Disaffiliation and discord in ordinary Chinese (Mandarin) social interaction

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Abstract

The following dissertation considers the practices involved in disaffiliation and discord in ordinary conversation. Although human interaction is biased towards affiliation, disaffiliation and discord do occur sometimes, and rather little research has focused on the systematic description of the dynamics of disaffiliation. The analysis of this dissertation is based on the data collected from mainland China by myself, consisting 10 hours of in-person interaction between family and friends. This dissertation explores (1) some of the practices employed by the interactants when they display their disaffiliative status, ranging from implicit to explicit disaffiliative expression, and (2) the dynamics of disaffiliation, how it emerges and can escalate into a rather explicit conflict, and how social cohesion is disturbed by explicit disaffiliation.

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Acknowledgements

Declaration

I declare that this thesis is a presentation of original work and I am the sole author. This work has not previously been presented for an award at this, or any other, University. All sources are acknowledged as References.

Chapter 1 Introduction

Even though they may generally avoid explicitly hostile or aggressive confrontations with one another, normative (Goffman, 1967; Sacks, 1987), social members do not always affiliate with each other. Interactants may insult, accuse, tease, criticise, complain to, or dispute with one another at certain points in a conversation. However, in order to maintain a state of equilibrium in terms of social order and social solidarity, members of society have resources at their disposal to handle these conflictual encounters and navigate affiliation and disaffiliation in their interaction.

The background to my research concerns the principle of cooperation that is a fundamental dimension of social life and that underlies our interactions with one another. Cooperation in interaction, as proposed by Goffman (1967) and subsequently developed by others (e.g. Brown & Levinson, 1978/1987; Grice, 1975), is an imperative ensuring the stability, cohesion and orderliness of interaction. The clearest and most consequential linguistic expression of cooperation is *affiliation* – evident, for instance, in the preference for agreement with one another (Sacks, 1987; Pomerantz, 1984a). Whilst social interaction is biased towards affiliation (Heritage, 2008:310), nevertheless any interaction can run into difficulties through disagreements, discord and disaffiliation, which can threaten to destabilize interactions and thereby compromise social cohesion. However, it appears from research into the preference for agreement, that disaffiliation is managed in such a way as to 'neutralize' discord, and thereby to avoid rupturing social coherence.

Whilst agreement and affiliation have been widely investigated (e.g. Sacks, 1987), there has been less research into the linguistic patterns and practices associated with disaffiliation in interaction. My research is therefore concerned particularly with the dynamics of conflictual interaction and its resolution, my objective being to identify some of the linguistic and embodied practices and resources through which people engage in disaffiliative, uncooperative behaviour and subsequently restore a culture of co-operation in ordinary social interactions. Moreover, no systematic research has been conducted into how conflict and disaffiliation are managed in ordinary interactions in China, in Mandarin; I will investigate this balance between affiliation and disaffiliation in Mandarin conversation, using conversation analysis as the research methodology to investigate how disaffiliation is realized in naturally occurring Mandarin conversations.

Previous Research on Disaffiliation

In conversation analyses, 'affiliative' social actions are those displaying agreement with or taking the same stance as co-participants. 'Disaffiliative' actions typically refer to those that are challenging, reproaching, complaining, criticizing, disagreeing and disapproving. Previous research on disaffiliation was rather scattered (e.g. Jefferson,

1988). Given the constraints on the length of thesis, the literature review will cover only two of the most prominent themes, namely facework and preference organization. Although politeness theory may also be relevant in considering how speakers select different forms (of turn design) in affiliating and disaffiliating from one another, as my research focus is to trace and analyse the sequential dynamics of disaffiliation, it lies outside the scope of this dissertation.

In the area of communication, the study of face and facework has taken several paths of investigation; one of these is the etic approach (Brown & Levinson, 1987; Goffman,1967), which puts the anthropologist's observations, classifications, explanations, and interpretations in the forefront of discussion instead of those made locally. It argues that people within a culture are frequently too immersed in what they are doing to interpret it objectively. And efforts are made to discover a grand theory to account for all human interactions regardless of culture; the other is the critical application studies with varying degrees of criticism in light of the emic perspective (Chang & Holt, 1994; Scollon & Scollon, 1994). The "emic approach" looks into the mentalities of native speakers, specifically how they view the world, how they categorise it, how they behave, what matters to them, and how they conceive and explain things. Conversation analysis developed as an emic science, and ethno-science, to discover the sequential order of interactions through the scrutinization of local context (Sacks, 1987; Psathas, 1995).

It is said that the way conversation is organised is biased in favour of social cohesion and the avoidance of conflict (Brown & Levinson, 1987; Goffman, 1967; Heritage, 1984; Levinson, 1983). This bias is made manifest not only by speakers' general propensity to produce pro-social behaviours (such as agreement and compliance), but also by the particular linguistic and interactional strategies employed to counteract challenges to the social bonds between participants. The concept of preference organization is proposed under this theoretical frame. It refers to socially normative rules that speakers observably orient to in interaction rather than the psychological states of the speakers. The core idea of preference is that participants follow principles, often implicit, when they act and react in a variety of interactional situations (Pomerantz & Heritage, 2013:210). It looks into the non-equivalent characters of different practices adopted by the participants when carrying out certain actions in interactions. Two dimensions of the interpretation of preference organization were discussed by different scholars: action-based preference and design-based preference (Sidnell, 2010:86). The action-based preference concerns the alternative actions that are relevant following the first pair part, those alternative options being either a positive or a negative response. For example, if a first pair part is recognized as a complaint, the options allow the recipient are either to accept the complaint, or alternatively to reject or disagree with the complaint. The preference organization refers to the preference for positive responses, such as agreement, acceptance and the like; dispreferred actions are those which reject or disagree with the first action in the adjacency pair (Kendrick & Torreira, 2015). The design-based preference refers to those turns which are designed as an unqualified and prompt response to the prior turn. In other words, the dispreferred turn organizations are those that either contain

actions that disagree or oppose to the actions of the prior turn, or are designed as delayed responses. The difference between prompt undelayed agreeing responses and delayed disagreeing responses, are clearly illustrated in these brief examples:

```
Ex.1:   [SBL:2:1:8:5]
Bea:    hh hhh We:ll,h I wz gla:d she c'd come too las'ni:ght=
Nor:    =Sh[e seems such a n]ice little [l ady]
Bea:       [(since you keh) ]           [Awf'l]ly nice l*i'l p*ers'n.


Ex.2:   [SBL:2:1:7:14]
A:    (          ) cause those things take working at,
      (2.0)
B:    (hhhhh) well, they [do, but
A:                       [They aren't accidents,
```

The following concepts have also been used in conversation analysis to conceptualise speakers' cooperative stances: Affiliation and alignment (Stivers, 2008; Stivers, Mondada, & Steensig, 2011). The term affiliation often refers to the affective level of contact where speakers collaborate to create pro-social behaviours. Affiliative behaviours typically express understanding and agreement with the previous speaker. Alignment, on the other hand, describes cooperative contact that successfully completes the relevant tasks or activities at hand. Furthermore, alignment need not entail agreement; one can disagree while still working to achieve the interaction's overall goals (Muntigl & Horvath, 2014). Conversely, interactions that put social peace, empathy, and cooperation at risk distinguish disaffiliation and misalignment.

Previous research conducted into the disaffiliative status displayed in various types of activities usually focuses on troubles-telling, complaints (Drew, 1998) and so on. The display of disaffiliation sometimes occurs as a second pair part of an adjacency pair, in actions such as rejections, disagreements and disconfirmations (Heritage, 1984: 245). Jefferson (1988) shows that the core of troubles-talk consists of an exposition of the trouble by the teller and the display of affiliation by its recipient. Drew & Walker (2009) showed that the preference organization for responses to complaints involves a collision between a preference for agreement and a preference for avoiding self-blame - in much the same way as Pomerantz (1978) showed that the preference for agreement with assessments conflicts with the preference of avoidance of self-praise, in those cases where an assessment is made which compliments the recipients. In the respect of social order, interlocutors negatively sanction inapt conduct through a variety of methods such as soliciting accounts (Bolden & Robinson, 2011), issuing accountability-driven imperatives (Kent & Kendrick, 2016), casting sanctioning looks (Kidwell, 2005), among others. As for the turn design of the disaffiliative talk, disagreements, or conflictual talk in general, tend to be softened through various linguistic markers and delay tactics (Atkinson & Drew, 1979; Pomerantz, 1984).

Sometimes the accusations take various syntactic forms—they may be declarative, interrogative, or imperative—but all are produced in the context of hearably antagonistic or conflictual talk (e.g., Dersley & Wootton, 2001; Goodwin, 1983; Hutchby, 1996). Speakers typically maintain social bonds by expressing their opinions in progressively less conflictual ways, even in ordinary conflictual conversations (Muntigl & Turnbull, 1998).

Previous research in conversation analysis has generally focused on how disaffiliative actions are constructed, and how' in their construction, the interactants nonetheless orient to the preference for agreement. Although one of the research focuses is on the production of certain disaffiliative social actions, the kind of dynamics of disagreement and argument are not very much studied. Hence this research is focusing on the dynamics of disaffiliation, how they emerge from a rather peaceful talk as implicit disaffiliation, and then escalate into a much more overt form. During the examination of those disaffiliative episodes, it is also worth discovering the practices deployed by the participants to express their disaffiliative status, and how is it recognized by its recipient.

Data and Methods

Both audio and video recordings of naturally occurring informal, face-to-face interactions between family and friends, in Mandarin were collected for this research, though the majority of the data shown here are from video recordings made of family eating or relaxing or talking in the home, made as participants were travelling in the car, recordings of friends sitting around eating, and other such everyday settings. Participants speak Chinese and have given informed consent for participation. To anonymize the data, pseudonyms are used in the transcripts, and images are pixelated. Disaffiliation and conflict were not my a priori research focus. It only caught my eye after video recordings were made.

This research involves the methodological paradigm of sequential analysis (Sacks, 1992), including the multi-modal analysis of embodied interaction (Mondada, 2007). CA is a qualitative approach to studying naturally occurring talk in both everyday and institutionalized contexts.

A general aim in CA research is to explore the orderly methods or practices through which speakers produce social interaction. CA is built on the foundation of five pillar concepts. Firstly, there is the concept of social action. As Drew (2015) illustrated 'When people converse, they are not merely talking, not merely describing …… They are constructing their turns to perform an action or to be part of the management of some activity.' These actions are interactive, co-ordinated with others' actions and collaborative, they are social actions (Heritage, 2012). These are not stand-alone actions, but have a corresponding social impact on the participants, a specific

interactional consequence, and requires a relevant response from the other participants. In my study, disaffiliative social actions refer to the actions such as challenging, reproaching, complaining, criticizing, disagreeing, or the like. The interactional consequences of such actions are likely to jeopardize social solidarity (Pomerantz, 1984; Button & Casey, 1984).

The second essential concept in CA is that of turn design. Turn design refers to how a speaker constructs a turn-at-talk—what is selected or what goes into 'building' a turn to do the action it is designed to do, in such a way as to be understood as doing that action. A turn is assembled out of components, notably turn-constructional units (TCU), within those TCUs, speakers employ a variety of linguistic and multimodal resources in designing these components and thereby building turns-at-talk. Those resources include lexis (or words), phonetic and prosodic resources, syntactic, morphological and other grammatical forms, timing (e.g. very slightly delaying a response), laughter and aspiration, gesture and other bodily movements and positions (Drew, 2013). When it comes to disaffiliative actions, the participants can use those different resources to design their turn as disaffiliative, which is not only recognizable for the other participants, but also recognizable for those who examines the talk.

Third, it is important to analyze the design of a turn within the sequence of talk in which the turn is being taken, in other words in its interactional environment. Sequence position in this section focus on the position of a particular TCU or TCUs within turns and the position of a turn within sequences (Schegloff, 2007; Heritage, 2013:331). Indeed, the most proximate context which a turn occurs is a turn's sequential context, and more precisely the immediate prior turn(s). Sequential connections and patterns of sequences are at the heart of our investigations of the practices for interacting. It is therefore important to identify the practices for disaffiliative actions in the sequence, for instance, disagreement to prior speaker's self-deprecating comment is a kind of affiliative action, instead of disaffiliative.

Intersubjectivity is the fourth CA building block. It refers to participants' understandings of others' prior turns. The orderliness and coherence of any social interaction relies on the mutual intelligibility of talk (and action) – on the understandings which each has about the other's 'meaning' (Heritage, 2012). Each participant in a dyadic (two-person) conversation (to take the simplest model) constructs or designs a turn to be understood by the other in a particular way - for instance, as performing some particular action. The other constructs an appropriate response, the other's understanding of the prior turn being manifest in that response (Drew, 2003). When a speaker takes the turn, they display their understanding of the turn before them and of what the prior speaker said or meant. This serves as the foundation to confirm that the participants understood what was stated and, if necessary, to mobilise practises for repair when there has been a breakdown in alignment and mutual understanding.

Conversation Analysis has long been focusing on identifying the processes and methods that enable the interactive and reflective production of recognised components in action (see Sacks et al., 1974). Until recently, the majority of CA work has been on telephone conversation, investigating the verbal mode of the conversation

and set aside the non-verbal conduct to simplify the research. However, face-to-face, embodied social interaction is the primordial site of language use, acquisition, and evolution (see Levinson & Holler, 2014; Levinson, 2016). Language is included into multimodal displays by both the speaker and the recipient, and a complex orchestration of articulators and modalities is required for the production of social actions during interaction. As more video recording data were used in CA research, researchers have been paying more precise attention to temporally and sequentially organized details of actions that account for how co-participants orient to each other's conduct, and assemble it in meaningful ways, moment by moment (Mondada, 2016). In the analysis of embodied interaction, conduct includes not only verbal conduct as outlined above, but also non-vocal conduct such as gesture (e.g. Streeck, 2022), eye gaze (e.g. Rossano, 2013), and body movement and position (e.g. Keevallik, 2010; Schegloff, 1998). Multimodal analysis also includes physical environmental factors and contingencies such as the ways in which the physical space within which an interaction takes place contributes to shaping that interaction (e.g. Backhouse and Drew, 1992). Research on how multimodal practices are fitted to sequences and trajectories of embodied activities, as well as deployed inter-changeably with bodily displays, result in truly multimodal patterns that emerge in real time (see Abner et al., 2015; Keevallik, 2018; Cooperrider & Mesh, 2022). It is therefore important to examine the multimodal resources and practices that may contribute to disaffiliative sequences and actions, how gaze, pointing, and other body movements may be designed for the participants to display their disaffiliative stance.

The Jeffersonian transcription system is adopted for data transcription (Jefferson, 2004a). However, that transcription system has had occasionally to be integrated with a system that could capture bodily and other conduct; it has proved difficult to transcribe non-vocal conduct in the same way as CA has tried to represent speech, partly because it is difficult to transcribe all non-vocal conduct, so the transcriber has to select what might be relevant to analysing a given action or sequence; and partly because there was until recently no commonly accepted system for representing non-vocal conduct and the coordination between speech and e.g. gesture. That has been resolved by the transcription system devised by Mondada (Mondada, 2019), and where relevant, when I have explored multimodal (bodily) conduct and speech, I have adopted Mondada's system for multimodal transcriptions. that interactants employ to display their disaffiliative stances.

The dynamics of disaffiliation

My study focuses on the dynamics of disaffiliation, and I will start to explore it with an investigation into conflict and discord in conversations between couples in ordinary households. In this case, I aim to trace the emergence of disaffiliation in a conversation in which the overt disaffiliation was foreshadowed by some nuanced practices of

inexplicit disaffiliation. My concern here does not relate to the generality or frequency of the use of the practices, but rather the patterns within the sequential dynamic of how such episodes begin as seemingly innocuous remark, and then escalate into overt disaffiliation. I will examine the formulation of actions with disaffiliative features, how those features were rendered through verbal and non-verbal resources, and the contrasting characters of implicit and explicit disaffiliation.

I first examined closely the trajectory of one conversation and how each step was generated as a result of the prior turn, focusing on those turns in which participants disaffiliated with one another; that is to say, turns which were treated by the other as disaffiliative and to which they responded argumentatively. My purpose in doing so was to locate and identify, within those turns, actions or practices through which disaffiliation was being mobilised, or to put it another way, the practices whereby a turn/action derived its character as disaffiliative.

This kind of escalation from implicit to explicit disaffiliation can be seen clearly in the following example where the husband (Lin) and wife (Mei) were in a car; Mei was driving the car and Lin was in the passenger seat. Although the beginning of the argument was not recorded, at the point where we join this interaction between Lin and Mei they are bickering only on an implicit level, and then moved into a more antagonistic argument as characterized by the participant. Each step of this transition can be traced from implicit to explicit disaffiliation.

Ex. 3   [SK: Rear view mirror]


```
01 Lin: ↑búshì nǐ   zhǐyào bú   qù  yòu   bìngxiàn .
          NEG  2SG  if     NEG  go  right merge lane
        No, if you don't go and merge into the right lane
02      nǐ  jiù  méi bìyào     kàn nàgè: +yòu- yòu  +fǎnguāng+jìng.
        2SG then NEG necessary look that right right rear-view mirror
        Then you don't have to check that right rear-view mirror.
   Mei:                                        +look twd right+,,,,,,,,,+
03      +(0.7)         +(0.3)+
   Mei: +look twd right +,,,,,+
04 Mei: +jīngcháng xūyào  yòu   bìngxiàn+    ā.+=
           Often    need  right merge lane  PRT
        (It's) often necessary to merge into the right lane.
        +look twd right                 +,,,,,,+
05 Lin: =nǎ: jīngcháng (yòu   bìngxiàn)
         Where often     right merge lane
        When (does it) often merge into the right lane.
06 Mei: +yě jīngcháng xūyào+[(>  biān kànkàn<)+
```

```
          Also often   need        side glance
```
(It's) also often necessary to glance at the sides.

```
          +look twd left       +,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,+
```
07 Lin:
```
                          [jìnliàng        de kěyǐ bú —
                           Try one's best  AUX can NEG
```
Can try your best not to-

08
```
          nà    ±wǒ lùxiàng zhè duàn ±shíjiān ± nǐ wánquán    kěyǐ bú qù—
          Then 1SG record this period time    2SG completely can NEG go
```
Then during this period of time when I am recording, you can completely avoid going-

```
             ±look twd camera       ±,,,,,,,±
```
09
```
          nǐ  wánquán    +kěyǐ bú  yòu  + bìngxiàn.+
          2SG completely can  NEG right    merge lane
```
You can completely avoid merging into the right lane.

```
   Mei:                    +look twd right+,,,,,,,,,,+
```
10   (1.1)

11 Mei: nǐ °zhè° +bú zhǎoshìér   nǐ.+
```
          2SG this NEG looking for trouble 2SG
```
Aren't you looking for trouble here.

```
                   +look twd Lin                  +
```
12 Lin: duì   yā .[nǐ cái zhīdào
```
          Right PRT 2SG just know
```
Right. You just found out?

13 Mei:
```
                   [bú zhǎo*shìér          nánshòu       nǐ*
                    NEG looking for trouble uncomfortable 2SG
```
You'd feel uncomfortable if you're not looking for trouble.

```
                         *head tilt twd Lin              *
```
14 Lin: duì ā .   nǐ kànkàn .
```
          Right PRT 2SG see
```
Right. You see,

15
```
          nǐ  zhè zhǒng rén   jiù  shì [zhè yàng .
          2SG this kind people just COP  this like
```
Your kind of people are just like this.

16 Mei:
```
                                  [èn .
                                   PRT
```
Mmh.

17
```
          +bú  tái+gàng néng  +sǐ.+
           NEG argue     can     die
```

(It) can kill you if (you) don't argue.

```
      +......+look twd Lin+,,,+
```

18 Lin: duì . nǐ zhè rén jiù shì +táigàng .   +

    Right 2SG this person just COP argue

    Right. You are this person who just argue.

In order to make the video recording, Lin was setting up his phone on the corner of the dashboard, thereby blocking Mei's sight to her right. Their squabble began with Lin's observation on Mei's behaviour indicating that it was unnecessary for her to check the right rear-view wing mirror:

01 Lin: ↑búshì nǐ   zhǐyào bú   qù   yòu   bìngxiàn .

    NEG   2SG if   NEG go   right merge lane

    No, if you don't go and merge into the right lane

02   nǐ   jiù   méi bìyào   kàn nàgè: +yòu–   yòu +fǎnguāng+jìng.

    2SG then NEG necessary look that right right rear-view mirror

    Then you don't have to check that right rear-view mirror.

```
   Mei:                                      +look twd right+,,,,,,,,,+
```

Lin's turn (line1-2) consisted of one TCU (negator + conditional construction) that formulated the conduct of pointing out the unnecessity of looking towards the right rear-view mirror. It was built towards the current situation where Mei had probably complained about Lin's blocking her sight. Lin attributed the trouble to Mei's behaviour, therefore formed a very mild element of finding fault with Mei. It is an unsolicited advice-giving that is oriented to as a disagreement (Heritage & Sefi, 1992) about Mei's driving technique, although it was not a quite overtly accusation at this stage.

The negator 'búshì (不是)' on the turn initial position prefaced the disaffiliative status of Lin's turn. The literal meaning of this word was 'not be', so that bú acted as a modifier of shì, a negation conveying disconfirmation, disagreement, disavowal, and similar 'disconnects' (Yu & Drew, 2017). The turn initial particle 'búshì' prefaced the intrinsically disaffiliative character of Lin's turn towards Mei. The negative connotation in Lin's turn projected criticism of Mei's driving, although that was not explicit. Although the prior conversation is not available, the action of Lin's turn can probably be described as a rebuttal to Mei's prior turn, or disagreement of Mei's driving technique.

After the turn initial particle 'búshì (不是)', the instructive character in Lin's turn was mitigated by the conditional structure of the sentence. It stated the condition of Mei's need to see the right rear-view mirror and therefore downplayed the instructive character of the statement.

When in response in Lin's criticism in line 1 and 2, Mei turns to her right, she's directly disobeying Lin's implicit instruction; when she further add in line 4 that contrary

13

to his instruction, it's often necessary to merge right, she is treating his turn in line 1 and 2 as having being critical.


```
03       +(0.7)           +(0.3)+
   Mei: +look twd right+,,,,,+
04 Mei: +jīngcháng xūyào  yòu   bìngxiàn+    ā.+=
         Often     need   right merge lane  PRT
        (It's) often necessary to merge into the right lane.
         +look twd right                 +,,,,,,+
```


Mei resisted Lin's advice by immediately looking to her right. The comparatively more implicit disaffiliation was firstly rendered Mei's gaze accompanying Lin's turn (looking toward right) as she's driving indicated that she needed to see the right rear-view mirror. After Lin produced his turn, Mei's gaze filled the 1 second gap between the turns. The repetition of her gaze towards right also coincided with Mei's immediate next turn, which was an embodied action of Mei's claim in line 4. The frequent gaze of Mei was in contrast to Lin's assertion in the prior turn and therefore formulated the conduct as disagreement. Mei's push-back was also shown by the denial of the condition provided by Lin in his prior turn (line 4). Grammatically, it was a pro-drop sentence, which omitted the agency of Mei's counter argument, contrastive to Lin's turn which is clearly directed to Mei with a second person pronoun. Rather than addressing the accusatory characters of Lin's turn, Mei's counter argument was on a more general issue of how people should drive, instead of the specific situation they were facing at that moment. It can be seen as an effort of managing the disaffiliation in a relatively less antagonistic level, as the agency of disagreement was made obscure.

After disputing the general issue of whether a driver needs to look over towards the rear-view mirror, Lin's argument escalated in the next turn where it was constructed as a self-correction in line 7.


```
07 Lin:                        [jìnliàng        de kěyǐ bú —
                                Try one's best AUX can NEG
        Can try your best not to-
08     nà    ±wǒ lùxiàng zhè duàn ±shíjiān ± nǐ wánquán    kěyǐ bú qù—
        Then 1SG record this period time    2SG completely can NEG go
        Then during this period of time when I am recording, you can completely avoid going-
             ±look twd camera      ±,,,,,,,,±
09     nǐ wánquán    +kěyǐ bú  yòu  + bìngxiàn.+
        2SG completely can  NEG right   merge lane
```

You can completely avoid merging into the right lane.

```
   Mei:                    +look twd right+,,,,,,,,,,+
10       (1.1)
11 Mei: nǐ °zhè° +bú  zhǎoshìér          nǐ.+
        2SG this NEG looking for trouble 2SG
    Aren't you looking for trouble here.
                +look twd Lin              +
```

The personal pronoun was omitted in the beginning of the turn, indicated the alignment of Mei's prior turn as they were arguing on whether the driver needs to see the right rear-view mirror while driving. The second person pronoun was added after the self-correction, shifting the topic back to the specific case that they were encountering.

Moreover, the word 'jìnliàng(尽量)' (try one's best) in the beginning of the turn still attributed to Mei the ability to mitigate the situation. After the self-correction, the turn design escalated into an extreme case formulation by the word 'wánquán(完全)' (completely). Interactants use extreme case formulations when they anticipate or expect their co-interactants to undermine their claims and when they are in adversarial situations (Pomerantz, 1986; Edwards, 2000). The word 'wánquán' was a maximum case on how unnecessary it was for Mei to look towards the right rear-view mirror during the video recording. It was to give a sense on the degree of unnecessity of Mei's behaviour, indicating Mei's behaviour was unreasonable and unacceptable. The choice of 'wánquán(完全)' (completely) rather than 'jìnliàng(尽量)' (try one's best) attended directly to the certainty of the argument rather than of the necessity of the situation. In this sense, the extreme case formulation provided for the recognizability of Mei's wrongdoings. Moreover, it was orienting to an audience who might be looking for the illegitimacy of his complaints, which prompted Mei's disaffiliative response in the next turn.

By talking about how Mei can mitigate the problem, with extreme case formulation, Lin's exaggeration on Mei's ability to solve the problem displayed stronger accusatory character than his prior turn. It led to Mei's explicitly argumentative remarks in line 11, which were addressed to Lin's problematic behaviour by the phrase 'zhǎoshìér' (找事儿). It is a phrase that literally means 'looking for trouble', which idiomatically indicates usually other people's problematic behaviour, as putting effort into searching for trouble is not in accordance with the social norm. The turn was designed as a negative interrogative which constituted a challenging character. It should be treated as an assertive accusation to be disagreed with (Heritage, 2002). However, Lin's response took the form of agreement with Mei in line 12, which was rather dispreferred and prompted the escalation of the accusation towards the personal character of Lin's in line 13 and 17, which is more clearly deictic attribution to Lin as a troublemaker.

```
13 Mei:            [bú zhǎo*shìér          nánshòu        nǐ*
                   NEG looking for trouble uncomfortable  2SG
```
You'd feel uncomfortable if you're not looking for trouble.
```
                            *head tilt twd Lin                    *
14 Lin: duì yā .   nǐ kànkàn .
         Right PRT 2SG see
```
Right. You see,
```
15       nǐ  zhè zhǒng rén    jiù  shì [zhè yàng .
         2SG this kind people just COP  this like
```
Your kind of people are just like this.
```
16 Mei:                                 [èn .
                                         PRT
```
Mmh.
```
17       +bú  tái•gàng néng   +sǐ.+
          NEG argue    can     die
```
(It) can kill you if (you) don't argue.
```
         +......+look twd Lin+,,,+
18 Lin: duì . nǐ zhè rén jiù shì +táigàng .     +
         Right 2SG this person just COP argue
```
Right. You are this person who just argues

Although Lin' rebuttal took the form of agreement as line 12, 14 and 18 all started with the word 'duì(right)' with a suffix 'yā' on the turn initial position, which is a token of agreement, but it was not to agree with Mei, instead it was to point out the transparency of the deictic of personal attribution. The suffix 'yā' particle seemed to contest the entitlement of Mei's accusation (Wu & Yu, 2022). Lin's turn was built towards the direction of turning Mei's words against herself. As Lin summarized the complainable personal character into 'nǐ zhè zhǒng rén (your kind of people)' in line 15, which is a phrase with idiomatically negative and facetious connotations, he conveyed a more antagonistic stance to Mei's personal character, which was almost like a short version of 'right back at you'.

By this stage, the interaction between them has escalated from implicit criticism (line 1-2) and implicit rebuttal (line 3-4) into quite explicit criticisms of one another's character(line 13-18). Different linguistic and non-linguistic resources were employed by the participants to escalate the argument.

Plan for the dissertation

As can be seen from this brief excerpt in what might be termed a spat between a husband and wife concerning the wife's driving, it can be rather difficult to draw a clear line between implicit and explicit disaffiliation. However, there is fairly clearly a move from more implicit disaffiliative forms to expressions that are rather more overtly disaffiliative. In other words, there is an escalation of disaffiliation between them in this short excerpt; they become more overtly hostile to one another as they move towards accusing one another as being the type of person who looks for an argument. Their language becomes increasingly more confrontational. In this dissertation I have tried to represent this dynamic by focusing first on the practices associated with relatively implicitly disaffiliative episodes, in Chapter 2. Then in Chapter 3 I focus on the practices through which participants are more openly or explicitly disaffiliative or hostile towards one another. Although it would be more accurate to examine the practices for disaffiliation as a spectrum or continuum of implicit and explicit, I hope that spectrum will be evident in how I have tried to convey the escalating dynamics of disaffiliation and discord, by showing that these are expressed not just within two turns, but through sequences in which one expression of disaffiliation is returned by another, which in its turn is rebutted or argued with, and the interaction becomes more explicitly discordant. I begin in the next chapter, Chapter 2, by focussing on the more nuanced cases of inexplicit disaffiliation.

Chapter 2 Implicit disaffiliation

Introduction

I have shown in Chapter 1 that disaffiliation may be expressed or manifested in ways that are quite implicit or even indirect – as well as in ways that are explicit, in which participants make plain their dissent, disagreement or discord with one another. When disaffiliation is implicit, it is barely visible in the interaction; when it is explicit, disaffiliation is highly visible. The data excerpt I showed in Chapter 1, example 1, illustrated the progression that may occur from implicit to more explicit forms or expressions of disagreement, which might be regarded as the escalation of conflict between them. In those episodes of the implicit expression of disaffiliation, participants managed to display their disaffiliative stance without rupturing the social coherence of the occasion – indeed without disaffiliation breaking through the surface of the talk. In contrast to explicit disaffiliation, implicit disaffiliation does not take the form of overt arguing or discord. Overt disaffiliation can be foreshadowed by the implicit disaffiliation, which indicates the effort that each individual may put into managing the social coherence of the occasion.

Such implicit or nuanced displays of disaffiliation are managed through features or practices of turn design, in the sequential unfolding of interactions, practices that consist of different linguistic and embodied resources. We can begin to see something of these resources for expressing implicit disaffiliation in this brief excerpt below (the rest of the sequence will be shown in the next section). Lin and Mei were sitting in their kitchen finishing their evening meal; Lin had evidently been having an alcoholic drink with his dinner, but at this point he has emptied his glass.

Ex. 1   [SK: No more drinks]

```
01 Lin:    ·èn :·: nà , hē    wán      le .#zěnme bàn·
           PRT   PRT  drink finished ASP how   do
           Finished my drink. What to do now?
           ·....·glass display twd Mei--------------·
02 Mei:    ·°èn °(1.0)            ·(0.5)                ·
           PRT
           Mmh
    Lin:   ·drink the last drop · glass display twd Mei·
```

It is evident from Lin's embodied display of having nothing left in his glass - the exaggerated way in which he held up and displayed his empty glass (line 1, fig.1), then

seemed to drink the last drop as well as saying to his wife Mei that he had finished his drink ('hē wán le') and pondered 'what next' – that he would like another drink.

Fig.1 Lin's display of his empty glass towards Mei

This becomes evident in the subsequent sequence (not shown here), as does Mei's understanding that he was indeed asking for another drink, or asking permission to have another drink. In her response (line 2) Mei's turn had an implicit, nuanced disaffiliative character of non-committal denial. Just as Lin did not ask for (or if he could have) another drink in a direct manner, only ending his turn 'zěnme bàn' (what to do now), which produced a slot for Mei to offer him another drink, so also Mei's response was not directly to reject Lin's implicit request. She did not take the opportunity to offer him a drink, but instead replied only with the single particle 'èn' (contoured in low pitch and almost unhearable). It was a minimal acknowledgement token that merely exhibited her recipiency. It can be seen as a misaligned response since it conveyed neither the fulfilment nor the rejection of his unstated request. Such a minimal acknowledgement can be seen as the most reduced way in which to respond (Jefferson, 1993), indicating Mei's unwillingness to cooperate.

In the remainder of this chapter, I will identify and explore some of the practices to be found on my data which are associated with such implicit or nuanced expressions of disaffiliation. One of these practices or resources for disaffiliating implicitly is minimal acknowledgement; two others I will review are pointing at a speaker's addressee, and 'forensic' questions.

Minimal acknowledgements

Minimal acknowledgments indicate an almost passive recipiency, like 'Mm hm' in English conversation. The participant uses this practice to propose that their co-participant is still in the midst of the course of talk, and may continue (Jefferson, 1984; Schegloff, 1982). In mandarin Chinese conversation, such a practice can be achieved by the particle 'èn', which does not always convey a disaffiliative stance; however, there are some particular features that can differentiate the stance it might convey. We have seen that in the example above, Mei's implicit rejection of Lin's implicit request

or at least desire for another drink was foreshadowed by her minimal acknowledgement:

Ex. 2   [SK: No more drinks] (Lin, on the right, and Mei, left, are sitting in their kitchen, finishing their evening meal)


```
01 Lin:    •èn :•: nà , hē    wán       le .#zěnme bàn•
           PRT   PRT  drink finished ASP how    do
           Finished my drink. What to do now?
           •.....•glass display twd Mei---------------•
    fig                                    #fig.1
```



```
02 Mei:    •°èn °(1.0)              •(0.5)                    •
           PRT
           Mmh
    Lin:   •drink the last drop • glass display twd Mei-->•
03 Lin:    •yī  dī # (yě   bú ) • chūlái    le  •
           One drop even NEG      come out  ASP
           There's not even one drop left here.
           •-------------------•,,,,,,,,,,,,,•
    fig              #fig.2
```



```
04 Mei:    °èn °
           PRT
           Mmh
05 Lin:    .h zài   jiā yě   búhǎoyìsī   le.hhh.
              again add also embarrassed ASP
           (I'd be) embarrassed to ask for more again.
06         (2.4)
07  Lin:   bú jiā le. ((sniffle))
           NEG add ASP
           No more.
```

```
08  Mei:    °èn °
         PRT
         Mmh
09  Lin:    zài   gěi  wǒ jiā diǎnér   ba .
         More give me add a little PRT
         Give me a little bit more BA.
10          (0.5)
11          Ha+hahaha[hahahaha               ]hahahaha
12  Mei:         [((smile))bú   hē    le +ba +]
                      NEG drink ASP PRT

         Don't drink BA.
            +pointing twd Lin  +,,,,,,,,,,,,,,+
```

In his first attempt, displaying his empty glass, Lin was looking at the glass while his body was oriented towards Mei (fig.1), seeming to examine how much drink was left in his glass, making it an almost innocent display of 'just looking'. After Mei's minimal acknowledgement, Lin pursued his desire for more to drink through showing Mei his empty glass, almost inviting her to check the glass with him (fig.2). It indicated that Mei's first response (line 2) was not to fulfil his implied request. Mei's response to Lin's escalated 'request' (line 4) was another minimal acknowledgement with similar prosodic features as the one in line 2. Lin recognized the disaffiliative character of Mei's response in his retreat from or retraction of his asking for another drink, in his turns in lines 5-7. Again, Mei responded similarly with another prosodically identical minimal acknowledgement (line 8). Each of her minimal acknowledgements indicated passive recipiency without at this stage offering a positive or negative response. Mei's (negative) stance toward Lin's desire for another drink was quite 'under the surface', which offered Lin another slot for further retracting or escalating. Mei's successive disaffiliative 'rejections' only became evident after Lin's overt expression requesting another drink (line 9); both this and Mei's explicit rejection (line 12) was accompanied with laughter and/or smiling, which formulated the character of their actions as non-serious (which is not to say he was not serious – their laughter only treats his 'request' as if it were non-serious).

Minimal acknowledgements usually have a 'continuative' character, that is to say while the participants receipt the talk that constitutes an action over its course, they do not acknowledge or affiliate with that talk (Heritage & Sefi, 1992). A similar phenomenon was widespread in my data corpus, as the participants produce it to disagree/decline the action of the prior speaker.

Minimal acknowledgements as an implicitly disaffiliative practice was also observed in other cases with a comparatively less playful character. In the following example, Mei expressed her opinion about psychological tests (lines 1-4), an opinion with which Rui agreed (lines 5, 8 and on). Sun did not respond verbally, other than to acknowledge minimally.

Ex. 3   [SK: Family diss]


```
01  Mei:    zán zhèxiē rén      zán  juézhe zìj–
            1PL these  people  1PL  feel   self
            We people feel that ourselves-
02  Mei:    jiù xiàng wǒ,
            just like  1SG
            Just like me,
03  Mei:    juézhe  xīn   lǐ méi yǒu   dà   wèntí de  rén
            feel    heart in NEG have big  problem POS person
            Feel like there's no big problem with my mental world
04          *qíshí     yě    shì* yǒu   wèntí =
             Actually also  be  have problem
            Actually the problem is there.
            *hand stroke fwd---*
05  Rui:    ±=dōu yǒu   wèn[tí =±
            All have   problem
            (We) all have problems.
            ±nodding-----------±
06  Sun:                       [°èn °
                               PRT
            Mmh.
07  Mei:    =yào qù yī   cè   dehuà yě    shì yǒu   wèntí .=
             If  go once test if    also  BE have problem
            If (we) go and have a test then (we) also have problems.
08  Rui:    =èn .
            PRT
            Yeah.
09          (.)
10  Mei:    *wǒ   rú– *yàoshì rú  shí *  zuò  *     dá      dehuà
            1SG  if-  if       as  fact conduct answer if
            If- If I honestly answer
            *········· *hand stroke fwd *,,,,,,*
11  Sun:    [°èn °        ]
            PRT
            Mmh.
12  Mei:    [dōu   yǒu ] wèntí . dànshì +wǒ   xiànzài .h+
             All   have  problem but    1SG   now
            (We) all have problems, But now I-
                          +self pointing---+
13          wǒ –yīnwéi   wǒ   dà  le ma . wǒ *zhīdào *zěnme guībì ,
            1SG because 1SG big le PRT 1SG know    how    avoid
            I- since I've gained more experience, I know how to avoid-
                                              *········*-->
```

22

```
14          wǒ    zhīdào shénme yàng de   tí        wǒ zěnme dá — *
            1SG   know   what   kind POS question 1SG how answer
            I know how to answer all kinds of question
            -->hand stroke fwd -->*
15          *.h huì   huì *dé    hǎo  de   fènr
                Will will gain good POS score
            to get a good score.
            *,,,,,,,,,,, *
16          •(.)          •
    Sun:    •eye rolling•
17  Rui:    >jiùshì shuō <nǐ   pèngdào    shénme yàngr de wèntí
             like   say   2SG encounter  what   kind  POS problem
            It's like when you encounter whatever type of problems-

(18-20 omitted)

21          .h wǒ zìjǐ [zhīdào -]=
               1SG self    know
            I know it myself-
22  Sun:                 [°èn °    ]
23  Rui:    =wǒ zěnme qù jiějué wǒ zhè  zhǒng xīnlǐ         wèntí . ·
             1SG how  go  solve  1SG this type psychological problem
            I know how to solve this kind of psychological problem of mine.
```

Sun's disagreement with Mei and Rui about Rui's son was foreshadowed by her minimal acknowledgements/continuers in line 6, 11 and 22. It was noticeable that both Rui and Sun use the same particle 'èn' but the stance they conveyed were different. Rui affiliates with Mei after Mei has finished the production of her TCU (line 1-4) and used the hand gesture to solicit a response. The agreement was also shown with embodied action (head nodding) accompanied with verbal agreement in line 5. The particle 'èn' in line 7 had a similar affiliative feature as it was also produced after Mei's production of her TCU. The falling intonation was clearly hearable, which enhanced the assertive character of the affiliation. In her minimal acknowledgements 'èn' (lines 6 and 11) Sun's quiet, almost inaudible speech contrasts with the emphatic way in which Rui produced the similar token in line 8. In this sense, the minimal acknowledgement token 'èn' had a similar passive recipiency feature. Mei's hand gesture in line 10 (fig.3) was rather clearly directed at Sun, indicating that the minimal acknowledgement in Sun's prior turn (line 6) was insufficient, and Sun's reluctance to agree also indicated a disaffiliative stance towards Mei's turn.

Fig.3 Mei's hand gesture pointing towards Sun

Sun's disaffiliation was indicated through her embodied action (eye rolling) in line 16 (Clift, 2021) and subsequently made explicit verbally (data not shown).

Sun's disaffiliative stance is similarly evident, though only implicitly, in her several minimal acknowledgements 'èn' in example 4.

Ex. 4   [SK: family diss]


```
29  Mei:    =ránhòu ba —
             Then    PRT
            And
30          (0.3)
31          nǐ xiàng tā   zhège • yang
            2SG like 3SG  this  situation
            With the situation like his
    Sun:                              • turn to Mei-->
32          (.)• (0.9)
            -->•
33          yǒu yīxiē ±zhège —
            have some  this
            (He)has some of this
                ±hand circling-->
34  Sun:    èn .
            PRT
            Mmh
35  Mei:    sīkǎo± wèntí    de zhège fāngshì zhège bú duì .
            Think problem  POS this  way      this  NEG correct
            ---->±
            The way he thinks of problems is wrong.
36  Sun:    èn .
            PRT
            Mmh
37  Mei:    rénjiā nàgè xīnlǐ -(0.4)  lǎoshī   huì gàosù tā yīxiē —
            Other  that psychological teacher will tell 3SG some
            That therapist will tell him some
```

```
38          zěnmeyàng .zhèngquè de  yīxiē sīkǎo fāngshì .
            How        correct POS   some think   way
            How to think in a correct way
39 Sun:     èn .
            PRT
            Mmh.
40 Mei:     *tā – *hái  shì děi tā   zìjǐ yòng .*
            3SG still    be need 3SG  self use
            He- he still need to use it himself
            *······*hand stroke fwd---------------*
41 Rui:     duì .
            Correct
            Yes.
42 Mei:     tā –bú  xìn =
            3SG NEG believe
            (if)he doesn't believe (it)
43 Rui:     =tā  bú   xiǎng yòng =
             3SG NEG want  use
            (if)he doesn't want to use it
44 Mei:     =tā  bú  yòng dehuà =
             3SG NEG use if
            If he doesn't use it
45 Sun:     =[bú shì –n-
              NEG be
            No but-
46 Mei:      [nà   hái  shì méi yòng .
             Then still be  NEG use
            Then it is still no use.
47 Sun:     dànshì tā  yǐjīng  shuō le   tā xiǎngyào qù kàn ,
            But    3SG already say  PRT 3SG want      go see
            But he had already said that he wanted to go and see (the therapist)
48          shuōmíng tā xiǎng yòng ā .
            mean       3SG want  use  PRT
            meaning that he wanted to use (the way that the therapist tells him)
49          huòzhě zhìshǎo    tā xiǎng qù shì yī shì .
            or       at least  3SG want  go try one try
            Or at least he wanted to go and have a try
50 Rui:     shì nǐ hái shì dài tā qù °kànkàn .nàyàng °
            Try 2SG still be bring 3SG go see then
            (If he wants to) try then you still can bring him to see (the therapist)
```

In line 34, Sun's minimal acknowledgement of Mei's prior turn was delivered before Mei finished her TCU, and again after a Mei's completed TCU (line 35). It is noticeable that until line 38 Mei's account of Rui's son's psychological difficulties was

a description of a rather 'objective' reality that Rui's son was facing. Her negative stance was not overtly expressed but only implied, and similarly Sun's disaffiliation was projected in her minimal acknowledgements. Only subsequently was their discord made explicit, when Sun overtly disagreed (line 45), using the negator 'bú shì' in turn initial position (Yu & Drew, 2017) (data not shown).

In the cases I discussed above, the speaker's disaffiliative stance was shown through one of the characteristics of minimal acknowledgements, which is that they display only the speaker's recipiency, without engaging with or taking a stance towards what was said in the prior turn. In other words, the recipient merely acknowledges what the other has said without agreeing or disagreeing or indeed expressing any view – any support for or denial of what the speaker said. And the recipient neither affiliates with nor disagrees with the speaker's remark. Such passive recipiency can be treated as withholding agreement, and indeed there is evidence in Mei's continued expressions of what she thinks is Zeng's problem, in response to Sun's minimal responses that she is treating Sun as not affiliating with her. This is similar to the pattern of pursuing a response noted by Pomerantz (1984b). Therefore in responding minimally to the prior speaker's assessment or informing, the recipient, Sun, was declining to agree or affiliate with the prior speaker's turn.

The following example is taken from a conversation between Mei and Zeng, where Zeng was a 13-year-old boy and Mei was his aunt. Zeng was near-sighted and they were having an argument about Zeng's overuse of mobile phone which caused the near-sightedness.

Ex. 5   [SK: camera fall again]


```
21 Mei:   xiànzài– zhè  gè– tiān–  tiāntiān kàn  shǒujī
          Now      this CL  everyd– everyday look mobile phone
          Now- this- everyd- looking at the mobile phone all day long
22        ránhòu zhè  gè duì yǎnjīng shì bú  bú  hǎo .=
          then   this CL to  eyes    COP NEG NEG good
          then this is or isn't going to be not good for the eyes?
23 Zeng:  =°èn °. =
              PRT
              Mmh.
24 Mei:   =[ā ? ]
           PRT
           What?
25 Zeng:  [èn .¹]èn hěn hǎo .
           PRT   PRT very good
```

¹ The pronunciation of this particle seemed to be somewhere between an 'mmh' and an 'oh', giving this turn an impression of an oh-prefaced response, projecting the disaffiliative response in the next turns.

```
                 Mmh. Yeah very good.
26  Mei:    duì  yǎnjīng hěn  hǎo ,
                 to   eyes    very good
                 Very good to the eyes?
27           (.)
28  Zeng:    èn   duì      ā
                 PRT  correct PRT
                 Mmh correct.
29  Mei:    èn  .nǐ  yǎnjīng bú   jìnshì       ā ,
                 PRT 2SG eyes    NEG  nearsighted  PRT
                 Mmh. You are not nearsighted?
30  Zeng:    èn  .bú jìnshì.
                 PRT NEG nearsighted
                 Mmh. Not nearsighted.
31  Mei:    yě   bú  yòng dài  yǎnjìng
                 Also NEG need wear glasses
                 Also no need for glasses?
32  Zeng:    èn .
                 PRT
                 Mmh.
33  Mei:    ↑shì ma.
                  COP PRT
                 Yes?
34  Zeng:    èn .
                 PRT
                 Mmh.
35  Mei:    ¥nǐ yǎnjīng zhème bàng ¥
                  2SG eyes    such  amazing
                 You have such amazing eyesight
36  Zeng:    èn [hahaha
                     PRT
                 Mmh hahaha
```

The first minimal acknowledgement 'èn' (line 23) was a response to Mei's question (line 21-22). It contained an extreme case formulation 'tiāntiān' (all day long), which was an exaggerated description on the frequency of Zeng's usage of his mobile phone, thereby highlighting the problematic behaviour of Zeng's and indicating its sanctionable character. Moreover, Mei's turn was constructed with a rhetorical question, which has the similar meaning as an assertive statement (watching the phone all day long is not good for the eyes). It was to admonish Zeng's problematic behaviour. By producing a minimal acknowledgement in line 23, Zeng failed to acknowledge the reprimand implied in Mei's observation that he watches his phone every day, that reprimand being that he should not watch it so frequently; moreover; he failed also to respond to Mei's open class repair initiator 'a' in line 24 (Drew, 1997)

to which he might have been expected to do some form of repair. It is important to note that Zeng's minimal acknowledgements in line 23, 32, 34 and 36 occur in a different sequential position than Sun's minimal acknowledgements in example 4 above (e.g. in line 39). Here in example 5, Mei is asking Zeng polar questions, which makes affirmation and disaffirmation conditionally relavant. However, although in the retrospect, the response might be considered affirmative, and therefore more than minimal, nevertheless, it is evident that Mei treats his responses as having been disaffiliative, as not agreeing with her; she therefore treat his turns as indeed minimal acknowledgements only, as not affirming what Mei claims. Those turns in which Mei appears particularly to treat Zeng as not having affiliated with her are her turns in lines 24, 26, 29, 31, 33 and 35, in all of which her skepticism with Zeng's responses is clearly manifested.

In comparison with the first minimal acknowledgement (line 23), Zeng's 'èn' was louder in the following turns (line 32 and 34) and his falling intonation was clearly audible. It displayed a more assertive stance as Mei kept pursuing the sanction, until the sanction deteriorated into teasing (line 35). As Mei described Zeng's eyesight as 'zhème bàng' (so amazing) with smiley voice, it was clear to both parties that the description was in contrast with the truth, therefore her teasing was recognizable. The minimal acknowledgement in line 36 was followed by laughter, which was going along with the teasing. At this stage of the conversation, the management of disaffiliation was achieved in a way that did not rupture the surface of the talk and therefore did not threaten social coherence, although they have not yet quite reached agreement with one another. The following example was another case of a similar phenomenon. Dou's friend Yue has complained that Dou told her friend how hard she studied over the summer vacation, which created pressure for her peers. Yue, Sun and Ding are having dinner together.

The recurrence of minimal acknowledgements can serve as a vehicle for an implicit disaffiliation. A variety of actions is conducted in the speaker's minimal acknowledgement was produced; the recipient(Sun)'s minimal acknowledgement displayed only a reserved acceptance, and thereby are implicitly disaffiliative in their stance towards the speaker(s). In the next section I will consider another such implicitly disaffiliative practice, namely ironic expressions.

Ironic identification of misconduct

The identification of misconduct has a necessarily disaffiliative character, since it consists of or drawing attention to an indication of the other person's wrongdoing. Such behaviour sometimes was categorized as 'aggressive' (Afshari Saleh, 2020). However, one way of drawing attention to another's misconduct or some other fault but doing so inexplicitly, indirectly, is to use irony; irony is 'the expression of one's meaning by using

language that normally signifies the opposite'. In other words, speakers can draw attention to a character trait or misconduct implicitly by stating the opposite of what the recipient character is 'really' taken to be, or by describing this conduct in opposite terms to those that the speaker 'really' means (Clift, 1999; Gibbs, 2000). Clift summarizes irony and the use of irony to highlight transgressions, as follows:

> Examination of irony in conversation shows how the shift of footing allows for detachment, enabling the ironist to make evaluations in response to perceived transgressions with reference to common assumptions. It is both the construction of an ironic turn and its placement in a sequence that make for the discernible shift of footing. (Clift, 1999:253)

In the following example, Dou was accused earlier than this segment (data not shown) for writing her thesis in the summer vacation and thereby creating peer-pressure for her friends. She was defending herself by producing an account for her behaviour in the summer vacation, and this received a disaffiliative response from Ding.

Ex. 6   [SK: peer pressure]


```
54 Dou:    =ránhòu xià bānér huí jiā .
             Then    off work  back home
           Then finish off work and head back home.
55         Wǒ  jiù  xiǎng -wǒ  yòu   bú xiǎng zuò zài nàér
           1SG just think 1SG again NEG want  sit in  there
           I just thought that I don't want to sit there anymore,
56         ránhòu shuā shǒujī      yòu hěn lèi
           then   play  cell phone  also very tiring
           and playing with my phone can also be very tiring
57         Wǒ  jiù   xiǎng liáo huì    tiān     ba
           1SG just  think chat a while something PRT
           I just thought (that I can) chat for a while,
58         liáo shénme ne ,
           chat what   PRT
           Chat about what?
59         jiù  gēn   dàjiā   fēnxiǎng yī xià
           just with everyone share    a bit
           Just share with everyone a little bit
60         wǒ jīntiān yòu  [xiě  le  duōshǎo   zì
           1SG today  again write ASP how many    word
           About how many words I wrote today
61 Ding:              [$xiě le  duōshǎo zì $
                       write ASP how many word
                       How many words (you) wrote
62 Dou:    $èn .$
           PRT
```

29

```
                   yeah
63 Ding:   kěyǐ liáo diǎn biéde .
           Can chat a bit other
           (You) could have chatted a bit about something else.
```

Dou's defensive account for creating peer pressure on her friends was a narrative of a typical day in her summer vacation. She comes to the point where she describes herself as having done enough for the day and decided to go home, explaining that other activities 'playing with my phone' and 'chatting' were not feasible. When she comes to the matter of what she can chat to everyone about (line 57), she poses the rhetorical question to herself of what she could chat with them about (line 58) and response by imaging that she could show with everyone 'how many words I wrote today'. In saying this, she is proposing herself as innocent, as innocently and modestly telling them about how much she managed to write that day (clearly sufficient work rate for her to leave without needing to continue working that day). However, in interjacent overlap (Jefferson, 2004b), Ding takes a turn that is something like a collaborative completion (Lerner, 1996),

Ding's response in line 61 to Dou's account of finishing work early (line 54-60) was a partial repeat of the 'punchline'. Partial repeats of this kind in this sequential position have the character of being other-initiated-repairs (cf. Robinson & Kevoe-Feldman, 2010; Cerovic, 2010), and thereby are a form of a dispreferred response (Kitzinger, 2013). The smiley voice also indicated Ding's reorganization of the joke. After the reciprocal smile of Dou's, Ding provided an unsolicited advice with a modal verb 'kěyǐ' (can) on the turn initial position. By suggesting what Dou could have done (chatting about something else), Ding's response was to suggest ironically an alternative way to behave, ironic insofar as chatting contrasts with what Dou had actually done, and because chatting would not have been acceptable or appropriate behaviour in the work place.

The ironic feature of such action can also be accomplished by the sheer contrast to the existing problematic reality. In the following example, Zeng was a 13-year-old boy and he was near-sighted due to several reasons including his overuse of mobile phone. Mei was his aunt and tried to reprimand him for his problematic behaviour:

Ex. 7   [SK: camera fall again]

```
21 Mei:    xiànzài- zhè  gè- tiān-   tiāntiān kàn    shǒujī
           Now      this CL  everyd- everyday watch mobile phone
           Now- this- everyd- Watching the mobile phone everyday
22         ránhòu zhè  gè duì yǎnjīng shì bú  bú  hǎo .=
           then   this CL to  eyes    COP NEG NEG good
           then this is or isn't going to be good for the eyes?
```

(23-28 omitted)

29 Mei: èn .nǐ yǎnjīng bú   jìnshì   ā ,
           PRT 2SG eyes   NEG   nearsighted   PRT
           Mmh. Your eyes are not nearsighted?
30 Zeng: èn .bú jìnshì.
           PRT NEG nearsighted
           Mmh. Not nearsighted.
31 Mei: yě   bú   yòng dài yǎnjìng
           Also NEG need wear glasses
           Also no need for glasses?
32 Zeng: èn .
           PRT
           Mmh.
33 Mei: ↑shì ma.
            COP PRT
           Yes?
34 Zeng: èn .
           PRT
           Mmh.
35 Mei: ¥nǐ yǎnjīng zhème bàng ¥
            2SG eyes   such amazing
           You have such amazing eyesight
36 Zeng: èn [hahaha
           PRT
           Mmh hahaha
37 Rui: [èn
                PRT
           Mmh.
38 Hua: [Hahahaha
39 Mei: ¥nǐ ↑liùdiǎnlíng de   yǎn¥
           2SG 6.0   POS   eyes
           Your eyesight is 6.0
40 Zeng: ¥èn. ¥
            PRT
           Yeah.
41 Mei: ¥ò   yōu lei nǐ ↑zhème lìhài¥
            PRT PRT PRT 2SG so   terrific
           Wow you are so terrific!
42 Zeng: ¥wǒ qīdiǎnbā de yǎn¥
            1SG 7.8   POS eye
           My eyesight is 7.8
43 Mei: [¥↑shì ma¥   ]
              COP PRT

31

Is it?

Each of Mei's remarks in lines 29, 31 and 35 are ironic, and therefore oblique references to Zeng's poor eyesight. First, her reference in line 29 to his near-sightedness is designed as ironic through her negative construction ('not near sighted'); then she suggests that he does not need glasses, again ironic insofar as he wears glasses (and therefore does need them) (line 31; after which she ironically compliments him on his amazing eyesight (line 35) – ironic because she knows and he knows that his eyesight is much less than amazing. Zeng plainly understands her to be ironically remarking adversely on his eyesight, again in his disaffiliative minimal minimal acknowledgement tokens and a partial repetition of Mei's question, conveying his disagreement with her. After Zeng's non-compliant response (line 32), Mei produced a question conveying disbelief (an open class repair initiator) inviting Zeng's self-repair, to which Zeng responded with a similar minimal acknowledgement token.

Mei's identification of Zeng's misbehaviour took the form of teasing in line 35. Instead of a question that invited Zeng's compliance, she produced a declarative sentence that described the problematic situation in sheer contrast with the reality. In other words, if Zeng chose to comply with the reprimand, he should have produced a response that did not go along with the teasing. However, his response was a similar minimal acknowledgement and laughter, which displayed his recognition of the teasing and to some extent, his compliance with the teasing. Mei's teasing was escalated in line 39, where she described Zeng's eyesight as '6.0' (the best eyesight in the Chinese eyesight measuring system is 5.0). She then used the word 'lìhài' to describe Zeng, which literally means 'terrific' but usually with a negative connotation. The ironic identification of misconduct is reflected in Zeng's subsequent turn (line 30) in where he confirmed that he was not near-sighted. The ironic identification of the misbehaviour was manifested through the teasing, and Zeng's noncompliance was in going along with the teasing, which maintained the social coherence to some extent.

A similar phenomenon was observed in an example shown earlier (Chapter 1, example 1), where Lin was trying to make a video recording and Mei accused him of blocking her sight with the camera while she was driving. Lin then produced a rebuttal to Mei's accusation (line 35-38), and Mei's response was to restate the problematic essence of Lin's behaviour (line 39) and then produce a facetious attribution of Lin's personality trait.

Ex. 8   [SK: rear view mirror]

35 Lin: dǎng yī dǎng nǐ <u>zěnme</u> le .
       Block one block 2SG what ASP
       What's wrong with blocking you for once
36   dǎng yī dǎng nǐ jiù bú néng kāi le .
       Block one block 2SG then NEG can drive ASP

Blocking you for once and then you can't drive?

37   (2.2)

38   bú   chéngrèn [nǐ b–bú chéngrèn nǐ **bèn** .
    NEG admit   2SG NEG   admit   2SG stupid
    not admit- You don't admit you are stupid

39 Mei: [(fǎnzhèng)wǒ bú dé jìn
                Anyway   1SG NEG comfortable
    Anyway, I am not comfortable.

40   (0.3)

41   nǐ bú bèn .   nǐ   lìhài .
    2SG NEG stupid 2SG terrific
    You are not stupid. You are terrific.

42   [nǐ gè sūn dà   lìhài .]
    2SG CL NAME big terrific
    You are a big-Lin-terrific

43 Lin: [nà dāngrán le .   ] nà dāngrán le .
    That sure ASP   that sure ASP
    That's for sure. That's for sure.

45 Mei: nǐ gè sūn dà cōngmíng .
    2SG CL NAME big clever
    You are a big-Lin-clever.

46 Lin: nà :dāngrán le .
    That sure ASP
    That's for sure.

47   (1.7)

48 Mei: °nǐ gè °sūn dà húlu .
    2SG CL NAME big bottle–gourd
    You are a big-Lin-bottle-gourd.

49 Lin: hā hā .hā .shǐyòng rénshēn gōngjī le .
             Use   personal abuse ASP
    Haha, (you) used personal abuse.

50 Lin: zhè jiào méi –qiánlǘjìqióng . qiánlǘjìqióng .
    This call NEG at one's wits' end like the donkey from Qian
    This is called no- at your wits' end like the donkey from Qian, at your wits' end
    like the donkey from Qian

51   (0.3)

52   a.
    PRT

53 Mei: nǐ jiù shì qiánlǘ .
    2SG exactly COP donkey from Qian
    You are exactly the donkey from Qian.

Mei initiated the teasing sequence with her ironic reference to Lin's being terrific (line 41). It consists of three TCUs, the first TCU was a rebuttal to Lin's accusation in

line 38, where Lin's hostility was displayed through the attribution to Mei's personality trait. It was to display Mei's recognition of Lin's 'attack', and project a next that displays a similar antagonistic stance. The next TCU of Mei's turn was also to describe Lin as 'lìhài' (terrific), and then in the next TCU (line 45) added the recipient's name in such a way as to turn his name into a nickname. The word 'lìhài' (terrific) is a commentary term that can be used to describe a person's remarkable quality, but in this case, Lin has not done anything that worth complimenting, in other words, Mei was making ironic comment on Lin's personality, and Lin's response was to go along with the teasing (line 43). Then in line 45, Mei used the word 'cōngmíng' (clever) to describe Lin when he has done nothing intellectually impressing, producing a similar ironic coment as line 42, and Lin's response was also to go along with the teasing.

Mei then used a humorously critical, abusive phrase to refer to Lin in line 48. The word 'húlu' (bottle-gourd) was a reference to A Dream of Red Mansions, where there was a monk from bottle-gourd temple that acted preposterously. Lin's response was to firstly recognize Mei's reference as an accusation to his personality trait (line 49), and then he produced a reciprocal teasing that referenced the idiom 'qiánlǘjìqióng' (at one's wit's end like the donkey from Qian). At this point of the conversation, the argument seemed to have a competitive but humorous character; they are vying with one another in finding sillier nicknames for each other.

Addressee points

In this final section I focus on the interactional function of, or role played by, a particular gesture, addressee pointing, in disaffiliative phases of interactions. In the examples shown here the talk itself is more overtly disaffiliative; participants are more explicitly critical of others' behaviour, more likely to complain about or accuse another than in previous extracts. So, these examples begin to transition into the more explicit disaffiliations to be explored in the next chapter, chapter 3. However, the gesture itself, addressee pointing, is only implicitly disaffiliative; In what follows the analysis of addressee points as a practice that implicitly contributes to disaffiliation alongside or in association with or set in the context of the sometimes overtly disaffiliative character of the talk. This begins to set the scene for Chapter 2 that follows; as we will see, this account of pointing has resonances with the phenomena observed in Chapter 3.

Cooperrider and Mesh (2019) defined pointing generally as movement towards a target, drawing attention to that target, However, in their module on Multimodality: Language and the Body (2021), Drew and Kendrick identified a particular form of pointing, namely an addressee point. They proposed the definition of addressee points specifically as a pointing gesture that fits the following three criteria:

a. The manual gesture is a 'pointing gesture', that is to say the hand configuration of the gesture is that the first finger is extended and the thumb and other fingers

are flexed, considering the deictic feature of such gesture is clearer compared to other hand and arm movements.

b. The turn cooccurring with the gesture has to address to the same participant as the pointing gesture.

c. The pointing gesture is directed to a person, not an object attached to that person. For example, if A is pointing at B's clothes while addressing their turn to B, then it is not an addressee point because A is pointing at an object worn by B instead of pointing at B as a person.

In that module, specifically in lecture 7 (November 2021) they explored some of the "actions conducted through addressee points" (slide 14), including complaining (slides 15-23) and affiliating (slides 24-29) – these actions being conducted both through gesture and speech. My analysis here builds on their analysis of a particular case where students are complaining about aspects of their coursework and readings they were expected to do. Here, I am applying the disaffiliative work of addressee points to disaffiliating with recipients. So addressee points, fitting Drew and Kendrick's 3 criteria above, were observed in my data corpus, such as in the following example where Mei rejected Lin's request for another drink while pointing at him with her index finger:

Ex. 9   [SK: no more drinks]

```
05 Lin:    .h zài   jiā yě   búhǎoyìsī   le.hhh.
              More add also embarrassed ASP
           (I'd be) embarrassed to ask for more again.
06         (2.4)
07  Lin:   bú jiā le. ((sniffle))
           NEG add ASP
           No more.
08 Mei:    °èn °
           PRT
           Mmh
09 Lin:    zài   gěi  wǒ jiā diǎnér   ba .
           More give me add a little PRT
           Give me a little bit more BA.
10         (0.5)
11         Ha+hahaha[hahahaha                      ]hahahaha
12 Mei:             [((smile))bú hē     le +ba +]
                            NEG drink ASP PRT
           Don't drink BA.
                +pointing twd Lin-------------+,,,+
fig          fig.4
```

Having finished his drink Lin indicates that he would like more to drink, but is embarrassed to ask (lines 5 and 7). Getting no encouragement from Mei (lines 7 and 8) he now asks for more to drink in a turn that is designed as a directive, but which through the turn ending particle ba is more questioning, even pleading with Mei to let him have more to drink. His plea for more is accompanied after a 0.5 sec pause with laughter. Mei responds to his laughter by smiling (line 12) but she does not respond directly to the request-like directive; her turn 'don't drink' in line 12 is designed as an independently standing directive, also ending with ba, which mitigates the directive by likewise seeming to ask him (not to drink more). Whilst she is speaking in line 12 she simultaneously does an addressee point, shown in figure 4.

An addressee point is not inherently disaffiliative; it is not idiomatically or conventionally recognizable as doing disaffiliation by itself. It is only in association with and in the sequential context of disaffiliative talk that it might be recognized as disaffiliative. Thus addressee points are unlike other disaffiliative digital gestures such as a V sign and a middle finger, which are conventionally understood to be offensive or derogatory. It's for this reason that they may be considered indirectly disaffiliative; they contribute to the hostile and disaffiliative character of the accompanying talk.

The onset of Mei's pointing gesture in line 12 was the prior turn and continued throughout her turn. The addressee and target of the turn was Lin. In the remainder of this chapter, I will identify the action the speakers were doing through the addressee points considering them in situ, in unfolding, emerging interaction. My focus will be on the contribution that gesture makes to action. I will look closely at where in a sequence that action or gesture occurs and examine the sequential placement of an action, and how addressee points facilitate the implicit display of disaffiliative stance.

Looking back at example 1, Lin's request consisted of a directive and a turn final particle 'ba', which indicate a pleading character of the request (Kendrick, 2010 & 2018). Moreover, the quantifier 'diǎnér' (a little) suggested that he was not asking for a full glass of alcohol. Such choices of linguistic forms for making requests reflect the speaker's evaluation of the contingencies surrounding the granting of a request as well as his entitlement to make the request (Curl & Drew, 2008). In other words, the turn design reflected Lin's perceived low entitlement to make the request. After a 0.5 second pause, which projected the dispreffered response to the request (Jefferson, 1988; but see Kendrick & Torreira, 2015), Lin produced the laughter that overlapped with Mei's addressee point. Instead of producing reciprocal laughter, she responded with a smile and an addressee point (see figure 4), which together indicate not only that Lin was not entitled to what he has asked for, but that Lin has recognized that his

request was unlikely to succeed. The addressee point here might serve as a recognition of the low entitlement of the request, emphasized by the directive nature of the pointing gesture.

It has been observed in other cases where addressee points were used as a recognition of the addressee's problematic behaviour. In the following excerpt, Yuan, Qing and Lee are family members discussing what light to buy for their new apartment. They were browsing different lights in a shopping app on Qing's phone. The addressee point occurred in line 30, as Yuan was addressing Lee.

Ex. 10   [SK: light diss] (From left to right, Lee, Qing, Yuan were sitting on their couch in the living room)


```
25 Lee:    nà    zhè  kàn  de   nǎ    yī  gè ya ,
           Then this look AUX which one CL PRT
           Then which one are you looking at?
26 Qing:   (léishì zhuāng   de ) yīdiǎnér bú   piányí (  )
           NAME     install aux   a   bit   NEG  cheap
           Leishi's is not cheap to install at all.
27 Lee:    èn ?=
           PRT
           What?
28 Qing:   =(ān     de )yī±qiān duō   kuài  ±  qián   de . ±
           Install AUX 1000    more  CNY       money AUX
           It costed more than 1000 yuan to install.
   Yuan:                    ±Glance at camera ±,,,,,,,,,,,, ±
29         +(.)                     +
   Yuan:  +head turn to Lee    +
30 Yuan:  *yī    kàn  #lùxiàng  *le.*nǐ guòlái#kàn     * dēng * le .
           Once see  video record CRS 2SG  come   look light    ASP
           Once (you) saw the video recording, you came here to browse the light.
   Yuan:  *pointing twd Lee------*····*pointing twd phone*,,,,,,*
   fig                #fig.5                      #fig.6
```



```
31         āi ya    zài zhè [zhuāng  de    ya .=
           PRT PRT   on  here pretend AUX  PRT
           (Look how you) pretend here
```

```
32 Lee:                        [duì ya .jiù shì —
                                Yes PRT just be
                                Yeah it's just-
33 Yuan:   =āi  ya   zài zhè kāishǐ yǎn  xì     le .=
            PRT PRT   on  here start  act  show  CRS
            Started to put on a show here
34 Lee:    =bú shì      [yǎn   xì
            NEG be        act   show
            (I'm) not putting on any show
35 Qing:                 [heh heh heh
36 Lee:    •nǐ • bú [#shì —          •
            2SG NEG be
            Weren't you-
   Lee:    •·· •pointing twd Yuan•
   fig                 #fig.7
```

```
37 Qing:            •[$(zhēn )shì yǎn•   xì  $=
                        Really be  act   show
           (You) really are putting on a show.
   Lee:              •,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,•
```

Although Yuan's addressee point was not quite as clear as Mei is in example 10, nonetheless the two still shots in figure 5 plainly show his finger pointing in Lee's direction, albeit in a manner which points around his mother Qing, sit in between him and Lee (the curled finger was probably also the result of his holding a peanut in his hand). The production of the pointing gesture of Yuan' s turn was prefaced by his glancing at the camera and turning his head towards Lee, and the pointing gesture was accompanying his turn (line 30-31), which was an accusatory comment on Lee's behaviour.

Yuan's commentary was accusing Lee of being pretentious (i.e. getting in on the action) during the video recording. Yuan's glancing at the camera and turning head to Lee projected his referent to the video recording and Lee in his direct next turn. The production of Yuan's turn started with a gesture accompanied with Qing's turn (line 28). Yuan's turn started with a temporal adverb clause, and the accusable matter is rendered through the production of the temporal marker 'yī' (once), indicating that the accusation was directed towards the juxtaposition of Lee's browsing the light and the video recording. The addressee point was produced accompanying the temporal adverb clause at the turn initial position, addressing the condition of the accusation directly to Lee while projecting the target of accusation, which was produced as the

turn proceeded. The verbal modality and non-verbal modality of Yuan's language co-constructed the accusatory character of his turn – but note that the embodied component, the addressee point, is only implicitly disaffiliative.

Yuan's turn was also understood as an accusation by the recipient Lee, who produced his denial in line 34 with an addressee point, opposing to the accusation of being pretentious in front of the camera. In line 36, Lee produced a cut-off TCU as part of the rebuttal of Yuan's accusation, which was affiliated by Qing as she produced the laughter (line 35) and reiterated the accusation (line 37). Therefore, Lee's rebuttal to the accusation could be addressed to both Yuan and Qing as the second person pronoun 'nǐ' can serve as both singular and plural pronouns. However, Qing's laughter and reiterated accusation were both overlapping with Lee's turn, indicating there was a competition of speakership. Addressee point can therefore serve as a means for the recipient to respond to the competition of speakership.

Addressee points were also observed to be accompanied with directives when addressing some perceived misbehaviour. In the following example, the argument in the last example continued and then tailed off into the discussion of which light to choose. However, it is worth noticing that Lee and Qing were Yuan's parents , although Yuan is an adult; therefore this once again illustrates a kind of role reversal in which the 'child's' addressee point at this father reverses the usual or probably normative authority dynamic between parents and children.

Ex. 11   [SK: light diss]


```
38 Yuan:   =mā kàn  le    hǎojǐ tiān dēng le ,
           Mom look ASP   many  day  light ASP
           Mom has been browsing lights for days.
39         nǐ  bú zhīdào .[nǐ b- nǐ-  nǐ bú guānxīn .=
           2SG NED know   2SG      2SG 2SG NEG care
           You don't know. You don't care.
40 Qing:                         [àng.
                                  PRT
                                 Yeah.
41 Qing:   =àng .nǐ jiǎzhuāng °zài nàlǐ . °=
            PRT   2SG pretend    on  there
           Yeah. You are pretending here.
42 Lee:    =(nà zhè )=
             Then this
           Then this-
43 Yuan:   +=xiànzài le +kāishǐ—        + chū+lái biǎoyǎn lái le .
             Now      ASP start           out     act     come ASP
           Now (you) started to come here and act.
           +·······+head turn to Lee+,,,+
```

```
44       (1.2)
45       *zuò        nà#*ér .   *
         sit         there
         Sit there.
         *pointing Lee *,,,,,,*
fig                   #fig.8
```



```
46 Qing:   *hahahahaha↑=
           *·········· -->
47 Yuan:   =búyào shuō*huà .=
            NEG    talk
           Don't talk.
   Qing:   -->·········*finger wagging to Lee -->
48 Qing:   =$búyào  xū*wěi .$ *
            NEG    pretentious
           Don't be pretentious.
                   -->*,,,,,, *
```

The first element of the accusation began at line 38, which was constructed as a contrast between "Mom" (Qing) and "You" (Lee). It was then affiliated by Qing with a single particle 'àng'(line 40), and the accusable character -being pretentious – was pointed out by Qing (line 41) and escalated by Yuan (line 43). At this point of the conversation, the identification of Lee's wrongdoing was constructed by Yuan and Qing, despite Lee's failed attempt to defend himself (line 42) – just to be clear, the wrongdoing for which Lee is being criticized is having joined the discussion about choosing a new light, not because he cared or thought he could help or was interested but only because he wanted to be shown in the film (lines 41 and 43); he was pretending to be interested and involved, but that was a pretext for his vanity.

The second element of Yuan's accusatory stance (line 45) was his directive to Lee. It indicated Yuan's opinion on how the correct behaviour should be with an illocution of limiting Lee's behaviour with a correct standard. By suggesting Lee's breach of norm, Yuan's accusation was almost encoded with an 'educational' character, which was commonly seen in parent-child interaction (Craven & Potter, 2010). However, it was usually the parents who designed their turn as some form of directive to educate the kid on how to behave in compliance with the social norm. The addressee point was accompanied with Yuan's turn, indicating an embodied performance of the identity as a figure with authority to provide instructions. It is a reversal of Yuan's social identity in the family settings as the son. The disaffiliative stance was therefore manifested as a 'role-play' and its absurdity was so obvious that it could be identified as teasing by Qing

when she laughed (line 46). Yuan's addressee point coincided with a negative imperative (line 47), which was part of the accusation towards Lee. The (verbal modality of the) accusation consisted of two elements, the first element identifying the misbehaviour of Lee's and the second one was an admonishing directive.

The construction of authority in the family was more typical in the next example, example 12, where the addressee point was produced by the adult, Zeng's aunt Mei, the participants we have seen in earlier excerpts 5 and 7.

Ex. 12   [SK: Camera fall] (Zeng, a 13-year-old boy, sitting in the middle; Mei, his aunt, sitting on the right but only her hand was in the camera; Rui, his mother, sitting on the left and was completely not in the camera)


```
14 Mei:     #zán chǎo yī jià ba ?
            1PL quarrel one CL PRT
            Shall we have a quarrel?
   fig      #fig.9
```



```
15 Zeng:   bú hǎo .
           NEG good
           No.


(16–18 omitted)


19 Mei:    •nǐ w-nǐ •#wǎng hòu  zuò•+nǐ •#zuò hǎo  le       •+#
           2SG 2SG   to   back sit   2SG sit well PRT
           You t- You sit back. You sit properly.
   Mei:    •. . . . • point twd Zeng•,, • air push twd Zeng•
   fig                 #fig.10                #fig.11
```



```
   Zeng:                                   +sit back------------+
```

```
20          (.)
21          [nǐ zuò hǎo le .
            2SG sit well PRT
            You sit properly.
22 Rui:     [>zuò hǎo le   zuò hǎo le   zuò -<
              sit well PRT sit well PRT sit
            Sit properly sit properly sit-
23          ↑bié guì   dì     shàng
             NEG kneel floor on
            Don't kneel on the floor
```

In the beginning of this excerpt, Zeng was sitting very close to the camera and leaning towards the table (fig. 9). Mei's request was constructed as a question with a personal pronoun 'zán' (we), which was a proposal for future action for both Mei and Zeng. Mei's pursuit of the request and Zeng's second rejection was omitted, but it was worth noticing that Mei's request took a different form in line 19, which was a imperative sentence. It was an escalated form of request, as the speakers who produced the request as imperative were usually oriented to compliance (Craven & Potter, 2010).

The onset of the pointing gesture was Mei's turn, which was a directive addressed to Zeng. It consisted of a second person pronoun and an instruction on how Zeng should behave. The second person pronoun has a character of mobilizing Zeng to behave as Mei directed, comparing to an imperative without a personal pronoun. The hand gesture of Mei was initially a pointing gesture (fig.10) and later deteriorated into an 'air push' (fig.11). The deterioration happened as Zeng displayed compliance with the directive, as he began to sit back. The addressee point here has a function of not only identifying Zeng's misbehaviour, but also mobilizing the addressee to do as Mei said.

In this chapter, I have examined some of the practices – minimal responses/acknowledgements, ironical expressions, and addressee points - through which participants conveyed disaffiliative status towards another implicitly. Although those practices did not demonstrate speakers' disaffiliative stance overtly, they were nevertheless all perceived by the recipients as displays of disaffiliation. And the responses of those implicit disaffiliative practices were often designed not to rupture the social coherence. It therefore endowed the implicit disaffiliative practices the function of initiating the argument, or allowing the participants to retreat from explicit disaffiliation. When those practices occurred in the initial stage of an argument, they

could sometimes project the explicit disaffiliative exchanges in the progression of the sequence, which I will begin to explore in chapter 3.

Chapter 3 Explicit disaffiliation

Introduction

I have shown in chapter 1 practices are associated with disaffiliation and discord ranging from a rather implicit level to more explicit disaffiliation. The practices for implicit disaffiliation were usually employed in the incipient stage of the emerging discord, with subtle implications of disagreement. The conflictual characters of such practices are more indirect, implicit, and therefore can be more difficult to detect, since they were usually incorporated through linguistic and non-linguistic resources for the participants to manage social coherence and so as to avoid rupturing the cooperative relationships. Compared to implicit disaffiliation, explicit disaffiliation involves practices associated with on-the-surface overt expressions of disagreement, dissent, disapproval, discord, imputations or allegations. They are usually associated with what are perceived to be breaches of certain social conventions. Although social cohesion is not always disrupted by those practices, it usually takes more work for the participants to restore the co-operation.

This chapter focuses on the practices of disaffiliation on an overt level. There is a significant literature specifically on disagreement in conversation; hence I will focus on how disaffiliation can be achieved in a rather overt form, so my research will not include how those actions have been achieved. However, the practices I identified for explicit disaffiliation usually occurred in the sequential environment of disagreement and discord. They can contribute to the hostile character the participants' conduct, and therefore increase the risk of disturbing or disrupting social cohesion. The following example demonstrates how participants displayed and responded to such practices of overt disaffiliations. It began as Zeng, a 13-year-old boy, being ironically accused by his aunt Mei for overuse of mobile phone and having bad eyesight (see chapter 2, example 8) . The disaffiliation then escalated to a more explicit level, where Rui, Zeng's mother, remonstrated with Zeng in response to his Zeng's facetious banter.

Ex. 1   [SK: camera fall again]

```
41 Mei:    ¥òyōulei nǐ ↑zhème lìhài¥
            INTJ    2SG so    terrific
           Wow you are so terrific.
42 Zeng:   ¥wǒ  qīdiǎnbā de  yǎn¥#
            1SG 7.8     POS eye
           My eyesight is 7.8
    fig                      #fig.1
```

```
43 Mei:    [¥↑shì ma¥   ]
                COP PRT
           Is it?
44 Rui:    [nǐ ↑zhōu ba .]húshuōbādào
            2SG  lie  PRT   talk gibberish
           You are lying. Talking gibberish.
45 Zeng:   nǐ   zài    shuō #=
            2SG again talk
           You say (that) again
fig                        #fig.2
```



```
46 Rui:    = hǎo   hǎo   shuōhuà .=
            Good good   talk
           Talk properly.
47 Zeng:   =[nǐ yǒu  bìng    ba]
            2SG have illness PRT
           You have problems
```

Compared to Rui's remark (line 44), Mei's comment was constructed with highly ironic characters. Mei's ironic teasing in line 41 of Zeng was prefaced with an interjection 'òyōulei', which was a three-particle interjection that is usually employed to express the speaker's astonishment. Moreover, Mei's use of 'lìhài' attributes to Zeng a personal character, which literally means 'terrific', but usually as a derogatory term to highlight the contradiction between the ideal status with the actual one. Zeng recognized Mei's remark as teasing, and produced an aligned response (line 42) in which he took the literal meaning of 'lìhài' instead of the derogatory implicature and specified how terrific his eyesight was. Both Mei and Zeng were smiling when they were engaged in their ironic banter (fig.1).

However, whilst Mei and Rui are aligned in their disbelief of Zeng's claims about his excellent eyesight, Rui does not engage in the kind of light banter employed by Mei but instead remonstrated with Zeng in a direct accusation, 'You're lying' (line 44). The simultaneous start of their turns in lines 43/44 indicates a competition of speakership. By pointing out the absurdity of Zeng's claim in line 42, Rui took a different stance than

Mei in her teasing exchange with Zeng, raising the level of disaffiliation from implicit to a more explicit level. Zeng's response to Rui was a threat (line 45) in the form of imperative, which also contained threatening characters. The threat was produced without smiling (fig.2), indicating the termination of the teasing and the beginning of explicit disaffiliation. At this stage of the conversation, the disaffiliation was escalated from an implicit level to an overt, on-the-surface argument.

This is a rather representative case of explicit disaffiliation that I have found in my data, where the display of hostility was clearly recognized and responded with argumentative behaviour. In the remainder of this chapter, I will introduce three practices used to achieve this kind of explicit disaffiliation - imperatives, tendentious inquiries, and stigmatized denunciations. Such explicit disaffiliation may lead to a breach of social solidarity, and it will be further discussed in the last section of this chapter, unilateral walkout.

Imperative

The imperative clause was one of three major sentence types that have been found to be universal across the languages, together with declaratives and interrogatives. The imperative indicates the speaker's desire to influence future events. It is of service in making requests, giving orders, making suggestions, and the like (Sadock & Zwicky, 1985). When the function of the imperative is to command its addressee to do something, the grammatical construction of an imperative can be just a verb phrase, or a verb phrase with a second person subject nǐ (you)/nǐmén (you, plural) (Li & Thompson, 1989). As linguistic forms can be seen as a social action formats, directives, commands, or other actions that involve the speaker attempting to bring about some future action, can be implemented by imperatives. It provides a basis on which recipients form working hypotheses about what action a co-participant is initiating (Couper-Kuhlen, 2014). In the sequences where imperatives that are issued after the directed action has already become projectable and relevant within the interaction, they have the function of not only explicitly direct the recipient to perform the action and thereby enforce its production, but they also tacitly treat the recipient as accountable for not having already done so (Kent & Kendrick, 2016). In my dataset, it was observed in the sequence of discord, and usually can serve as a practice of explicit disaffiliation.

In family settings, when speakers adopt imperatives as a way of giving directives, they claim a certain entitlement; their directives project the recipient's compliance. In this next example Mei was trying to make Zeng sit properly to be video recorded.

Ex. 2   [SK: camera fall]

```
13  Mei:    zán chǎo yī jià ba ?
            1PL quarrel one CL PRT
            Shall we have a quarrel?

14  Zeng:   bú hǎo .
            NEG good
            No.

15  Mei:    ā ?
            PRT
            What?

16  Zeng:   bú [hǎo .
            NEG good

17  Rui:       [chǎo yī jià .
               Quarrel one Cl
            Have a quarrel.

18  Mei:    •nǐ w-nǐ • wǎng hòu  zuò•±nǐ • zuò hǎo  le      •±
            2SG  2SG   to   back sit    2SG sit well PRT
            You t- You sit back. You sit properly.

    Mei:    •. . . . •point twd Zeng•,, •air push twd Zeng•
    Zeng:                            ±sit back--------------±

19          •(.)•
            •...•

20          [nǐ zuò hǎo le .
            2SG sit well PRT
            You sit properly.

21  Rui:    [>zuò hǎo le   zuò hǎo le    zuò -<
              sit well PRT sit well PRT sit
            Sit properly sit properly sit-

22          ↑bié guì   dì    shàng
             NEG kneel floor on
            Don't kneel on the floor

23  Mei:    zuò +hǎo  le  zán chǎo   yī  huì ér .=
            Sit well PRT 1PL quarrel one CL
            Sit properly and let's quarrel for a while.

    Zeng:       +sit on the seat--------------------->

24  Rui:    =°èn . °=
             PRT
            Yeah.
            --->

25  Mei:    =lái+
            Come
            Come.
            ----+

26  Zeng:   ↑nǐ yǒu  bìng    ba =
```

47

```
           2SG have illness PRT
           You have problems.
```

Mei's turn in line 18 in which she delivered an imperative fits the sequential pattern of directives in family interaction proposed by Craven and Potter (2010). It starts with a modal question as a request (line 13), and escalated into imperatives after Zeng's non-compliance (line 14) as Rui pursued the directive in the form of imperative in line 18. After that the original directive was abandoned, the imperatives from line 20-23 were another directive, which is to for Zeng to sit properly. When Zeng was kneeling on the floor and leaning forward, Mei's directive comprised a) a second person pronoun nǐ (you), and b) a description of the requested action 'zuò hǎo le' (sit properly). It is worth noticing that the word 'hǎo', which literally means 'good', can be used to describe a normatively standardized conduct. It formed a contrast between Zeng's current behaviour and the 'proper' behaviour according to the norms of how people should behave in such situations. Therefore, Mei's turn is designed to sanction Zeng's behaviour.

In example 2, the imperatives appeared in the escalation of a disaffiliation episode. The disaffiliation ended with Zeng's compliance as he sat back from the camera (fig.1) and eventually further back and more upright in his seat. However, the explicit disaffiliation can continue even after the recipient complied with the directive. The next example occurred a few seconds after the previous extract, example 2 – Zeng has knocked over the camera.

Ex. 3   [SK: camera fall]


```
    ((Camera fall))
01  Rui:   ò    yōu
           PRT PRT
           Ohhh
02  Mei:   °nǐ °bié gěi  tā   nòng huài    le =
           2SG NEG PREP 3SG make broken ASP
           Don't you break it
03  Rui:   =nòng huài    le± bié nòng huài    le± ZhangZeng[#ji nǐ—±
            Make broken ASP NEG make broken ASP NAME         2SG
           Break- Don't you break it Zeng.
    Zeng:  ±.............±sitting back      ±,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,±
    fig                                                #fig.3
```

48

```
04 Zeng:                                          [n(wǒ-)
                                                   1SG

             I-
05 Rui:    [nǐ  zuò  hǎo  le
            2SG sit  well PRT
           You sit properly
06 Mei:    [nǐ  zuò  hǎo  le #
            2SG sit  well PRT
           You sit properly
07 Rui:    a.=
           PRT
           Yeah.
08 Zeng:   =[ hái   (jis)-
              Still
           Still-
09 Mei:     [zuò  hǎo  le   jiù   xíng le.
             Sit  well ASP  then  fine ASP
           Sit well and then (it'll be) fine.
```

The imperative in lines 2 and 3 followed immediately after Rui's reaction to the camera having fallen over. Comparing the imperatives in the previous example, besides the second person pronoun, line 2 consisted of a) a negator 'bié (don't)', b) a variant of bǎ construction 'gěi tā'[2], in which the third person pronoun 'tā' was the direct object of the verb, and in this case referring to the camera and c) a verb-complement phrase (nòng huài, make broken). It was not to request or tell Zeng to behave in a certain way, but to sanction Zeng's behaviour by stressing the possible consequence of his behaviour, that is to say, his leaning forward could have potentially broken the camera.

Zeng's compliance was immediate after line 3 as he sat back to his seat while producing a cut-off TCU (line 4). He failed to take the next turn as Rui and Mei self-selected to produce another directive (line 5-6), similar to the last example. It was a directive for Zeng to sit properly and behave in a certain way that was in line with the social norm. However, Zeng was already sitting back and there was no verbal sign of

---

[2] The word 'gěi' was argued to be a variant that substitutable for the word 'bèi' in 'bèi' construction in different dialects of Chinese (Li & Thompson, 1989), however, the 'bèi' construction indicates the passive nature of the sentence, by which the noun phrase after 'bèi' cannot be the object of the verb. In this case, I consider the word 'gěi' as a substitute for 'bǎ' instead of 'bèi' because the word 'gěi' here serve as a preposition between subject and direct object and does not signal the passiveness of the sentence.

noncompliance from Zeng; the escalation of disaffiliation did not stop with Zheng's compliance with their directives. The practice of imperatives indicated the explicitness of disaffiliation.

In the two previous examples, the use of imperatives can be a way of displaying authority in family settings, through the use of directives that parents enact their identities as parents and claim their rights to educate their children to behave in line with social norms. Nonetheless, as was noted in chapter 2 the power dynamic between parents and child can be reversed in certain ways involving imperatives served the similar function in explicit disaffiliation. In the next example (overlapping with example 12 in chapter 2), Yuan has been discussing with his mother Qing which light to buy for their new apartment, when they are joined by Qing's husband, Yuan's father, Lee.

Ex. 4   [SK: light diss]

```
38 Yuan:  =mā kàn  le    hǎojǐ tiān dēng le ,
          Mom look ASP   many   day light ASP
          Mom has been browsing lights for days.
39        nǐ  bú zhīdào .[nǐ b– nǐ–  nǐ bú guānxīn .=
          2SG NED know   2SG      2SG 2SG NEG care
          You don't know. You don't care.
40 Qing:                        [àng.
                                 PRT
                                 Yeah.
41 Qing:  =àng .nǐ jiǎzhuāng °zài nàlǐ . °=
           PRT   2SG pretend    on  there
          Yeah. You are pretending here.
42 Lee:   =(nà zhè )=
            Then this
          Then this-
43 Yuan:  +=xiànzài le  kāishǐ — + chū+lái biǎoyǎn lái le .
            Now      ASP start       out    act     come ASP
          Now (you) started to come here and act.
          +turn to Lee----------+,,,+
44        (1.2)
45        ±zuò        nà±ér .  ±
          sit          there
          Sit there.
          ±pointing Lee±,,,,,,±
46 Qing:  *hahahahaha↑=
          *.......... ––>
47 Yuan:  =búyào shuōhuà .= *
           NEG    talk
```

```
            Don't talk.
    Qing:   -->·············*
48  Qing:   *=$búyào           xū*wěi .$ *
            NEG      pretentious
            Don't be pretentious.
            *finger wagging to Lee*,,,,,, *
49  Lee:    •kàn    nǎ        •gè ya ,•
            Look which        CL PRT
            Which is the one to look at?
    Qing:   •pointing Lee •,,,,,,,•
50  Qing:   hahahahaha. kàn nǎ      gè .
                            Look which CL
                            Which is the one to look
51          (2.2)
```

Yuan's imperative (line 45) followed his accusation to Lee, which is built as a contrast between Qing's efforts on selecting the light and Lee's present behaviour 'bú zhīdào' (don't know) and 'bú guānxīn' (don't care), as Yuan mentioned in line 39. Yuan also accused Lee of acting in a different manner because he's on camera (line 43), where he used a serial verb construction 'chūlái (come out) biǎoyǎn (act)' to accuse Lee in a facetious way (Drew et al., 2021). The imperatives (line 45 & 47) were a continuation of his ironic accusation, which only consisted of a verbal phrase. Yuan ordered his father Lee to behave in a certain way, while Lee was already doing what's been requested, which was to sit on the couch and not talk. Although there was an element of teasing in Yuan's accusatory criticism in line 38 and 43, his directives in lines 45 (sit there), line 47 (don't talk), and line 48 (don't be pretentious), his directives involve a certain kind of role reversal, in which he adopts a form of talk that would typically be used by an adult to a child – not as here by a son to his father.

Imperatives were also observed in other social settings. It still indicated the entitlement of making such a 'directive', but it was constructed more carefully within the sequential context thereby avoiding escalating the existing overt disaffiliation. In the next example, from an interaction we have seen before in chapter 2 example 6, Dou, Ding, Sun, and Yue were four friends having dinner together. Yue accused Dou of writing the graduation thesis in the summer vacation and created peer-pressure, but Sun and Ding did not agree with her.

Ex. 5   [SK: peer pressure]


```
21  Ding:   wǒ yě méi yǒu bèi   juǎn dào .
            1SG also NEG have    peer-pressured
            I also haven't been peer pressured
```

```
22 Sun:   n↑tā yě méi yǒu bèi juǎn dào .
          3SG also NEG have   peer-pressured
          She also haven't been peer-pressured
23 Yue:   jiù -jiù -jiù bèi wǒ [bèi juǎn le
          Just just just  1SG      peer-pressure
          Only I got peer-pressured
24 Dou:                             [ehahaha
25 Yue:   hézhe jiù wǒ bèi juǎn le =
          So    Only 1SG   peer-pressure ASP
          So only I got peer-pressured
26 Sun:   =méi yǒu =
          NEG have
          No
27 Dou:   =nǐ kǎolǜ yī xià =
          2SG consider a bit
          You consider a bit.
28 Sun:   =nǐ hǎoxiàng méi gēn wǒ shuō nǐ xiě le duōshǎo
          2SG seem     NEG with 1SG tell 2SG write ASP how many
          You didn't seem to tell me how long you've wrote,
29        yě jiù shì gěi wǒ fā le jǐ zhāng :tú
          just just  with 1SG send ASP several CL photo
          Just sent me several photos
```

The imperative construction in Dou's turn (line 27) was directed at Yue. After Ding and Sun's affiliation to Dou (line 21-22), Yue's complaint (line 23) escalated as more complainable matter was added. In Yue's previous complaint, the complainable matter was that Dou put peer-pressure on her, but in line 23 and 25 the word 'jiù' (just/only) in Yue's turn attributed her complaint to Ding and Sun as they did not affiliate with her and therefore nullified her complaint. Dou's imperative (line 27) was a rebuttal, pushing back against Yue's escalated complaint in line 25. Dou's rebuttal in line 27 might appear innocuous but in fact it is something of an escalation, through suggesting that she consider 'a bit'; if even 'a bit' would enable her to see how wrong she is, Dou might be understood as implying that she has not yet considered at all. This parallels a case in an American telephone call, when one woman suggests to another that students, whom she's been implicitly criticizing throughout, should 'Get ou:t'n: do a liddle wor:k.'; she thereby implies that students would benefit from doing even a little work. Tokens such as 'a bit' or 'a little' enhance or strengthen or intensify the criticism being made. Although the disaffiliation did not escalate because of Sun's retreating from the argument, it was still on a quite overt level.

As discussed above, imperatives are a practice of overt disaffiliation appearing in the sequence of argument no matter which stage was the argument was in. The explicitness of disaffiliation could also be intertwined with the power display in certain social settings.

<u>Tendentious Inquiry</u>

Based on my examination of the data, it seems that there can be progression in disaffiliation sequences, in which participants' disaffiliation from one another becomes more explicit or more overtly conflictual. Coulter (1990) has made some observations of the pattern of argument sequences, a pattern which he characterized it as the following steps:

Declarative Assertion	1. A: Well, he had all the chances but didn't make much of 'em
Disagreement Token (operative as) Pre-Counter Assertion	2. B: That's not really true
Solicit	3. A: Oh, why not?
Counter Assertion	4. B: For a start, y'c'd hardly blame for iz wife's illness and that's when the rot started…

Coulter identified the counter assertion as the second pair part of the declarative assertion, which was also constructed as a declarative. However, it was noticeable in my data that the counter assertion did not always take a declarative form. It could also appear as an interrogative, a 'rhetorical' question challenging or confronting the recipient (Steensig & Drew, 2008). Insofar as rhetorical questions are designed not to be answered, and thereby not giving the recipient opportunities to answer, they might in that respect, be considered more conflictual than a declarative counter assertion, even though such assertions render disaffiliation more explicit or on-the-surface. The questions designed for complaint or condemnation usually have particular presuppositions incorporated at varying levels of embeddedness. Tendentious inquiries highlight the conflictual character of the construction of the question. By 'tendentious', it is to say that the inquiry involved expressing a particular cause or point of view, a tendency, especially a controversial one, as what will become clear in examples below. The recipient of the question may be anticipated to resist,.

In this example, as we have seen before Qing and Lee were Yuan's parents and they were all adults. Qing and Lee were accusing Yuan of drinking alcohol right after a vaccine injection, as a result of which it appears that Yuan had a diarrhoea. Qing explicitly challenges Yuan's denial that diarrhoea could be caused by vaccine injection, through a series of rhetorical questions:

Ex. 6   [SK: vaccine and alcohol] (Qing and Lee were accusing Yuan of having alcohol directly after the vaccine injection because Yuan had a diarrhea when he did

so. In the omitted conversation, they were arguing over the side effect of vaccine and the connection between drinking and vaccine injection.)


```
01  Yuan:   yīnwéi ↑zhègè h- lādùzǐ
                Because this     diarrhea
                Because diarrhea
02              bú  shǔyú  zhègè :  dǎ       yìmiáo   de   fùzuòyòng .
                NEG belong this    inject   vaccine  POS  side effect
                is not one of the side effects of vaccine injection.
```

(03-19 omitted)

```
20  Qing:   nǐ  gǎo       shénme kē              yán      ā .
                2SG conduct  what   scientific research PRT
                What kind of scientific research were you conducting?
21              nǐ -nǐ  yánjiū    yīxiē -e —
                2SG 2SG research  some    PRT
                What were you researchin-
22              nǐ  dǒngdé       ma ,   e: - =
                2SG understand   PRT    PRT
                What do you know? Umm-
23  Lee:    =nǐ xué    yī        de ya .=
                2SG study medicine POS PRT
                You went to medical school?
24  Qing:   =duì    ā. nǐ   xué  yī >      de ya <.
                 Right PRT  2SG study medicine POS PRT
                Exactly. You went to medical school?
```

```
25  Yuan:   duì    wǒ  dōu yán —
                Right 1SG all research
                Yeah I did all the research-
26              wǒ  dōu diàochá    qīngchǔ le  wǒ   cái  chī de
                1SG all investigate clear   ASP 1SG then eat POS
                I investigated everything thoroughly before I ate.
27  Qing:   qī hh.diàochá      qīngchǔ le .
                PRT   Investigate clear   ASP
                Investigated thoroughly.
```


Each of Qing's questions (highlighted above), which followed one another without waiting for a response. The question in line 20 was possibly a call back to the previous talk, where we can only speculate that Yuan probably accounted for his behaviour as he was conducting research on the interplay of vaccine and alcohol. It was also to establish the epistemic weakness of Yuan's claim. Nevertheless, it was somewhat factual at this point, but it then escalated into an accusation of Yuan's ignorance (line 22).

When Qing was having trouble producing the tendentious inquiry, as she produced an elongated filler 'e:-' in the end of line 22, Lee joined in the alliance of accusation by posing a similar rhetorical question (line 23). Lee was not competing with Qing to take the next turn, but to escalate the blame on a more specific level. From Qing's blame for Yuan's ignorance in general (line 22), Lee specified the ignorance on medical knowledge. Qing then collaborated with Lee on the construction of blame (line 24) by producing an agreement token (duì ā, exactly) and a repetition of Lee's prior turn.

Yuan's defense (line 25) was an extreme case formulation which described the investigation that he has done in an exaggerated form. The credibility of his formulation "did all the research" was prone to be criticized, and the disaffiliation of Qing's continued with a partial repetition (line 27). The disaffiliation was quite explicit at this point as each party was overtly displaying their negative or hostile stance toward each other.

The challenging, disaffiliative character of tendentious inquiries was observed in other examples, although they were not as prominent in sequential environment. In the following example (see chapter 1, example 1), Mei (the wife) was driving the car and Lin was blocking the rear-view mirror when he tried to set up the camera for video recording. Mei's tendentious inquiry occurred when she was arguing with Lin about the necessity of checking the rear-view mirror whilst driving.

Ex. 7   [SK: rear-view mirror assumption]


```
23 Lin: ò   méi yǒu  yòu  fǎnguāngjìng bú  yòng kāi  chē  le.
        PRT NEG have right rear view mirror  NEG need drive car ASP
        Without having the right rear-view mirror, (you) can't drive the car
24      (2.3)
25 Mei: guānjiàn tā yǒu .
         Key      it have
        The point is it has.
26       (.)
27 Lin: °ò . °yǒu jiǎshè méi yǒu .
         PRT  have assume NEG have
        (It) has (but you can) assume (it) doesn't have .
28 Mei: wǒ  wéishénme yào   jiǎshè méi yǒu .=
        1SG why        would assume  NEG have
        Why would I assume it doesn't have
29 Lin: =jiǎshè méi yǒu yīyàng [néng kāi . ]
         Assume NEG have same   can drive
        Assuming it doesn't have, it is just as drivable.
30 Mei:                      [tā míngmíng]jiù yǒu .
                              It  clearly  just have
        It just clearly has,
```

```
31        wǒ wéishénme yào [jiǎshè méi yǒu
          1SG why        would assume NEG have
          Why would I assume it doesn't have
32 Lin:                      [tā méi —
                              3SG NEG
          It doesn't-
33        nǐ jiǎrú méi yǒu yīyàng néng kāi   jiù  xíng
          2SG if   NEG have same  can  drive then fine
          If you don't have it, it is just as drivable.
```

Mei's question in line 28 was designed with an interrogative word 'wéishénme'(why), which is similar to the function of wh-words in English interrogatives. It therefore endowed the question with a rhetorical and therefore more challenging character (Cerovic, 2010), and to make a stronger assertive stance than a simple declarative. The interactional function of this question is similar to the 'why' questions in English, which index an epistemic gap between the questioners and the answerers and transmit a position that the accountable occurrence does not make sense and is therefore inappropriate or unwarranted (Bolden & Robinson, 2011).

It is also noticeable that Lin's turn in line 23 was constructed as an ironical expression. Although grammatically it was a declarative sentence, it still has some rhetorical character, because it was exactly opposite to his point of view – the car was still drivable without any rear-view mirror. It offered Mei a slot to respond to this turn directly with a counter assertion with a similar declarative construction. However, when the questions served as a counter assertion, they were designed to be unanswerable. Lin's response (line 29) to Mei's tendentious inquiry in line 28 was a form of reiteration of the force of his point in line 23. And Lin's repair in line 32 also indicated the difficulty to produce a response to Mei's tendentious inquiry in line 31.

Tendentious inquiries as counter assertions might also have the function of soliciting further counter argument. In line 27, Lin had made the point that if the car had no rear-view mirror, it would be just as easily drivable. However, his remark was somewhat elliptical. Lin did not specify explicitly the subject and object of the first verb 'yǒu' (have); similarly, the subject of the second verb 'jiǎshè' (assume) was also not specified, and the object was also not in a completed form. Mei's tendentious inquiry in line 28 added the subject to the verb 'jiǎshè' (assume), which is 'wǒ' (first person singular pronoun). It was also positioned in the turn initial position, pointing out that it was actually up to Mei's decision if she would like to assume the car had rear-view mirror or not. Lin's response in line 29 reiterates his assertion in a more completed form, where he provided the full version of the hypothetical situation. However, the subject of the sentence was not provided until line 33, after Mei's second attempt to solicit Lin's counter argument in line 31.

In the example above we can see that tendentious inquires can serve as both the counter argument to (way to rebut) the prior speaker and soliciting further counter argument. They are therefore a vehicle for escalating disaffiliation, through which

disaffiliation evolves to a more explicit level. It was not designed to be answered, but the response of such questions can make the discord more on-the-surface and more scorching. In the next example, Zeng, a 13-year-old boy was discussing with his aunt Mei and his mom Rui an argument that happened in his school. Both Zeng and Rui were using tendentious inquiries to make counter assertions to each other.

Ex. 8   [SK: Exculpating for my friend]


```
11 Zeng:  ↑tā  nà   liǎn dōu  nǐng chéng yī gè máhuāzhuàng      le
          3SG  that face even twist into one CL Chinese doughnut ASP
          Their face even twisted into a Chinese doughnut
12        [nà ]kěndìng shì tā  tóngzhuō  piàn lǎoshī  ā
          that   must   COP 3SG desk mate lie  teacher PRT
          That must be their desk mate who lied to the teacher A.
13 Mei:   [āi, ]
          PRT
14             [bú -]
               NEG
          No
15 Rui:        [tā ]tóngzhuō  néng piàn lǎoshī  ā ,[érzǐ
               3SG   desk mate can  lie  teacher PRT son
          Can their desk mate lie to the teacher, son?
16 Mei:                                            [bú–
                                                    NEG
          No-
17        +[bú– + tā  tóngzhuō– tā tóngzhuō piàn +lǎoshī yě+ bú yàojǐn
          NEG 3SG  deskmate 3SG deskmate lie teacher even NEG essential
          No- Their desk mate- It's not essential even if their desk mate lied to the
          teacher
          +.....+pointing twd Zeng-------------+,,,,,,,,+
18 Zeng:  [tā tóngzhuō zěnme jiù bú néng piàn lǎoshī le
          3SG desk mate how   AUX NEG can lie teacher ASP
          Why can't their desk mate lie to the teacher?
19 Mei:   +nǐ– wǒ  wènwèn nǐ zhè shì  nǐ de gǎnjué, duì  ba,+
          2SG 1SG ask    2SG this COP 2SG AUX feeling right PRT
          You- I'm asking you, this is your feeling, right BA?
          +hand extended to Zeng----------------------------+
20        +nà   nǐ+ zhǎo zhāngjìn héshí guò méiyǒu .
          then  2SG find NAME     check ASP NEG
          Then have you find Jin to check with them or not?
          +,,,,,,,+
21        (0.6)
22 Mei:   nǐ  hòulái zhǎo tā [héshí ]guò le  méiyǒu .
```

```
                   2SG later  find 3SG check  ASP ASP NEG
                   Have you find them to check (with them) or not?
23  Zeng:                          [(n)     ]
24  Mei:   zán xiànzài ràng māmā gěi  tā  dǎdiànhuà. wènwèn tā .
                   1PL now     let  mom  give 3SG call       ask     3SG
                   Let's ask mom to give them a call. (Just to)ask them.
25  Zeng:  méiyǒu .
                   NEG
                   No.
```

The argument was a three-party argument where Rui and Mei were allied, taking the same side against Zeng. Zeng asserted in line 11-12 that someone must have lied to their teacher; Rui's counter assertion in line 15 was directed to Zeng despite Mei's turn in line 13/14. Rui's tendentious inquiry in line 15 was constructed based on the assertion of Zeng. It was a rhetorical question that conveyed the absurdity of Zeng's assertion.

Zeng's response in line 18 was not addressed to Mei, despite her efforts to self-select as the next speaker in line 13-14 and line 16-17. It was a counter assertion to Rui's tendentious inquiry in line 15. They were both arguing over the same proposition, and Zeng's line also had the similar design of rhetorical question. The symmetry of turn design could be a display of power, and each one of them was orienting to the other party to provide an explanation of their own assertion. At this stage of the conversation, the disaffiliation towards each other was quite apparent and there was no slot for them to retreat from the argument.

Stigmatized Denunciation

In some cases, when the conflict between participant was becoming more overt and their disaffiliation more explicit, one or other of the participants denounced the other by attributing to them a stigmatized identity, such as someone who 'craves alcohol', implying that they are becoming alcoholic, or someone who 'looks for trouble', implying that they are trouble maker. Such attributions of a stigmatized identity to the other participant can be considered a practice for disaffiliating from the other by denouncing them; this is what I mean by a stigmatized denunciation. Stigma was a concept proposed by Goffman (2009) to refer to the situation of the individual who is disqualified from full social acceptance. In Goffman's view, stigma is a phenomenon associated with attributes that are profoundly discredited by particular societies; if a person is perceived to be stigmatized in a given way, they may be treated as having a 'spoiled identity', and as a consequence, they may be rejected as a result of that stigmatizing attribute – they are disqualified from full social acceptance. Goffman

categorized three different types of stigma: the ones related to all kinds of physical deformities, the tribal stigma of race and religion, and the blemishes of individual character perceived as weak will, domineering or unnatural passions, treacherous and rigid beliefs, and dishonesty, these being inferred from a known record of, for example, mental disorder, imprisonment, addiction, alcoholism, homosexuality, unemployment, suicidal attempts, and radical political behaviour. People with stigmatized identity might have to make extra efforts to manage their identity so as to be able to live as 'passing' in a normal social setting. However, it was rarely discussed that the people who were privileged with no such stigmas might use stigmatized denunciation as a device to display their disaffiliative status towards each other.

In my data, I found that most of the stigmatized denunciations were related to personality traits that can be inferred from discredited social identities such as mental health problems and alcoholism. However, those who were denounced in such ways did not necessarily have those discredited identities. In other words, it was irrelevant whether those who were accused possess such characters that deviant from the norm. By producing such stigmatized denunciations, the speakers make accusations more hostile. The conversation was built on the understanding of such conditions, and it displayed the interactants' orientation to perceive such stigmatized denunciation as an escalated stage of disaffiliation and discord, rather than an attack of their social identity.

In the following data excerpt, Qing's accusation (line 15-18) oriented to Yuan's personality traits, and she made a stigmatized denunciation of Yuan by attributing to him being alcoholic and a trouble maker.

Ex. 9   [SK: vaccine and alcohol] (Qing was Yuan's mother, Yuan had some alcoholic drinks after his vaccine injection and then he had a diarrhoea. In the previous conversation, they were arguing over the side effect of vaccine and how it might interact with alcohol)


```
10 Yuan:  tā  huì – tā huì  dǎozhì wèi     téng .
         3SG will 3SG will  cause stomach ache
         It will cause stomach ache.
11       nǐ    dǒng       bú (rúguǒ shì  3syll)yánzhèng    dehuà .
         2SG understand NEG if    COP          inflammation  if
         You know, if there's inflammation
12 Qing:  a.
         PRT
         OK.
13       (0.3)
14 Yuan:  wǒ (yòu )méi zhè  fǎnyīng (1syll).
         1SG even NEG this reaction
         I don't even have this reaction.
15 Qing:  nǐ zhēn    shì jiàng.  °wǒ °fāxiàn nǐ .   zhēnde .
```

```
           2SG really COP stubborn 1SG discover 2SG really
           You really are stubborn, I find it. Really.
16         nà  zěnme de me .  chán  nà   kǒu   jiǔ     ā ,
            Then how PRT PRT crave that sip alcohol   PRT
           How is that? (You) were craving for a sip of alcohol?
17         háishì jiù  yuànyì- jiù- jiù- ā—
           or       just want    just just PRT
           Or (you) just wanted to -just -just
18         [jiù yuànyì nào   diǎn   shìér ā .
           just want  cause some    problem PRT
           cause some problems?
19 Yuan:   [bú shì ,(3syll)wǒ xiǎng gǎo —
           NEG COP           1SG want conduct
           No, I want to conduct-
20 Qing:   nǐ  gǎo      shénme kē            yán       ā .
           2SG conduct  what    scientific research PRT
           What kind of scientific research were you conducting?
21         nǐ -nǐ  yánjiū    yīxiē -e —
           2SG 2SG research  some   PRT
           What were you researchin-
22         nǐ  dǒngdé      ma ,  e - =
           2SG understand  PRT   PRT
           What do you know? Umm-
```

In the turn initial position (line 15), Qing made a declaration of Yuan's problematic personality trait, which is 'nǐ zhēn shì jiàng' (you really are stubborn). The observation Qing made on Yuan was subjected to Qing's own judgement, but she designed the turn so as not to put the main clause which indicated her subjectivity in the turn initial position. Instead, she started the turn with a judgement on Yuan's personality.

In the immediate next TCU (line 16), Qing raised a question 'nà zěnme de me' (how is that?) that seemed to be soliciting an account for Yuan's behaviour, but it was not to ask Yuan to provide an account. It foreshadowed the stigmatized denunciation in the following TCUs, where Qing produced her account for Yuan's problematic behaviour. The first account Qing provided (line 16) was 'chán nà kǒu jiǔ ā' (craving for that sip of alcohol), 'craving' indicating some kind of dependency. And the second account Qing provided (line 17-18) was 'jiù yuànyì nào diǎn shìér ā ' (just want to cause some problem), i.e. attributing to him the character of being a troublemaker, stirring up trouble. In his response in line 19, Yuan denies the potentially stigmatized attribution of alcohol dependency. Instead, he was trying to produce an account for his behaviour, although it was interrupted by Qing.

Such accusations, criticisms or denunciations might seem to have more to do with attributing reprehensible motives for wrongdoing; however, these criticisms go beyond motives for some particular conduct and involve characterlogical attributions, that is

about someone's character and consequent predispositions to behave generally in a certain way, e.g. someone who 'looks for trouble' as in the following excerpt. Such characterlogical attributions of the kind illustrated in the following excerpts are potentially stigmatizing. In some of these explicitly disaffiliative sequences, not only was stigmatizing attribution produced by the first speaker but also by the second speaker in response. The following excerpt comes a little before example 7 above in which Mei was accusing Lin of blocking her view to check the right rear-view mirror when she was driving.

Ex. 10   [SK: rear-view mirror assumption]

```
08 Lin: nà    •wǒ lùxiàng zhè duàn •shíjiān•nǐ wánquán kěyǐ bú qù —
        Then 1SG record this period time 2SG completely can NEG go
         Then during this period of time when I am recording, you can completely avoid
         going-
              •look twd camera      •,,,,,,,•
09      nǐ wánquán    +kěyǐ bú  yòu + bìngxiàn.+
        2SG completely can  NEG right   merge lane
        You can completely avoid merge into the right lane.
   Mei:                   +look twd right+,,,,,,,,,,+
10      (1.1)
11 Mei: nǐ °zhè° +bú  zhǎoshìér           nǐ.+
        2SG this NEG looking for trouble 2SG
        Aren't you looking for trouble here.
              +look twd Lin               +
12 Lin: duì  ā .[nǐ  cái zhīdào
        Right PRT 2SG just know
        Right. You just found out?
13 Mei:      [bú zhǎo*shìér          nánshòu       nǐ*
             NEG looking for trouble uncomfortable 2SG
        You'd feel uncomfortable if you're not looking for trouble.
                    *head tilt twd Lin                *
14 Lin: duì ā .   nǐ kànkàn .
        Right PRT 2SG see
        Right. You see,
15      nǐ zhè zhǒng rén   jiù  shì [zhè yàng .
        2SG this kind people just COP  this like
        Your kind of people are just like this.
16 Mei:                          [èn .
                                 PRT
        Mmh.
17      +bú tái+gàng néng   +sǐ.+
        NEG argue   can    die
```

```
            (It) can kill you if (you) don't argue.
            +.......+look twd Lin+,,,+
18 Lin: duì . nǐ zhè rén jiù shì +táigàng .       +
         Right 2SG this person just COP argue
         Right. You are this person who just argue.
```

In line 11, Mei delivers something of a denunciation of Lin, attributing to him the character of being a trouble maker. She then escalated this stigmatized attribution in lines 13 and 17, where she exaggerated this trouble-maker personality. The relation between her denunciation and a stigmatized identity was attributed to a group of people with certain personalities. Lin thereby constructed a relation between the denunciation and stigmatized identity. First, Lin provided agreements on Mei's accusation in line 12 and 14; however, his agreements treated Mei's accusation as a kind of declarative assessment, therefore misaligned with the prior turn; then in line 15, Lin treated Mei as being one of the type of person with the same problematic personality mentioned by Mei. The denunciations in this example invoked a stigma shared by a certain category of people, and the stigmatized denunciation was used as an attack on each other's personality.

In the previous examples, the stigmatized denunciation appeared to be something of a turning point in a disaffiliation sequence, where the talk before was mostly on the issues they were arguing over, and the talk after was more targeted at each other's personality. However, in the following example a stigmatized denunciation is rather more direct and less pivotal than above.

Ex. 11   [SK: camera fall] (Zeng was a 13-year-old boy, Mei was Zeng's aunt, Rui was Zeng's mom, Mei was persuading Zeng to have a quarrel with her. In the omitted lines, Mei and Rui was trying to make Zeng sit properly)

```
14 Mei:   zán chǎo yī jià ba ?
          1PL quarrel one CL PRT
          Shall we have a quarrel?
15 Zeng:  bú hǎo .
          NEG good
          No.
16 Mei:   ā ?
          PRT
          What?
17 Zeng:  bú [hǎo .
          NEG good
          No.

(18-22 omitted)
```

```
23 Mei:    zuò +#hǎo  le  zán chǎo   yī  huì ér .=
           Sit well PRT 1PL quarrel one CL
           Sit well and let's quarrel for a while.
   Zeng:       +sit back on the seat-------------------->
   fig         #fig.4
```



```
24 Rui:    =°èn . °=
            PRT
           Yeah.
           --->
25 Mei:    =lái+#
           Come
           Come on.
           ----+#
   fig         #fig.5
```



```
26 Zeng:   ↑nǐ yǒu  bìng      ba =
           2SG have illness PRT
           You have problems.
27 Rui:    ( )
28 Mei:    nà   hái  yǒu shénme shì    nǐ  xiǎng chǎojià .
           Then else 2SG what    matter 2SG want   quarrel
           Then what else do you want to quarrel about?
29 Zeng:   ((clear throat))(.)
30         ā   nǐ  yào chǎo   yě   bú  shì bú  xíng
           PRT 2SG want quarrel also NEG COP NEG okay
           It's also not unacceptable if you want to quarrel.
31         chúfēi gěi  wǒ yībǎi kuài qián chūyǎn fèi . èn . °nàgè °
           unless give 1SG 100  CL   money act    fee PRT     that
           Unless (you) give me 100 RMB as(my)acting fee. Yeah. That
```

Zeng's disaffiliative stance was quite bluntly displayed from the beginning of this episode, when he responded 'no' to Mei's request to have a quarrel in line 14 and

repeated after Mei's repair initiation in line 16. Although he was compromising on the directive of sitting back to the seat (fig.4, fig.5), he still produced a stigmatized denunciation in line 26 in respond of the directive of 'having a quarrel'. The word 'bìng' can be translated as 'illness', but it also suggested mental illness in the social context of Chinese. Zeng only deployed this practice after his persistent effort to avoid the quarrel. Although Zeng's disaffiliation with his aunt Mei was quite explicit, Mei still did not attend to Zeng's disaffiliation, but continued to persue her quarrel with Zeng (line 28), who responded in kind by continuing to quarrel with her.

Stigmatized denunciation as a device of escalated disaffiliation has the following characters: firstly, it was understandable to both the producer and the receiver of the turn because of its relation with a certain discredited identity, although this identity was sometimes not clear; secondly, it was usually an attack on the other's personality.

Retreating from Explicit Disaffiliation: Unilateral Walkout

In this chapter I have explored the practices for quite overtly or explicitly disaffiliating from a co-participant, those practices being imperatives or directives, tendentious inquiries, and stigmatized denunciations. They usually appeared in the progression of the argument, and the responses to those practices are hardly ever to retreat from the disaffiliation. The hostility managed and displayed through those practices seem to increase the risk of rupturing social cohesion, in comparison with the kinds of implicit disaffiliation managed through the practices identified in chapter 2. However, in my data the termination of such visible or explicit arguments - or one might say the breakdown of social solidarity in ordinary interactions - were rarely documented; and they are not much documented in CA studies more generally. Such overt disaffiliation and discord might result in a unilateral walkout; that is to say, one person involved in the argument might leave the room, or have themselves engaged in other activities to end the argument abruptly. It was observed in the classic CA data Virginia, where Mom left the room after her argument with Virginia:

Ex.12   [Virginia 22:49-23:18]

```
1226   VIR:   Y'all comple::tely ignore me b'cause I'm the
1227          youngest.
1228          (1.1)
1229   BET:   Uh-hh £y(h)ou're thuh youngest you get [spoi:led¿
1230   MO?:                                         [eh-
1231   VIR:   I[: do:: n:o:t!
1232   MO?:    [(          )
```

```
1233          (0.7)
1234   MOM:   We trip over you all thuh time.
       (11 lines of group laughter omitted)
1246   BET:   Okay [let's talk about thuh uh co]n- peaceful kin'a
1247          [convuhsation.
1248   VI?:       [(            money tuh    )]
1249   MOM:   [˙hhh  [Well,
1250   VIR:          [Wuh
1251          I want tuh (know)/(no) see you('ve) got every
1252           [thing you wa:nt.]
1253   MOM:   +[O : : : : : h! I]+ give up.
              +standing up-------+walk out-->
1254          Good-bah!+
              --------+,,-->
1255   ???:   ˙hh
              ,,,
1256   PRU:    eh huh huh + huh (˙hh)
              ,,,,,,,,,,,,,+
1257          (0.8)
1258   VIR:   °I think thuh lady's crazy.
1259          (0.4)
1260   BET:   °No she's not.Wesley.
```

The argument between Mom and Virginia began when Mom refused to buy Virginia a dress; the family argument rumbled on for some time during their meal, until in line 1226 Virginia accused everyone for ignoring her needs with an extreme case formulation 'comple::tely'. Mom and Beth's responses to Virginia's claim was more of a kind of gentle pushback with teasing character, especially when Mom said 'We trip over you all thuh time.' The argument then dissolved into group laughter, and Beth joined Mom's agenda to mitigate the argument by call for 'a peaceful conversation' in line 1246.

However, Virginia's pursuit of the argument in lines 1250 – 1252 leads to Mom getting up from the table and walking out of the dining room door into the kitchen, thereby walking away from the argument. It was noticeable that Mom did not produce a counter argument to Virginia's, but rather declared her decision on the termination of the argument. The conflict arose from the understandings that had been established earlier in the sequence, which was Mom's failed attempt to grant Virginia's request to buy a dress. Wootton (1997) argued that these offence-related sequences between parents and child usually had a connection of the prior sequence, which allowed the child to feel entitled to make the request, and have some sort of emotional display when the request was not granted. Such a phenomenon was also observed in my data collection, where Zeng, a 13-year-old boy walked out of the room after his request for the commission of video recording was not granted.

Ex.13   [SK: Camera fall again]

64 Zeng: [shuō hǎo de
            Say good AUX
           (You/we have) agreed
65   nǐ   lù   wán   gěi wǒ yībǎi kuài qián chūyǎn fèi
            2SG record finish give 1SG 100 yuan money acting fee
           You will give me 100 yuan acting fee after recording
66   (1.0)
67 Mei: lù   wán   le hái   déi   gěi
           Record finish ASP still have to give
           Still have to give (you)
68   yībǎi kuài qián chūyǎn fèi ?
           100   yuan money acting fee
           100 yuan acting fee after recording?
69 Zeng: duì ā
           Right PRT
           Right.
70 Mei: nà wǒ bú gěi ne ?
           If 1SG NEG give PRT
           What if I don't give (you)?
71   (0.4)
72 Zeng: °nà jiù bú lù °
               Then NEG record
           Then I won't record
73 Mei: ā ? bú gěi jiù bú lù le ?
           PRT NEG give then NEG record ASP
           What? If (I) don't give (you money) then (you) won't record?
            (·)
74 Zeng: [°èn °]
           PRT
           Mmh hmm
75 Rui: [nǐ   ]yímā gěi měi cì g–
           2SG   aunt give every time
           Your aunt every time give-
76   guāng gěi nǐ mǎi zhè xiē hǎochīde déi duō shǎo qián ,
           only give 2SG buy this many snacks need how much money
           needless to say how much money (she spent on) this many snacks she gives
           you
77 Mei: [nà jiù bú lù   lā ?āi zuò hǎo lā =
              Then NEG record PRT PRT sit properly PRT
           Then you won't record? Sit properly

```
78 Hua:    [yī gè miànbāo jiù   èrshí kuài
         One CL bread      just twenty yuan
         It costs 20 yuan just for a piece of bread
79 Zeng:   =kěyǐ ā =
          Ok    PRT
         Fine.
80 Mei:    =+èn zán zuò hǎo lā
           PRT 1PL sit properly PRT
         Let's sit properly
   Zeng:   +walk out of the room -->
81         (0.8)
                    -->
82 Mei:    zěnme le zhè shì+
           How   ASP this COP
         What about it?
           ----------------+
83         (1.6)
84 Hua:    bú nòng zhèng shìér
           NEG do   proper stuff
         Not doing proper stuff.
```

Similar to the last example, Zeng's request for 'acting fee' (line 64-65) was thwarted in a somewhat 'gentle' push back. Mei repeated his request (line 67-68) after a 1 second pause, indicated the inappropriateness of the request. She then proposed the alternative in a hypothetical question twice (line 70 and line 73), and Zeng kept the pursuit of his request. Another similarity to the last example was that everyone in the room except for Zeng was on the same side against Zeng, coalescing to decline his request. However, the efforts that Rui and Hua made to decline Zeng's request (lines 75-76 & 78) diverged from the main agenda, which was to make Zeng to cooperate and do the video recording. By stressing how much money Mei (Zeng's aunt) had spent for Zeng, they implied that it was immoral for Zeng to ask for more money. The disaffiliation was quite overt at this stage, and Zeng's immediate response was to declare 'kěyǐ ā' (fine) in line 79, which could be seen as a declaration of a failed effort to pursue his request. Mei continues to remonstrate Zeng by ordering him to sit up straight (line 80), to which Zeng response by simply walking away, and thereby leaving the interaction (see Dersley & Wootton, 2001, on complaint sequences that terminate with one party's walking out, unilaterally, on the other). The walkout was overlapping with Mei's turn, demonstrating that this was a unilateral decision on terminating the conversation. At this stage, the social coherence was completely shattered.

As shown above, overt disaffiliation and discord may lead to a more catastrophic consequence, and the social cohesion was usually not easily restored afterwards. Comparing to implicit disaffiliation, explicit disaffiliation was usually manifested with

more hostile characters, and the participants were more likely to respond with aggressive social behaviours. One possible explanation was that the establishment of cooperation usually was a joint effort by all parties involved in the conversation, and the breach of the cooperation could be caused by only one party. More analytic observations need to be done with a larger data collection.

Chapter 4 Conclusion

The analytical observations collected in this study do not exhaust the materials under discussion, but they can be a valuable contribution to the understanding of disaffiliation and discord in Mandarin Chinese ordinary conversation. I will summarize the main findings and the limitations of the study below.

<u>Findings</u>

There is generally in the social sciences and linguistics a bias towards cooperation, affiliation and agreement. By bias, I mean two things – it is widely understood that interaction itself is managed in such a way as to enhance and maintain cooperation, what might regarded as a cooperation principle underlying social cohesion in interaction; and second, the research literature has focused to a considerable extent on the maintenance of cooperation; this is perhaps most evident in the work in conversation analysis on preference organization (for instance, the preference for agreement and other positive actions in adjacency pairs) (Pomerantz, 1984a; see also Goffman, 1967; Brown & Levinson, 1987; and Sacks, 1987). It is fair to say however, that whilst interactions are very often permeated with disagreement and disaffiliation, and may even be disrupted by conflicts between participants, processes characterized by discord and conflict have not received similar scholarly attention. There are few exceptions (e.g. Coulter, 1991; Pomerantz & Sanders, 2013) and these concern English-speaking interactions. There is almost no work on disaffiliation and disagreements in Chinese mandarin (but for an exception, see Yu, Wu & Drew, 2019).

Affiliation and cooperation are widely discussed in the social sciences generally and in more social approaches in linguistics, including conversation analysis and interactional linguistics. However, disaffiliation and discord do occur in daily interactions, and my research is focusing on uncovering the practices through which interactants disaffiliate with each other.

There were practices associated with disaffiliation and discord ranging from a rather implicit level to explicit disaffiliation. The practices for implicit disaffiliation were usually employed in the incipient stage of the emerging disaffiliation. Sometimes the implicit disaffiliation can escalate into a more overt form, and further practices for explicit disaffiliation were found as arguments progressed and escalated. The distinction between implicit and explicit disaffiliation can be found in the progressivity of the disaffiliation sequence. Moreover, the practices for explicit disaffiliation might cause a more disruptive result comparing to implicit disaffiliation. That is to say, the practices for explicit disaffiliation can be seen as a demonstration of the disruption of social cohesion, and eventual accord between participants usually took more effort to restore.

Three practices of implicit disaffiliation were observed in this research, namely minimal acknowledgements, the ironic identification of misconduct, and addressee pointing. Minimal acknowledgement as a practice of implicit disaffiliation referred to a series of recurrent minimal continuers 'èn' in a troubles-telling sequence. It displayed the passive recipiency of the producer of the minimal acknowledgement and hence indicated the implicit disaffiliative status to the prior speaker. Another practice for implicit disaffiliation is the ironic identification of misconduct. The action of pointing out other people's wrongdoing can be seen as aggressive, but such a practice can be designed with facetious characters, hence making the disaffiliative character of an expression appear to be light or playful. Addressee pointing was a multimodal practice for implicit disaffiliation. It was a manual gesture – pointing – produced simultaneously with the turn-at-talk, directing to the other participant. The turn cooccurring with the gesture has to address to the same participant as the pointing gesture. It can serve as an unuttered accusation of the recipient, and the disaffiliation status can therefore remain under the surface.

The common feature of those implicit disaffiliation practices was that they displayed the participants' orientation to manage their potentially conflictual social interactions without rupturing the social cohesion. It was a vivid demonstration of how those participants as social beings, regardless of their age, gender, occupation and other social identities, conform to the normativity of avoiding explicit collision (Goffman, 1967; Sacks, 1987). However, conflicts in interactions can be manifest in quite overt, on-the-surface forms, and interactants usually adopted different approaches to demonstrate their explicit disaffiliative status.

This research documented three practices for explicit disaffiliation, which were imperatives, tendentious inquiries and stigmatized denunciations. Imperatives referred to the TCUs constructed with sentences in which the subject was the speech act's addressee and appeared in a second person form. It has been widely observed in research into parent-child interactions, and the imperatives usually had an apprehensive character. It was usually observed in a sequence where one participant was orienting to the recipient's compliance, and the imperatives were their last resort to accomplish that after (several) failed attempts. By informing the recipient what the normative behaviour would be, the wrong-doing of the recipient was implied. The tendentious inquiry, on the other hand, was to point out the wrong-doing in the form of interrogatives. Those questions were intended to represent a certain cause or point of view, particularly one that was debatable. Therefore, disaffiliation can appear at a relatively more overt level. Such inquiries were not designed to be answered, and they were often associated with competition in turn-taking. The recipients sometimes failed to produce a response that can both answer those questions and propose their objections to the already explicit disaffiliative status demonstrated in those questions. Similarly, stigmatized denunciation was another practice that holds the recipients accountable for their misbehaviours. It was to propose the relation between one's behaviour and some of the stigmatized social identities, such as alcoholism. It was not merely the denunciation for one's misconduct, but to link the misconduct with one's

personality. The argument can therefore transform into a much more drastic conflict from merely arguing over what was factually right or wrong.

It is also worth noticing that those practices were sometimes not stand-alone practices, that is to say, sometimes they can appear together in the same turn-at-a-talk. The participants adopted those practices to express their disaffiliative status implicitly or explicitly, because those practices had the similar interactional effects. For example:

Ex. 1   [SK: vaccine and alcohol] (Qing was Yuan's mother, Yuan had some alcoholic drinks after his vaccine injection and then he had a diarrhea. In the previous conversation, they were arguing over the side effect of vaccine and how it might interact with alcohol)

```
15 Qing:  nǐ zhēn    shì jiàng.   °wǒ °fāxiàn nǐ .   zhēnde .
          2SG really COP stubborn 1SG discover 2SG really
          You really are stubborn, I find it. Really.
16        nà  zěnme de me . chán  nà   kǒu   jiǔ    ā ,
          Then how PRT PRT crave that sip alcohol  PRT
          How is that? (You) were craving for a sip of alcohol?
17        háishì jiù  yuànyì- jiù- jiù- ā—
          or     just want    just just PRT
          Or (you) just wanted to -just -just
18        [jiù yuànyì nào   diǎn    shìér ā .
          just want cause some    problem PRT
          cause some problems?
19 Yuan:  [bú shì ,(3syll)wǒ xiǎng gǎo —
          NEG COP         1SG want conduct
          No, I want to conduct-
20 Qing:  nǐ gǎo      shénme kē           yán      ā .
          2SG conduct  what    scientific research PRT
          What kind of scientific research were you conducting?
```

Qing's turn from line 16-18 posed questions to Yuan on Yuan's motivation of drinking alcohol after his vaccine injection. The questions themselves were based on Qing's assumptions, but there were no gaps between Qing's questions, leaving no slot for Yuan to confirm or deny those assumptions. They only took the form of questioning, but they were not designed to be answered. And indeed, Yuan was not able to produce an answer in a full form in line 19. They were tendentious inquiries that held Yuan accountable for his misconduct, which was to drink alcohol after his vaccine injection. Qing described Yuan's wrong-doing as 'chán nà kǒu jiǔ' (craving for that sip of alcohol), which indicated that one possible account for his misbehaviour was that Yuan has alcoholism issues. It was not a factual observation, but an inferred correlation between

Yuan's misconduct and his personality, therefore it was also a stigmatized denunciation. Both tendentious inquiry and stigmatized denunciation incurred in the same turn, but they both conveyed the explicit disaffiliative status of Qing.

Such an overt display of disaffiliation might end with a disruptive result, which was the complete rupture of social cohesion. It can happen, though rarely, that conversations end quite abruptly as one participant made a unilateral decision to end the disaffiliative talk by walking out, by exiting the scene. It is evident that even during the expression of explicit disaffiliation, participants nonetheless manage to maintain an open channel of communication. Even though the social cohesion was demolished in the end of the interaction, the practices of explicit disaffiliation can be seen as the efforts to manage the conflicts.

Suggestions for Future Studies

This study is a contribution to the systematic analysis of disaffiliation in mandarin Chinese ordinary conversation. However, it was rather difficult to collect the data for overt disaffiliations, as people might feel uncomfortable to have a fierce wrangle or verbal struggle in front of the camera. More data that documents fully explicit conflictual talk – arguments with its incipience, progression and termination - would definitely contribute to tracing the development of the argument in its sequential environment.

Different practices were discovered in this study for both implicit and explicit disaffiliations. My study mainly focused on their sequential emergence, participants' orientations to them, the social actions that they perform, and their outcomes in the interaction. More systematic research is needed on the correlation between each practice. In other word, it is also important to look into how the similar interaction effect was achieved by different practices. More importantly, it would be worth exploring how the disaffiliation was transformed from implicit to explicit, and how the sequential environment was established for this kind of transformation.

Moreover, the relation between the practices participants deployed and their cultural background can be further explored. This study explicated how different practices were recognized by the recipients as disaffiliative, but it was quite limited to Chinese data. Disaffiliation and discord as an interactional phenomenon could be observed in a cross-culture perspective, and the deployment of certain embodied interactional resources could be universally recognizable, and hopefully this study can shed light on the cross-linguistic examination on those verbal and non-verbal practices. It would be beneficial to have the similar kind of data in other languages in order to determine the cultural aspect of certain practices.

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Appendix: Transcription Conventions

For transcribing the linguistic resources employed by the participants, Jefforsonian transcription system were used in my data transcription with some modification:

Symbol	Definition and use
[yeah] [okay]	Overlapping talk
=	End of one TCU and beginning of next begin with no gap/pause in between (sometimes a slight overlap if there is speaker change). Can also be used when TCU continues on new line in transcript.
(.)	Brief interval, usually between 0.08 and 0.2 seconds
(1.4)	Time (in absolute seconds) between end of a word and beginning of next. Alternative method: "none-one-thousand-two-one-thousand…": 0.2, 0.5, 0.7, 1.0 seconds, etc.
wo::rd	Colon indicates prolonged vowel or consonant. One or two colons common, three or more colons only in extreme cases.
↑word ↓word	Marked shift in pitch, up (↑) or down (↓). Double arrows can be used with extreme pitch shifts.
°word°	Degree sign indicate syllables or words distinctly quieter than surrounding speech by the same speaker
word-	A dash indicates a cut-off. In phonetic terms this is typically a glottal stop
>word<	Right/left carats indicate increased speaking rate (speeding up)

.hhh	Inbreath. Three letters indicate 'normal' duration. Longer or shorter inbreaths indicated with fewer or more letters.
£word£	Pound sign indicates smiley voice, or suppressed laughter
(word)	Parentheses indicate uncertain word; no plausible candidate if empty
(( ))	Double parentheses contain analyst comments or descriptions

For multimodal transcription, I adopted Mondada's conventions for transcribing multimodality.

The data was firstly transcribed in Chinese, with annotations and English translations. The annotations follow the glossing conventions listed below:

ASP	Aspectual marker
PRT	Particle
CL	Classifier
NEG	Negator
COP	Copula
AUX	Auxiliary
3SG	Third person singular pronoun