According to age, we choose 60 males and 60 females in total. We randomly extract 765 minutes from one variety show of Taiwan, 765 minutes from two variety shows of China, and 2400 minutes from the four dramas of Taiwan and China, and analyze how the sentence-final particles *A* 啊, *Ya* 呀, *Ma* 嘛, and *Ne* 呢 are used in these shows. The transcriptions of the data in this thesis only focus on the fragments that include these sentence-final particles. The details of data sources are presented in Table 6 and Table 7.

Table 6. Information of Data Sources-TV Variety Shows

Area		Taiwan	China		Total
Name of the variety show		<i>Yi Dai Nu Wang</i> 《一袋女王》 (Lady Commander)	<i>Hua Er Yu Shao Nian</i> 《花兒與少年》 (Divas Hit the Road)	<i>Dai Zhe Ba Ma Qu Lu Xing</i> 《帶著爸媽去旅行》 (With my parents to travel)	
Length		765 mins	765 mins		1530 mins
Broadcast date		<u>2017</u> 2/21, 2/28, 3/13, 3/14, 4/4, 4/10, 4/11, 4/17, 4/18, 4/19, 4/20, 4/25, 4/27, 5/1, 5/2, 5/4, 5/10	<u>2014/5/2,</u> 5/16 <u>2015/5/9,</u> 5/23 <u>2017/4/23,</u> 4/30	<u>2014/12/21,</u> 12/28 <u>2015/1/18,</u> 1/25	
Male	Under 30	5 people	5 people		30 people
	31-50	5 people	5 people		
	Over 51	5 people	5 people		
Female	Under 30	5 people	5 people		30 people
	31-50	5 people	5 people		
	Over 51	5 people	5 people		

Table 7. Information of Data Sources-TV Dramas



Area		Taiwan		China		
Name of the TV drama		<i>Suan Tian Zhi Wei</i> 《酸甜之味》 (Family Time)	<i>Jiang Lao Shi Ni Tan Guo Lian Ai Ma</i> 《姜老師妳談過戀愛嗎》 (Jiang Teacher, You Talked About Love it)	<i>Wei Wei Yi Xiao Hen Qing Cheng</i> 《微微一笑很傾城》 (LOVE O2O)	<i>Shan Shan Lai Le</i> 《杉杉來了》 (Boss & Me)	Total
Length		600 mins	600 mins	600 mins	600 mins	2400 mins
Broadcast date		2017/3/18~ 2017/6/24	2016/11/18~ 2016/12/23	2016/8/22~ 2016/9/6	2014/7/8~ 2014/7/20	
Male	Under 30	5 people		5 people		30 people
	31-50	5 people		5 people		
	Over 51	5 people		5 people		
Female	Under 30	5 people		5 people		30 people
	31-50	5 people		5 people		
	Over 51	5 people		5 people		

3.2.1 The Variety Show -*Yi Dai Nu Wang* 《一袋女王》 (Taiwan)

Yi Dai Nu Wang 《一袋女王》 ('Lady Commander') is a variety show produced in Taiwan, hosted by a male host (曾國城) and a female host (嚴立婷). The main language spoken in this variety show is Mandarin Chinese with some Taiwanese occasionally. The content of this TV program includes discussions on daily experiences or gossips between the two hosts and the guests. Since there are a lot of episodes in this variety show, we only randomly extracted 17 episodes, about 765 minutes in total for data analyzing. In these episodes, we chose 15 males and 15 females that accord with the age groups we set out to

investigate their speech. The detail information of *Yi Dai Nu Wang* 《一袋女王》 is in Table

8.



Table 8. Information of *Yi Dai Nu Wang* 《一袋女王》

		<i>Yi Dai Nu Wang</i> 《一袋女王》 (Lady Commander)
Area		Taiwan
Host		曾國城 and 嚴立婷
Length		765 mins
Broadcast date		2017 2/21, 2/28, 3/13, 3/14, 4/4, 4/10, 4/11, 4/17, 4/18, 4/19, 4/20, 4/25, 4/27, 5/1, 5/2, 5/4, 5/10
Male	Under 30	5 people
	31-50	5 people
	Over 51	5 people
Female	Under 30	5 people
	31-50	5 people
	Over 51	5 people

3.2.2 The Variety Shows -*Hua Er Yu Shao Nian* 《花兒與少年》 & *Dai Zhe Ba Ma Qu*

Lu Xing 《帶著爸媽去旅行》 (China)

Hua Er Yu Shao Nian 《花兒與少年》 and *Dai Zhe Ba Ma Qu Lu Xing* 《帶著爸媽去旅行》 are variety shows of China. The main language used in these variety shows is Mandarin Chinese. The content of these two variety shows is reality programming involving traveling. The attendees in these two reality shows are supposed to travel by themselves without the help of the staff of the TV programs. In this case, all the speech is spontaneous speech. There are a lot of episodes of these two variety shows, so we only randomly extracted 10 episodes, about 765 minutes in total for data analyzing. From these two shows, we chose

15 males and 15 females that accord with the age groups we set out to investigate. The details of these two shows are further listed in Table 9.



Table 9. Information of *Hua Er Yu Shao Nian* 《花兒與少年》 and *Dai Zhe Ba Ma Qu Lu Xing* 《帶著爸媽去旅行》

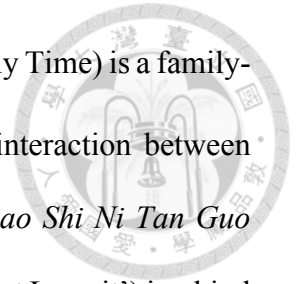
		<i>Hua Er Yu Shao Nian</i> 《花兒與少年》 (Divas Hit the Road)	<i>Dai Zhe Ba Ma Qu Lu Xing</i> 《帶著爸媽去旅行》 (With my parents to travel)
Area		China	
Main Host or guest		鄭佩佩、張凱麗、許晴、劉濤、李菲兒、張翰、華晨宇等等	張博宇、孫浩、武藝、張楚楚、呂麗萍、宋佳、陳翔、高梓淇、孫海英、武力等等
Length		765 mins	
Broadcast date		2014/5/2, 5/16 2015/5/9, 5/23 2017/4/23, 4/30	2014/12/21, 12/28 2015/1/18, 1/25
Male	Under 30	5 people	
	31-50	5 people	
	Over 51	5 people	
Female	Under 30	5 people	
	31-50	5 people	
	Over 51	5 people	

3.2.3 TV Dramas -*Suan Tian Zhi Wei* 《酸甜之味》 & *Jiang Lao Shi Ni Tan Guo Lian*

Ai Ma 《姜老師妳談過戀愛嗎》 (Taiwan)

Suan Tian Zhi Wei 《酸甜之味》 (Family Time) and *Jiang Lao Shi Ni Tan Guo Lian*

Ai Ma 《姜老師妳談過戀愛嗎》 ('Jiang Teacher, You Talked About Love it') are TV dramas produced in Taiwan. The main language used in these two dramas is Mandarin Chinese, but



Taiwanese is mixed occasionally. *Suan Tian Zhi Wei*《酸甜之味》(Family Time) is a family-type drama, broadcast from 2017/3/18 to 2017/6/24. It describes the interaction between family members and the meaning of affection towards people. *Jiang Lao Shi Ni Tan Guo Lian Ai Ma*《姜老師妳談過戀愛嗎》('Jiang Teacher, You Talked About Love it') is a kind of mystery story, broadcast from 2016/11/18 to 2016/12/23. It explores those secrets that are not to be divulged during one's growth. For these two dramas, we randomly extracted 1200 minutes in total and chose 15 males and 15 females that accord with the age groups we set out to investigate their speech. The detail information of these two dramas is listed in Table 10.

Table 10. Information of *Suan Tian Zhi Wei*《酸甜之味》 and *Jiang Lao Shi Ni Tan Guo Lian Ai Ma*《姜老師妳談過戀愛嗎》

		<i>Suan Tian Zhi Wei</i> 《酸甜之味》 (Family Time)	<i>Jiang Lao Shi Ni Tan Guo Lian Ai Ma</i> 《姜老師妳談過戀愛嗎》 (Jiang Teacher, You Talked About Love it)
Area		Taiwan	
Main Host or guest		賀一航、柯淑勤、六月、張書豪、黃遠、林子晞、方志友等等	藍正龍、葉星辰、許光漢、郎祖筠、柯叔元等等
Length		600 mins	600 mins
Broadcast date		2017/3/18~2017/6/24	2016/11/18~2016/12/23
Male	Under 30	5 people	
	31-50	5 people	
	Over 51	5 people	
Female	Under 30	5 people	
	31-50	5 people	
	Over 51	5 people	

3.2.4 TV Dramas -*Wei Wei Yi Xiao Hen Qing Cheng* 《微微一笑很傾城》 & *Shan Shan*

Lai Le 《杉杉來了》 (China)

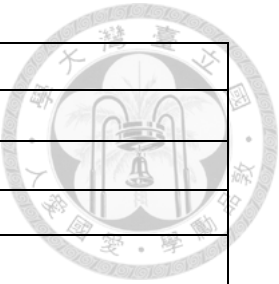


Wei Wei Yi Xiao Hen Qing Cheng 《微微一笑很傾城》 (LOVE O2O) and *Shan Shan Lai Le* 《杉杉來了》 (Boss & Me) are TV dramas produced in China. The main language used in these two dramas is Mandarin Chinese. The story of *Wei Wei Yi Xiao Hen Qing Cheng* 《微微一笑很傾城》 is mainly about the daily life or school life of protagonists, broadcast from 2016/8/22 to 2016/9/6. *Shan Shan Lai Le* 《杉杉來了》 is about the love story of the female protagonist during her work, broadcast from 2014/7/8 to 2014/7/20. For these two dramas, we randomly extracted 1200 minutes in total and chose 15 males and 15 females as our research targets that accord with the age groups to investigate. The detail information of these two dramas is listed in Table 11.

Table 11. Information of *Wei Wei Yi Xiao Hen Qing Cheng* 《微微一笑很傾城》 and *Shan Shan Lai Le* 《杉杉來了》

	<i>Wei Wei Yi Xiao Hen Qing Cheng</i> 《微微一笑很傾城》 (LOVE O2O)	<i>Shan Shan Lai Le</i> 《杉杉來了》 (Boss & Me)
Area	China	
Main actors or actress	鄭爽、楊洋、毛曉彤、白宇等等	張翰、趙麗穎、黃明、李呈媛等等
Length	600 mins	600 mins
Broadcast date	2016/8/22~2016/9/6	2014/7/8~2014/7/20
Male	Under 30	5 people

	31-50	5 people
	Over 51	5 people
Female	Under 30	5 people
	31-50	5 people
	Over 51	5 people



Chapter 4 Data Analysis



In chapter 4, we present the results of our investigation. In section 4.1, the analysis of sentence-final particles *A* 啊 and *Ya* 呀 is presented. In section 4.2, the analysis of sentence-final particle *Ma* 嘛 follows. In section 4.3, we give the analysis of sentence-final particle *Ne* 呢. Finally, an overall discussion based on these analyses is presented in section 4.4.

4.1 Analysis of Sentence-final Particles *A* 啊 and *Ya* 呀

In this section, we present our investigation of the sentence-final particles of *A* 啊 and *Ya* 呀 shown in our data. With different sentence-final particles, there will be different functions of sentences (Huang, 1994; Lee-Wong, 1998). Therefore, these two sentence-final particles will be discussed with the functions of questioning and declarative based on their usage in the drama.

The data will be discussed from two aspects, namely gender, and age. We found 971 tokens of sentence-final particles of *A* 啊 and *Ya* 呀 in the collected data. Among them, 406 tokens are used by male characters, and 565 tokens by female characters. The overall results are shown in Table 12.

Table 12. The statistical results of 啊 *A* and 呀 *Ya* (tokens and percentages)



		Male			Female			
Age group		Under 30	31-50	Over 51	Under 30	31-50	Over 51	default ^a
Phonological rule		Tokens	Tokens	Tokens	Tokens	Tokens	Tokens	
Questioning	啊 <i>A</i> /a/ → [a]/ [a][u][o]_#	20	35	19	10	41	37	√
		19%			16%			
	啊 <i>A</i> /a/ → [a]/ [i][e]_#	18	22	12	7	6	5	
		13%			3%			
	呀 <i>Ya</i> /a/ → [ja]/ [i][e]_#	1	0	0	14	15	12	√
		0%			7%			
	呀 <i>Ya</i> /a/ → [ja]/ [a][u][o]_#	4	2	0	64	25	15	
		2%			18%			
Declarative	啊 <i>A</i> /a/ → [a]/ [a][u][o]_#	39	82	23	28	58	49	√
		36%			24%			
	啊 <i>A</i> /a/ → [a]/ [i][e]_#	30	67	18	7	6	6	
		29%			3%			
	呀 <i>Ya</i> /a/ → [ja]/ [i][e]_#	0	0	0	20	26	20	√
		0%			12%			
	呀 <i>Ya</i> /a/ → [ja]/ [a][u][o]_#	1	3	1	39	27	28	
		1%			17%			
Total tokens percentages		406 100%			565 100%			

^a: “default” means “regular in terms of Chinese phonological rules.”



4.1.1 Gender

The results show that there is a gender difference in character language in terms of the distributions of the sentence-final particles *A* 啊 and *Ya* 呀 when used as the function of questioning and declarative, which is seldom recognized in the previous literature. Although the use of *A* 啊 and *Ya* 呀 can be categorized as variants of the same phoneme /a/ based on the Chinese phonological rule /a/ → [ja]/ [i]_#, there is a tendency that males still use *A* 啊 up to 42% of the total numbers of sentence-final particles expressed by male, and females still use *Ya* 呀 up to 35% of the total numbers of sentence-final particles expressed by female regardless of the phonological rule. That is, although it is after [i] and [e], males still tend to use *A* 啊. On the contrary, although it is after [a], [u], and [o], females still tend to use *Ya* 呀. We propose that it may be related to the sound symbolic image of [a] which is associated with the heavy image, and [i] with the light image (Gordon & Heath, 1998). Also, the speech style of male is usually related to straightforwardness and unsophisticated character; while the image of female is of tenderness, gracefulness, and restrained character (Li, 2006). Thus, the heavy image is associated with the image of male and the light image is associated with the image of female (Gordon & Heath, 1998). Examples of questioning *A* 啊 and *Ya* 呀 are given in (27) and (28), and examples of declarative *A* 啊 and *Ya* 呀 are given in (29) and (30). The four examples show that males use *A* 啊 and females use *Ya* 呀 regardless of the phonological rule. Note that the abbreviation of M stands for male, and F stands for female in the following examples.

(27) [an excerpt involving a male and a female] (during cooking)



→ M: 這 辣椒 洗 不 洗 啊?

zhè làjiāo xǐ bù xǐ ā

this chilli.pepper wash NEG wash A

F: 洗 呀。

xǐ ya

wash ya

M: Is it necessary to wash the chilli pepper?

F: Yes.

(帶著爸媽去旅行, 2014/12/28)

(28) [an excerpt involving a female and a male]

→ F: 現在 幾點 了 呀?

xiànzài jǐdiǎn le ya

now when le YA

M: 十一 點。

shíyī diǎn

eleven o'clock



(花兒與少年, 2015/5/9)

F: What time is it now?

M: 11 o'clock.

(29) [an excerpt involving two males] (talking about a girl wants them to repair the computer)

→ M1: 兄弟們，好消息，好消息啊。

xiōngdìmen , hǎo xiāoxī , hǎo xiāoxī ā

dudes good news good news A

我們脫光³有望了。

wǒmen tuō guāng yǒu wàng le

we leave single exist hope le

M2: 很稀奇嗎？

hěn xīqí ma

very special ma

³ There are two meanings of 脫光 *tuōguāng*: one means out of singles, and the other one means taking off the clothes.

我 每天 洗澡 不 都 脫光
wǒ měitiān xǐzǎo bù dōu tuō guāng
I everyday bath NEG always take.all.the.clothes.off



M1: 活該 你 單身。

huógāi nǐ dānshēn
deserve you single

我 認真 的。

wǒ rènzhēn de
I serious DE

前陣子 結識 一個 人，

qiánzhènzǐ jiéshí yīgè rén
recently meet a person

校花 宿舍 的，

xiàohuā sùshè de
campus.queen dorm DE

說 要 我們 幫 她 修 電腦。

shuō yào wǒmen bāng tā xiū diànnǎo
say want us help her repair computer



M1: Dudes. Good news. It's the good news. We have a chance to say goodbye to the single life.

M2: Is it very special? Don't I take all the clothes off when I have a bath everyday?

M1: You deserve being single. I am serious. I met a person recently. She lives in the dorm of campus queen and wants us to fix her computer.

(微微一笑很傾城, Ep. 2)

(30) [utterances involving two females] (a girl wants to borrow the cellphone of her friend)

F1: 借 我 一下 手機。

jiè wǒ yīxià shǒujī

lend me a.while cellphone

我 給 大神 發 短信。

wǒ gěi dàshén fā duǎnxìn

I give Dashen send message

F2: 大神 怎麼 不 買 個 手機 送 你？

dàshén zěnmě bù mǎi gè shǒujī sòng nǐ

Dashen why NEG buy CL cellphone give you



F1: 大神 不 是 認識 幾 天 就 做 這種 事 的 人，
dàshén bù shì rènshí jǐ tiān jiù zuò zhèzhǒng shì de rén
Dashen NEG COPULA meet several day then do this.kind.of thing DE person

→ 那 多 尷尬 呀。
nà duō gāngà ya
that so embarrassed YA

F1: Lending me the cellphone for a while, I send Dashen a message.

F2: Why doesn't Dashen buy you a cellphone?

F1: Dashen is not the person that will do this kind of thing when we just meet for several days. It's so embarrassing.

(微微一笑很傾城, Ep. 15)

As a character language, for special purposes in a particular context, *Ya* 呀 is sometimes used by males for about 3% in our data, and *A* 啊 is sometimes used by females for about 6%. The usages of character language *A* 啊 and *Ya* 呀 do not follow the phonological rule, either. In (31), M1 (a male) uses *Ya* 呀 when he is overwhelmed and speaks with crying sound. M1 asked for finding a female to work at the reception desk; however, since the new coming employee has gynephobia, a female employee is impossible. Thus, M1 is overwhelmed and crying for this situation. In (32), M (a male) uses *Ya* 呀 when

he is doing something funny. In order to sell the second-hand necessity, this male tries hard to making a joke to attract people to buy the products.



(31) [an excerpt involving a male with crying sound] (talking about the matter of hiring a female for the reception desk)

M1: 老三， 我 沒有 其他 要求，

lǎo sān , wǒ méiyǒu qítā yàoliú

laosan I no other request

一定要 為 我們 找 一個 前台 妹子。

yīdìngyào wéi wǒmen zhǎo yīgè qiántái mèizǐ

have.to for us find a reception.desk girl

M2: 這 不可能。

zhè bùkěnéng

this impossible

M1: 為什麼？

wéishíme

why



M2: 我 找 了 一 個 程 序 高 手 過 來 ，

wǒ zhǎo le yīgè chéngxù gāoshǒu guòlái

I find le a programming master come

叫 阿 爽 ，

jiào āshuǎng

call A-shuang

改 天 介 紹 你 們 認 識 。

gǎitiān jièshào nǐmen rènshi

another.day introduce you meet

M1: 不 是 ， 你 找 了 一 個 程 序 高 手 ，

búshì , nǐ zhǎo le yīgè chéngxù gāoshǒu

NEG you find le a programming master

跟 我 們 前 台 有 沒 有 妹 子 有 什 麼 關 係 嗎 ？

gēn wǒmen qiántái yǒuméiyǒu mèizi yǒu shíme guānxì ma

with we reception.desk extst.or.not girl exist what relation ma

M2: 他 有 恐 女 症 。

tā yǒu kǒngnǚzhèng

he has disease.of.fearing.of.female



M1: 什麼？ 什麼 症？

shéme shéme zhèng

what what disease

M3: 我 好像 聽見 了 恐女症 這 三 個 字。

wǒ hǎoxiàng tīngjiàn le kǒngnǚzhèng zhè sān gè zì

I seem.to hear.of le disease.of.fearing.of.female this three CL word

M1: [with crying sound]

→ 怎麼 有 人 有 這麼 奇怪 的 毛病 呀？

zěnmeyǒu rén yǒu zhème qíguài de máobìng ya

why exist person have so strange DE disease YA

M1: Laosan, I don't have other requests. You have to hire a female for the reception desk for us.

M2: It is impossible.

M1: Why?

M2: I have hired a master of programming called A-shuang. I will introduce him to you another day.

M1: But, what is the relationship between hiring a master of programming and hiring a female for the reception desk?

M2: He has gynephobia.

M1: What? What disease?

M3: It seems that I heard of gynephobia.

M1: How come there is the person that has the strange disease?



(微微一笑很傾城, Ep. 7)

(32) [an excerpt involving a male when doing something funny] (selling his quilt)

M: 走 一 走 看 一 看。

zǒu yī zǒu kàn yī kàn

walk a walk see a see

為什麼 說 師哥 這個 被子 好？

wéishéme shuō shīgē zhègè bèizi hǎo

why say senior.brother this quilt good

因為 師哥 用 了 這個 被子，

yīnwéi shīgē yòng le zhègè bèizi

because senior.brother use le this quilt

就 沒 掛過 科，

jiù méi guàguò kē

then no fail exam

→ 所謂 是 掛 科 難 呀。

suǒwèi shì guà kē nán ya

so-called COPULA fail exam difficult YA



F: 師兄， 你 別 好的 不 學 學 壞的。

shīxiōng , nǐ bié hǎode bù xué xué huàide

senior.brother you do.not good.thing NEG learn learn bad.thing

M: Please take a look. What is the reason that this quilt is so good? It is because after I used this quilt, I have never failed the exam. It is the so-called difficult for failing the exam.

F: Senior brother, it is the good things rather than bad things that you have to learn.

(微微一笑很傾城, Ep. 15)

Next, in (33), the female uses *A* 啊 when she is angry and straightforward. This female wanted the handsome senior brother to help her repair the computer; however, the fact is that there is another senior brother to help her, so she felt anger toward the situation and blamed at the handsome senior brother for not coming to help her. In (34), the woman uses *A* 啊 when she speaks with cool attitude. When this woman is studying, the senior brother called her. Also, the senior brother keeps making jokes at this female's expense, so this female answered him with cool attitude. All of these four examples show that character language *A* 啊 and *Ya* 呀 can be used flexibly by the speakers for portraying the images they want to be, such as maleness, femaleness, angry, or joking, etc.

(33) [an excerpt involving a female with anger] (talking about whether the other male knew about the matter of repairing the computer)



F: 謝謝 師哥。

xièxiè shīgē

thank senior.brother

我 問 你 一 個 事。

wǒ wèn nǐ yīgè shì

I ask you a matter

M: 問 吧。

wèn ba

ask ba

F: 肖奈 知道 今天 修 電腦 的 事 嗎？

xiāonài zhīdào jīntiān xiū diànnǎo de shì ma

Xiaonai know today repair computer DE matter ma

M: 知道 啊。

zhīdào ā

know a



F: 他 知道 是 逸然 的 電腦 嗎?

tā zhīdào shì yìrán de diànnǎo ma

he know COPULA Yiran DE computer ma

M: 知道 啊。

zhīdào ā

know a

F: [blaming/ speaking with an angry facial expression]

→ 那 他 怎麼 不 來 啊?

nà tā zěnmē bù lái ā

then he why no come A

M: 我 怎麼 知道 啊?

wǒ zěnmē zhīdào ā

I how know a

F: Thank you, senior brother. I want to ask you a question.

M: Okay.

F: Did Xiaonai know about the matter of repairing the computer?

M: Yes.

F: Did he know it's Yiran's computer?

M: Yes.

F: Then why didn't he come?

M: How would I know?



(34) [an excerpt involving a female with cool attitude] (on a phone call)

M: 微微 師妹，

wēiwēi shīmèi

Weiwei junior.sister

不 是 老 三 的 電 話 是 不 是 很 失 望 ？

bù shì lǎosān de diànhuà shì bù shì hěn shīwàng

NEG COPULA laosan DE call COP NEG COP very disappointed

F: 我 掛 了。

wǒ guà le

I hang.up le

M: 別 別 別，你 要 趕 緊 上 線 給 我 們 發 禮 物。

bié bié bié , nǐ yào gǎn jǐn shàngxiàn gěi wǒmen fā lǐwù

no no no you need quickly online give we send gift



F: 現在 不 行， 等 我 複習 完。

xiànzài bù háng , děng wǒ fùxí wán

now NEG able wait me review over

再說， 你們 打擾 一 個 考生 是 不 對 的。

zàishuō , nǐmen dǎrǎo yī gè kǎoshēng shì bù duì de

furthermore you disturb one CL examinee COP NEG right DE

M: 老三 回來 讓 老三 給 你 複習。

lǎo sān huílái ràng lǎosān gěi nǐ fùxí

laosan come.back let laosan give you review

F: [with a cool attitude]

→ 他 是 在 幫 我 複習 啊。

tā shì zài bāng wǒ fùxí ā

he COPULA ADV help me review A

M: Junoir sister Weiwei, are you very disappointed that this is not Laosan's call?

F: I am going to hang up the phone.

M: No, no, no, you have to go online to give us gifts.

F: I can't do that now. Let me review my lessons. Furthermore, it is wrong to disturb an examinee.

M: After Laosan came back, letting him help you review your lessons.

F: He is helping me review my lessons.



4.1.2 Age

For males' usage of *A* 啊 and *Ya* 呀, the males of the three age groups, under 30, from 31 to 50, and over 51, all tend to use *A* 啊 regardless of the phonological rule. That is, although it is after [i] and [e], they still use *A* 啊 rather than *Ya* 呀, such as in the example (35).

(35) [an excerpt involving three males and two females] (during cooking)

F1: 你們 都 在 燒 義大利麵 嗎?

nǐmen dōu zài shāo yìdàlimiàn ma

you both ASP cook spaghetti ma

M1: 對 啊。兩 個。

duì ā 。 liǎng gè

yes a two CL

F2: 他們 兩個 好 認真 啊。

tāmen liǎnggè hǎo rènzhēn ā

they two very hardworking a



→ M2: 那個 肉 不用 洗 啊?

nàgè ròu bù yòng xǐ ā

that meat unnecessary wash A

F2: @他 已經 放 進去 了。

tā yǐ jīng fàng jìn qù le

he already put into le

M3: 肉 真 不用 洗，

ròu zhēn bú yòng xǐ

meat really unnecessary wash

→ 肉末 怎麼 洗 啊?

ròu mò zěn me xǐ ā

minced.meat how wash A

F1: Are both of you cooking spaghetti?

M1: Yes. Two.

F2: They are very hardworking.

M2: Is it unnecessary to wash the meat?

F2: He has already put it into the pot.

M3: It is unnecessary to wash the meat. How do we wash the minced meat?



As a kind of character language, as we pointed out in section 4.1.1, males will sometimes use *Ya* 呀 for special purposes in certain contexts. However, unlike the use of *A* 啊 that males in all the three age groups use it very often, only the age groups of under 30 and from 31 to 50 will sometimes use character language *Ya* 呀 in certain contexts for special purposes for 10 tokens, such as that in the example (36). M3 uses character language *Ya* 呀 in a certain context for special purposes, for example, to tease someone. In example (36), the three males are talking about the new situation of a game, and M2 thought the new situation is boring since it can just chat during the game. Moreover, M3 teased M2 for M2's opinion. Males with age under 30 and from 31 to 50 use *Ya* 呀 as a character language when they are joking and doing something funny or when they want to present a different image from the current one.

(36) [an excerpt involving three males, talking about a newly released game]

M1: 倩女 什麼 時候 出 的 洞房?

qiànnǚ shéme shíhòu chū de dòngfáng

Qiannu what time produce DE bridal.chamber

M2: 最近 才 上線 的。

zuìjìn cái shàngxiàn de

recently just online DE



不過 只有 兩 個 玩 法，

bùguò zhīyǒu liǎng gè wán fǎ

but only have two CL play way

很 是 無聊 啊。

hěn shì wúliáo ā

very COP boring a

一， 站著 聊天。

yī , zhànzhe liáotiān

one stand chat

二， 坐著 聊天。

èr , zuòzhe liáotiān

two sit chat

M3: [teasing]

→ 你 不 聊天 你 還 想 幹 什麼 呀？

nǐ bù liáotiān nǐ hái xiǎng gàn shéme ya

you NEG chat you even want do what YA

M1: When does Qiannu launch nuptial night?

M2: It just launched recently. But there are only two ways to play. It's very boring. The first one is standing and chatting. The second one is sitting and chatting.

M3: What do you want to do other than chat?



(微微一笑很傾城, Ep. 2)

Next, males in the age group of over 51 are found to use character language *Ya* 呀 for only one token, such as that in example (37). We propose that these phenomena exist because the personality of people who are over 51 years old tend not to do something funny and tend to maintain their solemn image. In example (37), this male that is over 51 years old uses character language *Ya* 呀 to make the tone milder and friendlier when he is talking to the females.

(37) [an excerpt involving a male over 51 and two females] (talking about when will the male leave)

M: 報告 老婆， 親家母，

bàogào lǎopó , qīnjiāmǔ

report wife children's.mother.in.law

我 都 處理 好 了。

wǒ dōu chùlǐ hǎo le

I all arrange okay le



F1: 你 不 再 多 待 幾 天 啊？

nǐ bù zài duō dài jǐ tiān ā

you NEG ADV more stay several day a

→ M: 沒 辦法 呀。

méi bànfa ya

no way YA

公司 籌備 上市，

gōngsī chóubèi shàngshì

company prepare go.on.the.stockmarket

股東 本來 不 打算 讓 我 待 這麼 久 的。

gǔdōng běnlái bù dǎsuàn ràng wǒ dāi zhème jiǔ de

shareholder originally NEG plan let I stay so long DE

F2: 對 啦。

duì la

yes la

你 公司 重要 還 你 女兒 重要
nǐ gōngsī zhòngyào hái nǐ nǚér zhòngyào
 you company important or you daughter important



M: 當然 女兒 重要 啦。
dāngrán nǚér zhòngyào lā
 certainly daughter important la

M: I have already arranged everything.

F1: Don't you stay here for other several days?

M: I can't. The company is preparing for listing onto the stock market. At first, the shareholders didn't plan to let me stay here for so long.

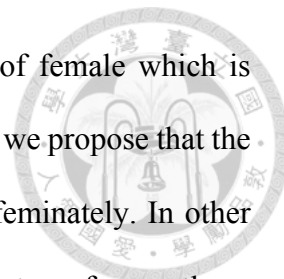
F2: Right. (But) which is more important, your company or your daughter?

M: It is undoubtedly my daughter is more important.

(酸甜之味, Ep. 4)

For females' usage of *A* 啊 and *Ya* 呀, it seems to be similar to males' usage of these two sentence-final particles, the females of the three age groups, i.e., those under 30, from 31 to 50, and over 51, all tend to use *Ya* 呀 regardless of the phonological rule. That is, although it is after [a], [u] and [o], they still use *Ya* 呀 rather than *A* 啊, as shown in example (38). Although females in all the three age groups all tend to use *Ya* 呀 regardless of the phonological rule, by observing the data, we found that females over 51 years old use *Ya* 呀 less than the other two age groups. It is because [i] is related to the light image (Gordon &

Heath, 1998), and the light image will be associated with the image of female which is tenderness, gracefulness, and restrained character (Li, 2006). As a result, we propose that the personality of people who are over 51 years old tend not to behave effeminately. In other words, they tend not to use *Ya* 呀 which connotes an image of effeminate as frequently as females of the other two age groups do.



(38) [an excerpt involving two females] (talking about repairing the computer)

F1: [repairing the computer]

搞定。

gǎodìng

done

→ F2: 還 真 被 你 給 修 好 了 呀。

hái zhēn bèi nǐ gěi xiū hǎo le ya

ADV really PREP you PREP repair done le **YA**

以後 計算機 有 問題 也 靠 你 了。

yǐhòu jìsuànjī yǒu wèntí yě kào nǐ le

after computer exist problem also rely.on you le



F1: 沒問題。

méiwèntí

no.problem

F1: It's done.

F2: It is really fixed by you. I will rely on you whenever I have a problem with my computer.

F1: No problem.

(微微一笑很傾城, Ep. 1)

As a kind of character language, all the three age groups of female use *A* 啊 for special purposes in certain contexts, as shown in example (39). In example (39), the female uses character language *A* 啊 when she is angry. F1 is angry with F2 for that F2 always suggests F1 to do something useless. We suspect that it is because the sound symbolic image of [a] which is associated with the heavy image (Gordon & Heath, 1998) which related to the image of male and straightforwardness.

(39 [an excerpt involving two females] (that one girl is blaming at another girl))

→ F1: [with angry facial expression]

都是 你 啊。

dōushì nǐ ā

ADV you A



拉 我 看 什麼 籃球 比賽。

lā wǒ kàn shéme lánqiú bǐsài

involve I watch what basketball game

F2: 我 也 不 知道 會 發生 這樣 的 事情 啊。

wǒ yě bù zhīdào huì fāshēng zhèyàng de shìqíng ā

I also NEG know will happen this.kind.of DE thing a

我 也是 為 了 你 好。

wǒ yěshì wéi le nǐ hǎo

I also for le you good

F1: 為 我 好。

wéi wǒ hǎo

for I good

你 總是 慫恿 我 做 這個 做 那個，

nǐ zǒngshì sǒngyǒng wǒ zuò zhègè zuò nàgè

you always incite I do this do that

結果 呢？

jiéguǒ ne

result ne

一點 用 都 沒有。

yīdiǎn yòng dōu méi yǒu

not.at.all use ADV not



F1: It is your fault that you bring me to watch the basketball game.

F2: I don't know that it will turn out to be this messy situation. I am doing this for your own good.

F1: For my own good? You always invite me to do this and that. And then? It's no use at all.

(微微一笑很傾城, Ep. 11)

To conclude, based on the findings in sections 4.1.1 and 4.1.2, we claim that for the original usage, males tend to use *A* 啊, and females tend to use *Ya* 呀, while for being a kind of character language, males will sometimes use *Ya* 呀, and females will sometimes use *A* 啊, as it is shown in Table 13.

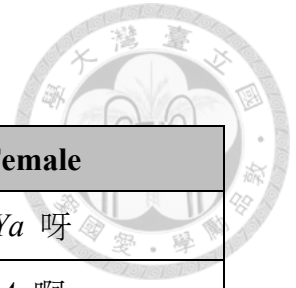


Table 13. Usage of *A* 啊 and *Ya* 呀

	Male	Female
Original usage	<i>A</i> 啊	<i>Ya</i> 呀
Character language	<i>Ya</i> 呀	<i>A</i> 啊

4.2 Analysis of Sentence-final Particle *Ma* 嘛

In this section, we investigate sentence-final particle *Ma* 嘛 in the TV shows we chose. In these TV shows, we found two uses of *Ma* 嘛. Firstly, *Ma* 嘛 expresses the obviousness of the information given by the speaker. Secondly, *Ma* 嘛 has the function of indicating the speaker's opinion.

The data will also be discussed from two aspects, gender, and age. We found 255 tokens of sentence-final particle *Ma* 嘛 in the collected data. Among them, 105 tokens are used by males, and 150 tokens by females. The results are shown in Table 14.

Table 14. Tokens of *Ma* 嘛 and Their Percentages



	Male			Female		
Age group	Under 30	31-50	Over 51	Under 30	31-50	Over 51
	Tokens/ (Percentage %)			Tokens/ (Percentage %)		
Obvious information	24 (22%)	40 (38%)	20 (19%)	8 (5%)	21 (14%)	43 (28%)
Indicating the speaker's opinion (giving advice, expressing a hope or expressing one's emotion)	6 (6%)	7 (7%)	8 (8%)	28 (19%)	34 (23%)	16 (11%)
Total tokens	105/ (100%)			150/ (100%)		

4.2.1 Gender

On the aspect of gender, the results show that there is a gender difference in using the sentence-final particle *Ma* 嘛 in terms of character language. There is a tendency that females use *Ma* 嘛 more than males do. In the total numbers of *Ma* 嘛 used by males, 79% of the usages are indicating obvious information while there are only 21% of them indicating the speaker's opinion. In the use of *Ma* 嘛 by females, 47% of them indicate obvious information, and 53% of them express the speaker's opinion.

The main function of *Ma* 嘛, i.e., indicating obvious information, still appears as the majority in the total numbers of *Ma* 嘛 used by females; however, the percentage of the same function of *Ma* in males' data is 79%. There are only 47% in females' usages indicating obvious information. This shows that in contrast to females, males tend to add *Ma* 嘛 at the

end of the sentence when indicating obvious information. The reason of this phenomenon is that using *Ma* 嘛 at the end of the sentence for expressing something obvious can strengthen the tone and can make the sentence more direct and straight (Du & Zhang, 2011), therefore we propose that females tend not to use it as frequently as males do in order to avoid the straightforward speech style. Examples of indicating obvious information *Ma* 嘛 are given in (40) and (41). Example (40) shows the indicating obvious information *Ma* 嘛 expressed by a male. In this example, the man indicated the fact of the room is too small to live in by adding *Ma* 嘛 at the end of the utterance. Example (41) shows indicating obvious information *Ma* 嘛 given by a female. In that example, the female indicated the fact that the male is senior by adding *Ma* 嘛 at the end of the utterance.

(40) [an excerpt involving a male and a female] (talking about changing the room)

M: 我們 看 可 不 可以 跟 他們 換。

wǒmen kàn kě bù kěyǐ gēn tāmen huàn

we see can NEG can with they exchange

F: 什麼？

shéme

what

M: 看看 可 不 可以 跟 他們 換 房子。

kànkàn kě bù kěyǐ gēn tāmen huàn fángzi
see can NEG can with they exchange house



因為 我們 房間 有點，

yīnwéi wǒmen fángjiān yǒudiǎn

because we room a.little

有點 太 小，

yǒudiǎn tài xiǎo

a.little too small

→ 不 夠 住 嘛。

bú gòu zhù ma

NEG enough live.in MA

M: Let's ask them whether it is possible to exchange with them.

F: What?

M: To ask them whether it is possible to exchange with them because our room is a little, a little too small to live in.

(帶著爸媽去旅行, 2014/12/21)

(41) [an utterance given by a female] (talking about the process of starting to chat with the senior)



→ F: 他 是 很 資深 的 前輩 嘛。

tā shì hěn zīshēn de qiánbèi ma

he COPULA very senior DE elder MA

他 來 上節目，

tā lái shàng jiémù

he come.to on.the.program

我們 稍微 開 了 玩笑。

wǒmen shāowēi kāi le wánxiào

we a.little make le joke

我 怕 他 介意，

wǒ pà tā jièyì

I afraid.of he mind

跟 他 說 一下。

gēn tā shuō yīxià

with he say once



然後 就 開始 聊 了。
ránhòu jiù kāishǐ liáo le
then already start chat le

F: He is very senior. He came to the program and we made fun of him. I was afraid that he would mind so I talked with him, and then we started to chat (on the program).

(一袋女王, 2017/2/28)

In the total numbers of *Ma* 嘛 used by females, 53% of them are indicating the speaker's opinion which is more than male's 21%. This shows that in contrast to males, females tend to add *Ma* 嘛 at the end of the sentence when giving advice, expressing a hope or expressing one's emotion. Underlying this gender difference may be a complex interaction between sound symbolism and expected stereotypes of social roles. Sidhu and Pexman (2015:2) indicated that "voiced bilabial consonants (i.e., /b/ and /m/) and certain other voiced consonants (e.g., /l/ and /n/) tend to be associated with rounded shapes" (Sidhu & Pexman, 2015:2), and round-sound can relate to femaleness (Sidhu & Pexman, 2015). Also, when the sentence is for the function of indicating the speaker's opinion, adding *Ma* 嘛 at the end of the sentence can soften the tone (Du & Zhang, 2011), and it will be slightly girlish or childish when using this kind of *Ma* 嘛. This feature probably causes males to use it seldom. In example (42), it is expressed by a female. She used *Ma* 嘛 to make the sentence with a mild tone to express her hope of trying to sell her handicraft at the second-hand market.

(42) [an excerpt involving two females] (talking about selling the handicraft)



F1: 聽說 那邊 有 個 二手 市場，
tīngshuō nàbiān yǒu gè èrshǒu shìchǎng
hear.of there exist CL second-hand market

我 看看 能 不 能 把 這些 手工品 賣 了。
wǒ kànkàn néng bù néng bǎ zhèxiē shǒugōngpǐn mài le
I see can NEG can ba these handicraft sell le

F2: 不 可能。
bù kěnéng
NEG possible

F1: 你 連 試 都 沒 試 就 說 不 可能。
nǐ lián shì dōu méi shì jiù shuō bù kěnéng
you even try even no try then say NEG possible

→ 試 一下 嘛。
shì yīxià ma
try once MA

F1: It is said that there is a second-hand market there. I want to try to sell these handicrafts.

F2: It is impossible.

F1: You say that it is impossible, but you don't even try. Let's give it a try.

(帶著爸媽去旅行, 2015/1/18)



As a character language, in the data we examined, taking a female host for example, she is in the age group of 31 to 50, with a relatively maleness character in front of the audience, and she tends to speak like a male and speak straightly. As we pointed out previously when the utterance relates to indicating obvious information, using *Ma* 嘛 at the end of the sentence can strengthen the tone (Du & Zhang, 2011), causing it to sound a little maleness and straight. As a kind of character language, in this special context and situation, when indicating obvious information, this female host with a maleness personality tends to add *Ma* 嘛 at the end of the sentence, such as that shown in example (43). The female host indicated the fact that the guest speaks funny by adding *Ma* 嘛 at the end of the utterance.

(43) [an utterance given by a boyish female] (talking about the interaction with the male on a live video)

F: 有 一次 他 直播，

yǒu yīcì tā zhíbō

exist once he live.broadcast

→ 他 講話 很 好笑 嘛。

tā jiǎng huà hěn hǎo xiào ma

he talk very funny MA



我 就 打字 上去。

wǒ jiù dǎzì shàngqù

I then type up

然後 他 說 明天 我 有 錄影，

ránhòu tā shuō míngtiān wǒ yǒu lùyǐng

then he say tomorrow I have record

他 要 來 探班。

tā yào lái tàn bān

he want come.to visit

結果 他 也 沒 來。

jiéguǒ tā yě méi lái

eventually he even no come

F: There was one day that he did the live broadcast. He talked funny, so I typed to interact with him. And then, he said that since I had to video a TV program, and he wanted to visit me during the recording. But it turns out that he didn't even come.



On the other hand, as shown in the following example (44), males will add *Ma* 嘛 at the end of the utterance when giving advice, expressing a hope or expressing one's emotion only in certain context, because when *Ma* 嘛 is added at the end of such utterance, the utterance will sound childish or girlish and also makes the sentence sound not so straightly when using this kind of *Ma* 嘛. In example (44), when speaking to his mother, the son uses *Ma* 嘛 to express hope. The son wanted his parents to wear the couple t-shirts; however, his mother refused to wear it. So, he tried to persuade his mother to see what the couple t-shirts look like first.

(44) [an excerpt involving a son with the age under 30 and his mother] (talking about the couple clothes)

M: 我 上次 幫 爸 媽 你們 買 了 情侶 裝。

wǒ shàngcì bāng bà mā nǐmen mǎi le qínglǚ zhuāng

I last.time help father mother you buy le couple clothes

F: 我 先 說 我 不 穿。

wǒ xiān shuō wǒ bù chuān

I first say I NEG wear

→ M: 你 先 看 是 什麼 嘛。
nǐ xiān kàn shì shéme ma
you first see COPULA what MA



M: I bought couple t-shirts for mom and dad last time.

F: I make it clear that I don't want to wear it.

M: (Come on,) Let's take a look first.

(帶著爸媽去旅行, 2014/12/28)

4.2.2 Age

For the usage of male, all of the three age groups use indicating obvious information *Ma* 嘛 very often, while they only use indicating the speaker's opinion *Ma* 嘛 in some certain contexts for special purpose. Males in age groups under 30, from 31 to 50, and over 51 add *Ma* 嘛 at the end of the sentences when they are giving advice, expressing a hope or expressing one's emotion for 21 tokens in total. As what we found in the data, as character language, this kind of *Ma* 嘛 used by these three age groups only in certain context. As we pointed out in section 4.2.1, males under 30 years old and from 31 to 50 years old add *Ma* 嘛 at the end of the sentences of giving advice or expressing hope only when they are speaking to females or elders, as shown in example (45). In example (45), the son and his mother are looking for restaurants, but they cannot find any restaurants. So, the son tried to persuade his mother to take it easy.

(45) [an excerpt involving a son with the age under 30 and his mother] (talking about where to have the meal)



M: 他 說 這裡 沒有 吃飯 的 地方。

tā shuō zhèlǐ méiyǒu chīfàn de dìfāng

he say here no eat DE place

F: 這裡 沒有 吃飯 的 地方，

zhèlǐ méi yǒu chīfàn de dìfāng

here no eat DE place

但 總 有 賣 菜 的 地方 嘛。

dàn zǒng yǒu mài cài de dìfāng ma

but ADV exist sell vegetable DE place ma

→ M: 我們 就 慢慢 逛 嘛。

wǒmen jiù màn màn guàng ma

we ADV slowly stroll MA

F: 我們 先 弄 口 吃 的。

wǒmen xiān nòng kǒu chī de

we first make some eat DE



M: He said that there is no restaurant here.

F: There is no restaurant here but there must be some places that sell food.

M: Let's stroll around here.

F: Let's find something to eat first.

(帶著爸媽去旅行, 2014/12/28)

Moreover, males in age group over 51 could use *Ma* 嘛 when they are speaking to people that are not so familiar with, such as in the case of example (46). By adding *Ma* 嘛 at the end of the sentence when giving advice, expressing a hope or expressing one's emotion, they can modify the sentence with a mild tone and makes the sentence sound not so straightly. In example (46), M2, who is over 51, tried to ask M1 to show the ability to speak English.

(46) [an excerpt involving three males and M2 wants M1 to show his ability to speak English; both M1 and M2 are of age over 51]

M1: 我 是 學 外語 的。

wǒ shì xué wàiyǔ de

I COP learn foreign.language DE

M2: 學 啥 外語?

xué shá wàiyǔ

learn what foreign.language



M1: 英語。

yīngyǔ

English

M3: 我 爸 他 英語 都 丟 得 差不多 了。@@

wǒ bà tā yīngyǔ dōu diū dé chàbùduō le

my father he English all throw DE almost le

→ M2: 那 你 給 我 表演 一下 嘛。

nà nǐ gěi wǒ biǎoyǎn yīxià ma

then you give I perform once MA

M1: My major is learning foreign languages.

M2: What foreign languages do you learn?

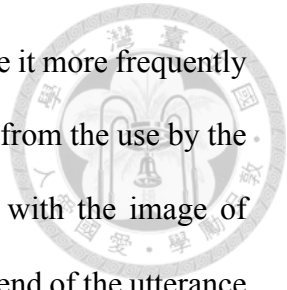
M1: English.

M3: My father has almost forgotten how to speak English.

M2: Performing it for me, please.

(帶著爸媽去旅行, 2014/12/21)

In the numbers of the function indicating obvious information *Ma* 嘛 used by female, 28% of the females over 51 years old use *Ma* 嘛 at the end of the sentence to express something obvious, which is more frequently compared to the other two age groups. Their use of *Ma* 嘛 of age group over 51 is more than that of the age groups under 30 and from



31 to 50 for 13 tokens. The reason that people in the age group over 51 use it more frequently than the age groups under 30 and from 31 to 50 for 13 tokens may result from the use by the female host of age group from 31 to 50 who speaks like a male and with the image of maleness, so she tends to speak straightly and tends to add *Ma* 嘛 at the end of the utterance when saying something obvious. We take this kind of use as an example of *Ma* 嘛 as a kind of character language. On the other hand, in the numbers of the function indicating the speaker's opinion *Ma* 嘛, females under 30 years old and from 31 to 50 years old use it for 42%, which is more than the usage of females over 51 years old.

We propose that these phenomena occur because the personality of people who are over 51 years old tend not to behave femininely, and tend to speak straightly. Moreover, since adding *Ma* 嘛 at the end can make the sentence with a mild tone and with the image of girlish or childish when giving advice, expressing hope or expressing one's emotion, females over 51 seldom use it. The phenomenon that females change their style of speaking when getting older is also another example of *Ma* 嘛 as a kind of character language. Example (47) shows how the female over 51 uses it. *Ma* 嘛 in example (47) is given by a female over 51 to express something obvious. A male and two females are discussing that everyone carries one's own travel expense or not. When F1 is asking for the expense of housing, F2 indicates the fact of subtracting the cost of housing.

(47) [an excerpt involving a male and two females] (talking about carrying one's own money)



M: 明天 錢 分 給 大家，

míngtiān qián fèn gěi dàjiā

tomorrow money divide give everybody

各自 帶 自己 的 錢。

gèzì dài zìjǐ de qián

each.one carry self DE money

F1: 住 呢？

zhù ne

housing Q

→ F2: 去掉 三 百 塊 以後 嘛。

qùdiào sān bǎi kuài yǐhòu ma

subtract three hundred dollar after MA

我 贊成 他。

wǒ zànchéng tā

I agree.with him



M: I will divide the money to everyone tomorrow, and then each of you carry your own money.

F1: What about housing?

F2: After subtracting three hundred dollars, he will divide the money to everyone. I agree with him.

(花兒與少年, 2014/5/2)

To conclude, based on the findings in sections 4.2.1 and 4.2.2, we propose that for the original use of *Ma* 嘛, males tend to use obvious information *Ma* 嘛, and females tend to use speaker's opinion *Ma* 嘛, while for being a kind of character language, males will sometimes use speaker's opinion *Ma* 嘛, and females will sometimes use obvious information *Ma* 嘛, as shown in Table 15.

Table 15. Usage of *Ma* 嘛

	Male	Female
Original usage	obvious information <i>Ma</i> 嘛	speaker's opinion <i>Ma</i> 嘛
Character language	speaker's opinion <i>Ma</i> 嘛	obvious information <i>Ma</i> 嘛

4.3 Analysis of Sentence-final Particle *Ne* 呢

In this section, we investigate sentence-final particle *Ne* 呢 which occurs in the variety shows and dramas we chose. In these variety shows and dramas, we found two uses of *Ne* 呢. One of them is to make questions. The other is used in declaratives.



The data will be discussed in two aspects: gender and age. We found 134 tokens of sentence-final particle *Ne* 呢 in our data. Among them, 44 tokens are used by males, and 90 tokens are used by females. The results are shown in Table 16.

Table 16. Tokens of *Ne* 呢 and Their Percentages

Age group	Male			Female		
	Under 30	31-50	Over 51	Under 30	31-50	Over 51
	Tokens/ (Percentage %)			Tokens/ (Percentage %)		
Questioning	13 (29%)	11 (25%)	11 (25%)	15 (17%)	26 (29%)	20 (22%)
Declarative	2 (5%)	7 (16%)	0 (0%)	15 (17%)	10 (11%)	4 (4%)
Total tokens	44/ (100%)			90/ (100%)		

4.3.1 Gender

In the aspect of gender, the results indicate a gender difference in character language in terms of sentence-final particle *Ne* 呢. There is a tendency that females use *Ne* 呢 more than males do. In the total numbers of *Ne* 呢 used by males, there are about 79% of questioning while there are only 21% of declaratives. In the use of *Ne* 呢 of female, there are 68% of questioning, and there are 32% of declaratives.

For questioning *Ne* 呢, in terms of percentage, males use it for 79%, which is more than females' 68%. However, from the aspect of tokens, females use it for 61 tokens while males use it for 35 tokens. This result shows that on the whole, females use questioning *Ne*

呢 more often than male, but in their respective usage of questioning *Ne* 呢, both males and females often add *Ne* 呢 at the end of the question. The use of questioning *Ne* 呢 of males and females is illustrated in example (48) and example (49). Example (48) is a conversation between a male and a female. Example (49) is the questioning *Ne* 呢 given by a female in an excerpt involving two females about unable to find a boyfriend.

(48) [an excerpt involving a male and a female] (talking about the position of a tourist spot)

M: 有 中國人，

yǒu zhōngguó rén
exist Chinese.people

問 你 一 個 問題，

wèn nǐ yī gè wèntí
ask you one CL question

活 女神 在 哪 可以 看到？

huó nǚshén zài nǎ kěyǐ kàndào
live goddess at where can see

F: 可以 先 拍照 嗎？

kěyǐ xiān pāizhào ma
can first take.a.picture ma



M: 好。

hǎo

okay

→ 你們 告訴 我 一下 我 怎麼 去 看 活 女神 呢？

nǐmen gàosù wǒ yīxià wǒ zěnmē qù kàn huó nǚshén ne

you tell me once I how go see live goddess NE

沒 時間 來不及 了。

méi shíjiān lái bùjí le

no time too.late le

F: @我 也 不 知道， 對不起@。

wǒ yě bù zhīdào , duìbùqǐ

I also NEG know sorry

M: There are Chinese people (over there). Can I ask you a question? “Where can I see the live goddess?”

F: Can we take the picture first?

M: Sure. Can you tell me how to see the live goddess?

F: I don't know, either. I'm sorry.

(帶著爸媽去旅行, 2014/12/28)



(49) [an excerpt involving two females] (talking about unable to find a boyfriend)

F1: 我 都 兩 年 沒 談戀愛 了。

wǒ dōu liǎng nián méi tánliànài le

I already two year no in.love le

確實 挺 空虛 的。

quèshí tǐng kōngxū de

really very empty DE

→ 這 是 為什麼 呢？

zhè shì wéishéme ne

this COP why NE

F2: 找不著。

zhǎobùzháo

can't.find

→ F1: 這 是 為什麼 呢？

zhè shì wéishéme ne

this COP why NE

F2: 朋友 圈 太 窄 了。

péngyǒu quān tài zhǎi le

friend circle too narrow le



F1: I haven't been in a relationship for two years. I did feel a little empty. How come it is this way?

F2: You can't find a boyfriend.

F1: Why is it this way?

F2: Your circle of friends is too small.

(花兒與少年, 2014/5/2)

For the declarative *Ne* 呢, 32% of them are used by females while there are only 21% of them used by males. This indicates that females tend to add *Ne* 呢 at the end of the utterances of declaratives. The example of declarative *Ne* 呢 used by females is given in the following example (50).

(50) [an excerpt involving two females] (an ordering scene in the restaurant)

F1: 你們 兩 個 都 點 完 了?

nǐmen liǎng gè dōu diǎn wán le

you two CL both order over le



F2: 我 就 不 要 了。

wǒ jiù bú yào le

I ADV NEG want le

我 早上 有 吃 了 點。

wǒ zǎoshàng yǒu chī le diǎn

I morning have eat le some

我 嚐 一口 她 的 就 行 了。

wǒ cháng yīkǒu tā de jiù xíng le

I try a.bite her DE ADV be.all.right le

我 要 了 個 咖啡 不是 嗎？

wǒ yào le gè kāfēi búshì ma

I order le CL coffee not ma

F3: 我 也 要 了 咖啡。

wǒ yě yào le kāfēi

I also order le coffee

你 沒 要 吃 的 什麼 嗎？

nǐ méi yào chī de shéme ma

you no order eat DE what ma



那 我 也 沒 要，
nà wǒ yě méi yào
then I also no order

→ 還 想 嚐 妳 的 呢。

hái xiǎng cháng nǐ de ne
ADV want try your DE NE

好 吧。

hǎo ba
okay ba

F2: 你 沒有 吃 的。

nǐ méiyǒu chī de
you no eat DE

那 你 得 要 一 個 呀。

nà nǐ děi yào yī gè ya
then you have.to order one CL ya

F1: Have you already ordered the meal?



F2: I just ordered a cup of coffee because I have already had some in the morning. I just want to have a bite of her food.

F3: I also ordered a cup of coffee. Didn't you want something to eat? Neither did I. I planned to try yours. Okay.

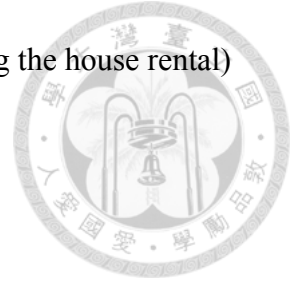
F2: You didn't order anything that we can eat. Then you have to order one.

(花兒與少年, 2014/5/2)

The reason for this phenomenon is that using *Ne* 呢 at the end of the sentences can create a mild tone. As we reviewed in section 2.6, in regard to the sound symbolic image of consonants, Sidhu & Pexman (2015:2) indicated that “voiced bilabial consonants (i.e., /b/ and /m/) and certain other voiced consonants (e.g., /l/ and /n/) tend to be associated with rounded shapes” (Sidhu & Pexman, 2015:2), and round-sound is related to femaleness (Sidhu & Pexman, 2015). Therefore, males tend not to use sentence-final particle *Ne* 呢 as usual as females do and only use it in special contexts and situations.

As a kind of character language, males use questioning and declarative *Ne* 呢 in special contexts and situations. For example, in the data we examined, when males are speaking to females, elders, or people that they are not so familiar to, they tend to use *Ne* 呢 at the end of the sentence to make it sound softer and more polite. Example of the use of the character language *Ne* 呢 by males is given in the following. Example (51) is a conversation between a male, a young female, and a female elder. They are talking about paying the house rental. After he knew the cost of housing, he said to the females that besides the house rental, he also had to pay for the tickets of the ball game.

(51) [an excerpt involving a male and two females] (talking about paying the house rental)



M: 是 要 我們 付 房 錢 嗎?

shì yào wǒmen fù fáng qián ma

COP want we pay room fee ma

F1: 對。

duì

yes

M: 多少錢?

duōshǎoqián

how.much

一 天。

yī tiān

a day

F1: 五 天 九 百 一 共。

wǔ tiān jiǔ bǎi yīgòng

five day nine hundred totally



40 塊 錢 一 個 人 一 天。

40 *kuài qián yī gè rén yī tiān*

40 dollar money one CL person one day

M: 按 人 算 嗎?

àn rén suàn ma

according.to person count ma

F1: 對， 他 按 人 算。

duì tā àn rén suàn

yes he according.to person count

M: @哇，那 我 家 三 人， 一百二。

wa , nà wǒ jiā sān rén , yībǎièr

wow then my family three person one.hundred.and.twenty

→ 還 要 看 球 呢。

hái yào kàn qiú ne

also want watch ball.game NE

要 自 己 買 票。

yào zìjǐ mǎi piào

need self buy ticket



F2: 你 就 吃 省 了 唄。

nǐ jiù chī shěng le bei

you then eat save le bai

M: Does he want us to pay the house rental?

F1: Yes.

M: How much?

F1: There are 900 dollars for five days in total.

M: Does it charge per person?

F1: Yes.

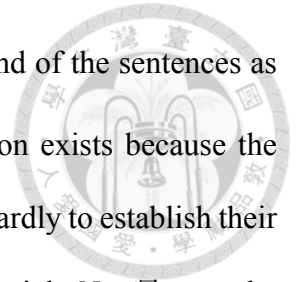
M: Wow. We have three people, then 120 dollars in total. And we even want to watch the ball game. We have to buy tickets.

F2: Then you have to live frugally.

(帶著爸媽去旅行, 2015/1/18)

4.3.2 Age

As for the use by males, males in the age groups of under 30 years old and from 31 to 50 use questioning and declarative *Ne 呢* very often; however, males over 51 years old do not use *Ne 呢* as frequently as the other two age groups do. We also found that all of the three age groups only use character language *Ne 呢* in special contexts and situations, i.e., when speaking to females, elders, or people that they are not so familiar with.



For the phenomenon of males over 51 do not add *Ne* 呢 at the end of the sentences as usual as the other two age groups do, we propose that this phenomenon exists because the personality of males who are over 51 years old tend to speak straightforwardly to establish their authority. Thus, males over 51 years old tend not to use sentence-final particle *Ne* 呢 to make the tone of the sentence softer, and they use it only in special contexts and situations. Example of character language *Ne* 呢 of questioning expressed by a male over 51 years old is given in (52). In example (52), the male who is over 51 asked the female how to know the local gourmet. As an example of character language *Ne* 呢 of declarative expressed by male from 31 to 50 is given in (53). In example (53), the male in the age group of from 31 to 50 told the females that after he bought the fruits, there still 17 euros left. These two examples show that males only use character language *Ne* 呢 in a special context and situation, for example, when talking to females.

(52) [an excerpt involving a male over 51 and a female] (talking about how to find out the local gourmat)

F: 出國 一定 要 吃 當地 的 美食。
chūguó yīdìng yào chī dāngdì de měishí
 go.abroad must need eat local DE gourmet

→ M: 你 怎麼 去 找到 當地 真正 的 美食 呢？
nǐ zěnmē qù zhǎodào dāngdì zhēnzhèng de měishí ne
 you how to find.out local real DE gourmet NE



F: 我 通常 都 是 會 先 做 功課。
wǒ tōngcháng dōu shì huì xiān zuò gōngkè
I usually ADV COP will first do homework

然後 問 比如說 那個 國家 的 人。
ránhòu wèn bǐrúshuō nàgè guójiā de rén
and.then ask for.example that country DE people

F: I will eat the local gourmet in the country when going abroad.

M: How do you find out the real local gourmet of the place?

F: Usually, I will do my homework (some survey) first, and then I will ask the people from that particular country for more information.

(一袋女王, 2017/4/25)

(53) [an excerpt involving a male from 31 to 50 and two females] (talking about the price of the fruits)

M: 姊姊 們。

jiějiě men

sister PL



F1: 你們 買 了 些 什麼 啊?

nǐmen mǎi le xiē shíme ā
you buy le some what a

M: 晴 姐， 快 起來。

qíng jiě , kuài qǐlái
Qing sister quickly get.up

吃 水果。

chī shuǐguǒ
eat fruit

F2: 多少錢 呀?

duōshǎoqián ya
how.much ya

M: 一共 花 了 二十一 歐，

yīgòng huā le èrshíyī ōu
totally spend le twenty.one euro

→ 還 剩 了 十七 歐 呢。

hái shèng le shíqī ōu ne
still left le seventeen euro **NE**



F1: 這麼 便宜 呀。

zhème biànyí ya

such cheap ya

F2: 為什麼 呀？

wéishéme ya

why ya

M: 應該 也 不 便宜 吧。

yīnggāi yě bù biànyí ba

possibly also NEG cheap ba

M: Sisters.

F1: What did you buy?

M: Sister Qing, get up to eat fruits.

F2: How much?

M: We spent 21 euros totally, and still 17 euros left.

F1: It's so cheap.

M: I think it's not that cheap either.

(花兒與少年, 2014/5/2)

As for the use by females, based on our data, we found that females over 51 years old only use sentence-final particle *Ne* 呢 for 26% while the age group under 30 years old and from 31 to 50 use the sentence-final particle *Ne* 呢 for 74%. The example of this use by those under 30 years old is given in (54). The female is asking for everyone's love and care since everyone always ignore her by joking.

(54) [an utterance given by a female] (asking for everyone's love and care)

F: @我 覺得 我 說 我 不 跳，

wǒ juéde wǒ shuō wǒ bú tiào

I think I say I not dance

你們 也 沒有 關心 過 我。

nǐmen yě méiyǒu guānxīn guò wǒ

you also no care.about ASP I

為什麼 就...

wéishéme jiù

why ADV

我 覺得 整個 團隊 對 我 有 歧視。

wǒ juéde zhěnggè tuánduì duì wǒ yǒu qíshì

I think whole team PREP I exist discrimination



我 說 我 有 低血糖，
wǒ shuō wǒ yǒu dīxiě táng
I say I have hypoglycemia

你們 也 不 理 我。
nǐmen yě bù lǐ wǒ
you also not heed I

我 說 我 不 跳，
wǒ shuō wǒ bú tiào
I say I not dance

沒有 人 關心 我。
méiyǒu rén guānxīn wǒ
no person care.about I

你 知道。
nǐ zhīdào
you know



你們 能不能 對 我 多 一些 關愛

nǐmen néngbùnéng duì wǒ duō yīxiē guānài

you can. NEG.can PREP I more some take.good.care.of



All: @@@@

F: I say that I don't want to dance but you don't concern me. How come? I think the whole team has a discrimination toward me. I say I have hypoglycemia but nobody really cares about me. I say I don't want to dance and nobody cares about me. You know. Can you all give me more love and care?

All: @@@@

(花兒與少年, 2017/4/30)

Comparing with the other two age groups discussed above, we propose that the personality of females who are over 51 years old tend to establish authority and speak straightforwardly, and tend not to behave as feminine as the young do. Also, according to Barke (2000:32), "older women appear to be socially more self-assured and do not need to spend as much energy reinforcing their position within their social group." The phenomenon that females change their style of speaking when getting older points out that *Ne* 呢 is a kind of character language. Example of character language *Ne* 呢 expressed by females over 51 years old is given in the following example (55). The female who is over 51 asked a question about how they could manage the money for dinner if they kept spending money.

(55) [an excerpt involving a male and three females] (talking about whether to buy the ice cream during the trip)



M: 哇，冰淇淋 好好吃。

wā , bīngqílín hǎohǎochī

wow ice.cream so.delicious

怎麼樣？

zěnmeyàng

what.do.you.think

要 不 要？

yào bú yào

want NEG want

F1: 不 要，快 走 吧。

bú yào , kuài zǒu ba

NEG want hurry go ba

因為 我們 沒 剩 什麼 錢 了。

yīnwéi wǒmen méi shèng shíme qián le

because we no left what money le



坐 完 這 個 車 。

zuò wán zhègè chē

sit finish this car

M: 姊姊 們 想 吃 嗎?

jiějie men xiǎng chī ma

sister PL want eat ma

F2: 我 不 能 吃 。

wǒ bùnéng chī

I can't eat

M: 你 們 都 不 想 吃 嗎?

nǐmen dōu bù xiǎng chī ma

you all NEG want eat ma

→ F1: 不 是 ， 怎 麼 吃 飯 呢?

búshì , zěnmē chī fàn ne

no how eat meal NE

F3: 如 果 今 天 再 花 錢 進 去 的 話 ，

rúguǒ jīntiān zài huā qián jìnqù dehuà

if today again spend money into if



我們 就 完蛋 了。

wǒmen jiù wándàn le

we ADV over le

M: Wow. The ice cream is so delicious. What do you think? Do you want to eat ice cream?

F1: No. Let's go. Because we don't have enough money after we came here by bus.

M: Do you want to eat ice cream?

F2: I can't eat ice cream.

M: All of you don't want to eat ice cream?

F1: What about the money for dinner?

F3: We will be finished if we keep spending money (like this way).

(花兒與少年, 2014/5/2)

To summarize, based on the findings in sections 4.3.1 and 4.3.2, we conclude that for the original usage, females tend to use *Ne* 呢, while for being a kind of character language, males sometimes use *Ne* 呢, as shown in Table 17.

Table 17. Usage of *Ne* 呢

	Male	Female
Original usage		<i>Ne</i> 呢
Character language	<i>Ne</i> 呢	

4.4 Discussion



In this section, we give the discussion by answering the research questions mentioned in chapter 1. They are: (i) How can the phenomena of character language be connected with the use of sentence-final particles *A* 啊, *Ya* 呀, *Ma* 嘛, and *Ne* 呢 in Mandarin Chinese; (ii) is there any empirical evidence to indicate the above-mentioned phenomena? Figure 3 is an overview of our discussion to these questions.

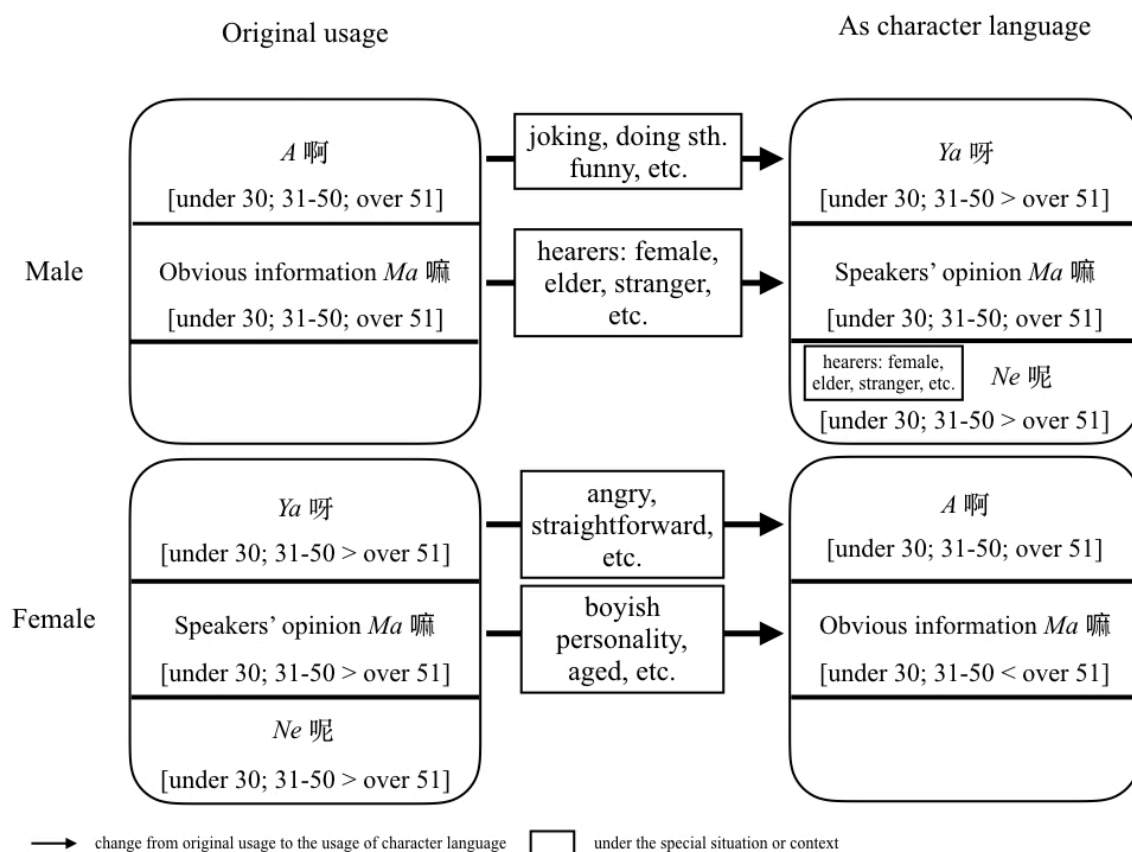


Figure 3. Schema of Character Language of Sentence-final Particles *A* 啊, *Ya* 呀, *Ma* 嘛, and *Ne* 呢




Figure 3 is the schema of character language of sentence-final particles *A* 啊, *Ya* 呀, *Ma* 嘛, and *Ne* 呢. For sentence-final particles *A* 啊 and *Ya* 呀, *A* 啊 is mostly used by males while *Ya* 呀 is mostly used by females. However, as a kind of character language, the males will use *Ya* 呀 for special purposes in certain context, for example, joking, doing something funny or when they want to perform the image that is different from the current image, and the females will use *A* 啊 for special purposes in certain context, such as when they are angry and straightforward.

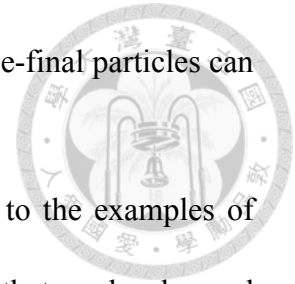
For sentence-final particle *Ma* 嘛, there are mainly two functions, i.e., indicating the obviousness of the information given by the speaker and indicating the speaker's opinion. Males mostly use *Ma* 嘛 to emphasize the obviousness of the information while females mostly use it to indicate the speaker's opinion. As a kind of character language, males use indicating the speaker's opinion *Ma* 嘛 when they are speaking to females, elders, or people that are not familiar with, and females who are boyish or with the age of over 51 will use *Ma* 嘛 at the end of the sentence when indicating obvious information.

For sentence-final particle *Ne* 呢, it is mostly used by females. As a kind of character language, males only use sentence-final particle *Ne* 呢 in special contexts and situations, such as when they are speaking to females, elders, or to those that they are not so familiar with.

Recalling that in our literature review, Sadanobu (2006) says that character language is a speech style but flexibly changeable according to situations by a speaker. Thus, the phenomena that *A* 啊, *Ya* 呀, *Ma* 嘛, and *Ne* 呢 can be used flexibly for special purposes

according to the situations are evidence that indicates these four sentence-final particles can function as a kind of character language.

Also, the usage of *A* 啊, *Ya* 呀, *Ma* 嘛, and *Ne* 呢 is similar to the examples of character language given in the literature review. They are speech styles that can be changed flexibly according to different contexts. For example, in childhood, children tend to use 媽媽 *māmā*, while adults tend to use 媽 *mā* (Zhang & Li, 2015) or in daily conversation, when talking to the daughter, Japanese women speak loudly; however, when talking to the husband, they speak with a low voice (Campbell & Mokhtari, 2003). The similar situation also shows *A* 啊, *Ya* 呀, *Ma* 嘛, and *Ne* 呢 can be seen as a kind of character language in Mandarin Chinese.



Chapter 5 Conclusion

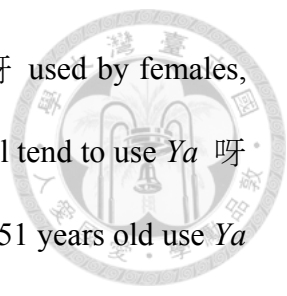


5.1 Recapitulation

This paper discusses the gender difference and age difference as a kind of character language in terms of sentence-final particles *A* 啊, *Ya* 呀, *Ma* 嘛, and *Ne* 呢 which are seldom recognized in the previous literature.

For the gender difference of sentence-final particles *A* 啊 and 呀 *Ya*, although the use of *A* 啊 and *Ya* 呀 can be categorized as variants of the same phoneme /a/ based on a phonological rule, i.e., /a/ → [ja]/ [i]_#. However, there is a tendency that males still use *A* 啊, and females still use *Ya* 呀 regardless of the phonological rule. Also, as a kind of character language, *A* 啊 and *Ya* 呀 can be used flexibly by females and males for special purposes in certain contexts.

For the age difference of sentence-final particles *A* 啊 and *Ya* 呀 used by males, males of the three age groups, under 30, from 31 to 50, and over 51, all tend to use *A* 啊 regardless of the phonological rule. As a kind of character language, males sometimes use *Ya* 呀 for special purposes in certain contexts. However, only the age groups of under 30 and from 31 to 50 will sometimes use character language *Ya* 呀 in certain contexts for special purposes, such as when joking and doing something funny or when they want to perform the image that is different from the current image. We propose that it is because the personality of people who are over 51 years old tend not to do something funny and tend to maintain their solemn image.



For the age difference of sentence-final particles *A* 啊 and *Ya* 呀 used by females, females of the three age groups, under 30, from 31 to 50, and over 51, all tend to use *Ya* 呀 regardless of the phonological rule. However, we find that females over 51 years old use *Ya* 呀 less than the other two age groups. It is because [i] is related to the light image, and the light image is associated with females' tenderness, gracefulness, and restrained character (Gordon & Heath, 1998). We also propose that the personality of people who are over 51 years old tend not to behave as feminine as the younger, so they tend not to use *Ya* 呀 which is with the image of girlish as usual as females of the other two age groups. As character language, all the three age groups of female use *A* 啊 for special purposes in certain contexts.

For the gender difference of sentence-final particle *Ma* 嘛, there is a tendency that females use *Ma* 嘛 more than males do. In the use of indicating obvious information *Ma* 嘛, there are 82% used by male while there are 59% used by female. We propose that when indicating obvious information, adding *Ma* 嘛 at the end of the sentence can strengthen the tone (Du & Zhang, 2011), so females tend not to use it as usual as males do to avoid speaking so straightforwardly. In the use of indicating the speaker's opinion *Ma* 嘛, 41% of them are used by females, and 18% by males. Round-sound [m] can relate to femaleness (Sidhu & Pexman, 2015). Also, since adding *Ma* 嘛 at the end of the sentence when people are giving advice or expressing hope can make the sentence with a mild tone (Du & Zhang, 2011), it sounds a little girlish or childish when using this kind of *Ma* 嘛. So, males seldom add *Ma* 嘛 at the end of the sentence when giving advice or expressing hope. As a kind of character language, indicating obvious information *Ma* 嘛 and indicating the speaker's opinion *Ma* 嘛 can be used flexibly by both males and females for special purposes in certain contexts.

For the age difference of sentence-final particle *Ma* 嘛 used by males, all of the three age groups use indicating obvious information *Ma* 嘛 very often, while they only use indicating the speaker's opinion *Ma* 嘛 in certain contexts for special purpose. As we found in the data, as a kind of character language, this kind of *Ma* 嘛 used by all age groups only in certain contexts, such as when they are speaking to females, elders, or people that they are not so familiar with.

For the age difference of sentence-final particle *Ma* 嘛 used by females, females over 51 years old tend to use *Ma* 嘛 at the end of the sentence to express something obvious more usually, while females under 30 years old and from 31 to 50 years old tend to use *Ma* 嘛 at the end of the sentence when they are giving advice, expressing hope or expressing one's emotion. We propose that it is because the personality of people who are over 51 years old tend not to behave girlish or childish. The phenomenon that females change their style of speaking when getting older is also an example of *Ma* 嘛 as a kind of character language.

For the gender difference of sentence-final particle *Ne* 呢, there is a tendency that females use *Ne* 呢 more than males do. For questioning *Ne* 呢, from the aspect of percentage, males use 79% of *Ne* 呢 in this function, which is more often than 68% used by females. However, from the aspect of tokens, female uses it for 61 tokens while male uses it for 35 tokens. This result shows that on the whole, females use questioning *Ne* 呢 more often than males, but in their respective usage of questioning *Ne* 呢, both males and females often add *Ne* 呢 at the end of the question. For declarative *Ne* 呢, females use it for 32% while there are only 21% of males. This indicates that females tend to add *Ne* 呢 at the end of the sentences of declarative. The reason for this phenomenon is that using *Ne* 呢 at the

end of the sentences can make the sentences with a soft tone, and certain voiced consonants (e.g., /l/ and /n/) tend to be associated with rounded shapes and femaleness” (Sidhu & Pexman, 2015:2). As a kind of character language, males use questioning and declarative *Ne* 呢 in special contexts and situations, such as when speaking to females, elders, or people that they are not so familiar to.

For the age difference of *Ne* 呢 used by males, according to our data, it shows that males in the age group of under 30 years old and from 31 to 50 use questioning and declarative *Ne* 呢 very often; however, males over 51 years old do not use *Ne* 呢 as much as the other two age groups do. We propose that this phenomenon exists because the personality of males over 51 years old tend to speak straightforwardly and to establish their authority. We also found that all of the three age groups only use character language *Ne* 呢 in special contexts, such as when speaking to females, elders, or people that they are not so familiar with.

For the age difference of *Ne* 呢 of female, females over 51 years old only use sentence-final particle *Ne* 呢 for 26% while the age group under 30 years old and from 31 to 50 use sentence-final particle *Ne* 呢 for 74%. We propose that the personality of females over 51 years old tend to establish their authority and speak straightforwardly, and tend not to behave as feminine as the young do. The phenomenon that females change their style of speaking when getting older suggests that *Ne* 呢 is a kind of character language.

As discussed above, this paper examines the use of Chinese sentence-final particles *A* 啊, *Ya* 呀, *Ma* 嘛, and *Ne* 呢 with the perspective of character language. We conclude that

they have developed a sense of character language which accords with Kinsui's definition, and they are used flexibly according to different circumstances.



5.2 Contribution, Limitation, and Future Studies

Since the studies of sentence-final particles in Mandarin Chinese mostly concerned about their grammatical and pragmatic functions in usage, this paper investigates Chinese sentence-final particles from a sociolinguistic perspective and discusses a phenomenon which is often overlooked by linguists but is vital in our lively conversations. This study shows that not only Japanese has the feature of character language, we also have the feature of character language in Mandarin Chinese in terms of sentence-final particles. This investigation sheds new light on the area of character language research.

Limitation of this study includes the selection of the data source. There are many kinds of data sources, such as variety shows, TV dramas, online youtube clips, and so on, appearing on different websites. Since there are so many sources, it is difficult to include all of them in this study. As a result, we chose several shows and dramas to be as our data sources. Moreover, for online forum or community websites, we can get a lot of data from them; however, one important element, gender, which we want to investigate in this study, cannot be identified from this kind of source. In this case, online fora or community websites are not suitable for this study. If we can know the gender of people who post their articles, comments, and conversations on the internet, we believe we can obtain more linguistic data for investigating these usages from online community websites. For future study, we can expand our research scope to examine the phenomena of character language. Thus, more different

sources of data are needed, and other types of sentence-final particles can be investigated in the future.



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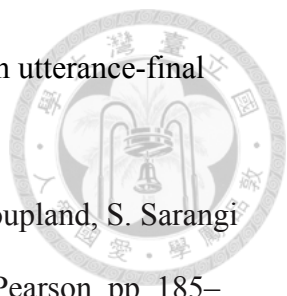
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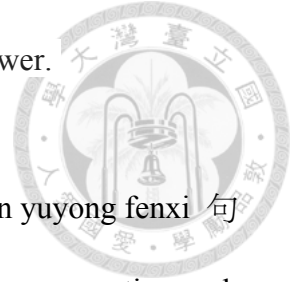
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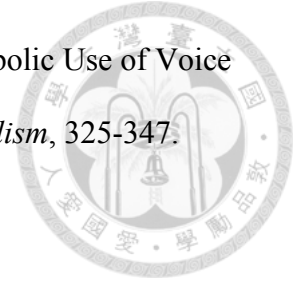
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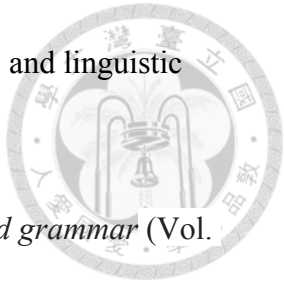


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