Nizhidaoba: 'You Know + *ba* (Modal Particle)' as a Response-Mobilizing Device in Mandarin Conversation

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Abstract

Nizhidaoba is composed of *nizhidao* 'you know' and the modal particle *ba* in Mandarin Chinese. Building on previous research, this study examines how *nizhidaoba* is used as a response-mobilizing device to seek acknowledgement, acceptance, or agreement in different sequential environments. Adopting the methodology of Conversation Analysis and Interactional Linguistics, this study examines eight hours of audio-recorded telephone conversation in Mandarin and explores the interactional functions of [X + *nizhidaoba*] (TCU-Final, Turn-Final). The study shows that [X + *nizhidaoba*] is either used in the disagreement sequence or at the end of the telling sequence to display the speaker's stance that the listener must take into account in order to understand X. Therefore, the speaker's opinion or the telling can become more understandable to the listener. In this way, [X+*nizhidaoba*] is used to increase the listener's accountability to respond.

Key terms: *Nizhidaoba*, Mandarin Chinese, Response-mobilizing device, Conversation Analysis, Interactional linguistics

1. Introduction

Nizhidaoba is composed of the second-personal singular pronoun *ni* 'you', the verb *zhidao* 'to know' and the modal particle *ba* in Mandarin Chinese. As to the basic semantic meaning, according to Chao (1968=1979, p.363), *nizhidaoba* is used in yes-no questions and interrogative statements, and in the latter case, *nizhidaoba* means 'I think you probably know'.

Regarding the study of *nizhidaoba* in conversation, Tao notes that in Mandarin conversation, *zhidao* 'to know', which is considered a versatile verb that can take a wide variety of object arguments, often exhibits patterns differing substantially from its expected behavior (Tao, 2003, p.383). The *nizhidao*-structure has evolved into a discourse marker, which is used as an attention-getting device regulating speaker-hearer interaction[1]. In addition, Tao (2003) points out that one of the distinctive features of the *nizhidao*-structure is that it often co-occurs with a modal particle[2] such as *nizhidaoma*（吗／嘛）, or *nizhidaoba*（吧）(Tao, 2003, p.297). When used as discourse markers, they have similar meanings/functions (Tao, 2003, p.298). However, modal particles play

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[1] Even though Yin & Yin (2017) have analyzed the verb *zhidao* with different corpus and obtained some details different from Tao (2003), it is still impossible to deny that the *nizhidao*-structure can be regarded as an evolving discourse marker.

[2] There have been variously labeled as "final particles"(Wu, 2004), "sentence-final particles" (Li & Thompson, 1981), *zhu ci* 'helping words', *yuqi ci* 'mood words' (Lü & Zhu,1953), and so on.

an important role in interactions among speakers of Mandarin Chinese (Wu, 2004, p.25), and speakers choose different modal particles to perform different actions or to display different stances (Wu, 2004). Regarding this point, Liu (2006) examines *nizhidao nizhidaoma* and *nizhidaoba* separately. We have further detailed analysis and investigation based on Liu (2006). This paper focuses on *nizhidaoba*. *Nizhidaoma* will be addressed elsewhere (Chen & Wu, forthcoming).

Before introducing the research methods and data, we first summarize the analysis of the pragmatic functions of *nizhidaoba* in the literatures (Liu, 2006; Shan, 2014, 2015; Tang, 2016 etc.). Then we clarify why further research is needed.

Liu (2006) demonstrates that the pattern [(X1), X + *nizhidaoba*, (X2)] is used to monitor whether the listener has background information X to understand what the speaker is trying to convey. It is also used to monitor whether X has been activated. In addition, Liu (2006) mentions that speakers think X is familiar, straightforward, and understandable to their listeners. She also notes that pattern [(X1), X + *nizhidaoba*, (X2)] is often used in communication types such as arguing, defending, persuading, encouraging, admonishing, explaining etc. Liu (2006) only focused on whether the information X is shared by both parties. However, from an interactional perspective, X not only represents some information but also implements some social actions. What kind of social action does [(X1), X + *nizhidaoba*, (X2)] performs? What kind of response does the listener give? The answers to these questions are not clear. Shan (2014) does not distinguish the sequential environments in which *nizhidaoba* and *nizhidaoma* appear, but only draws a general conclusion that the *nizhidao*-structure has the procedural pragmatic meaning of "attracting the attention of the hearer and seeking the hearer's approval".

The analysis of the pragmatic function of *nizhidaoba* has some explanatory power for *nizhidaoba*. However, *nizhidaoba* is used to perform different social actions in different sequential environments. Many previous studies have only focused on the information conveyed by X rather than the actions performed by X. This study will focus on the whole utterance containing *nizhidaoba* ([X+*nizhidaoba*]) and its social actions. In addition, some previous research has examined the use of *nizhidaoba* based on some written language corpora or unnatural corpora, such as films, TV plays and novels. In contrast, our study will analyze natural conversations and exam interlocutors' utterances word by word, line by line, moment by moment.

This paper is organized as follows: in Section 2 we introduce our methodology and data; in Section 3 we show our analysis; in the final section of the paper, we offer some conclusions.

2. Methodology and Data

The research method adopted in this study is informed by conversation analysis (hereafter CA) and interactional linguistics. As an empirical science, CA is a data-driven qualitative methodology developed by Harvey Sacks, Emmanuel Schegloff and Gail Jefferson to study the social organization of talk-in-interaction. It offers a set of analytic methods for the study of conversation. Among the set of methods established in CA, three cornerstones – action, turn design and sequence – are always used (see, for example, Sidnell & Stivers, 2013). Interactional linguistics was initially

conceived as a CA-informed approach to the investigation of specific linguistic phenomena in social interaction (see, for example, Couper-Kuhlen & Selting, 2018).

The data used for this study included 17 casual telephone conversations from the CallFriend-Mailand Maindarin Corpus (Canavan & Zipperlen, 1996). All instances of *nizhidaoba* were extracted from a total of eight hours of conversational data, constituting a preliminary collection of 76 *nizhidaoba* uses within an interactive context. The sequential environments in which these *nizhidaoba* occurred were then transcribed for data analysis (the transcription system and the glossary of transcript symbols refer to Jefferson, 2004) [3]. All examples shown in this paper are taken from this collection[4].

Table 1 demonstrates the distribution of the position of *nizhidaoba* and the number of the response for the turn that including *nizhidaoba.*

Table 1

Distribution of *nizhidaoba* (on conversation structure) and the response for the turn that including *nizhidaoba*

Turn position of nizhidaoba	*nizhidaoba* Number	%	Response Number
TCU-Initial, Turn-Initial	3	3.9	1
TCU-Medial	1	1.3	0
TCU-Final, (Turn-Medial/Turn-Final)	66	86.9	56
Separate TCU	6	7.9	4
TOTAL	76	100	61

Nizhidaoba appears in the syntactic construction that characterizes the mobilization of the response (Stivers & Rossano, 2010), and in our data, in 61 out of 76 cases, the listener gives a response after *nizhidaoba*. Therefore, *nizhidaoba* can be regarded as a response-mobilizing device in Mandarin Chinese. We will analyze the social action performed by *nizhidaoba* in different sequences in the next section.

3. Analysis of Two Nizhidaoba Sequences
This study mainly focuses on [X+*nizhidaoba*] (TCU-Final, Turn-Final) used in the disagreement

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[3] The data have been transcribed to the accepted conventions for showing non-English data. The data have been transcribed in pinyin Mandarin, then translated into English, first literally and then into a more conversational form. However, due to space limitations, this paper only retains the literal meaning of the target line.

[4] Examples for this paper can be found at https://ca.talkbank.org/access/CallFriend/zho-m.html. You can access each radio file.

sequence (section 3.1) and at the end of the telling[5] sequence (section 3.2). There are 8 cases in the disagreement sequence and 6 cases at the end of the telling sequence.

3.1 In the Disagreement Sequence

One sequential environment where [X+*nizhidaoba*] is used in the disagreement sequence. Excerpt (1) is taken from a telephone conversation between two friends who studied abroad in America in the 1990s. On the day of the phone call, B had just finished the TOEFL test. B felt that she did not do well on the test.

Excerpt (1)_ Callfriend_4447 06:06

01 B: danshi xiangdui .hhh(.) wo juede XIANGDUI yuedu,
       wo ganjue haoxiang (.) yuedu shi wo zui zaogao de yi bufen, da de.
       '*But, relatively speaking, it seemed to me that reading was my worst part.*'

02   benlai wo juede haoxiang hai keyi ne[:
       '*Originally, I felt it seemed okay.*'

03 A: [yuedu bufen.
                                         '*The reading section.*'

04   (0.2)

05 B: (tsk) dui. wo [(juede)
       '*Yeah. I feel···*'

06 A: [xiaojianying de yisi shi yuedu bufen hai keyi,
                    '*Xiao Jianying said that the reading section was okay((not difficult)).*'

07   .hh shuo de shi DIer bufen he DIyi bufen tebie nan.
       '*(What she) said was that the first and second sections were particularly difficult.*'

08 B: <TA MEN> DOU shi juede yuedu （hai xing)=
       3SG PL   all be think reading （still Okay）
       '*They all thought reading was (okay).*'

09 → = **yinwei wo xiang   ta   men keneng shi kao guo GRE** nizhidaoba.=
        because I think 3SG PL   maybe be exam EXP   you know PRT
        '***(That's) because I think they might have taken the GRE (test)***， nizhidaoba.'

10 A: =>dui dui dui dui [dui:.<
          '*Yeah-yeah-yeah-yeah-yeah.*'

11 B: [suoyi wo xiang keneng renjia yuedu shuiping hai shi yao bi wo
                       hao de duo.
                       '*So I think maybe their reading level is much better than mine.*'

12 A: dui dui dui.

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[5] Telling is a generic type of activity in talk-in-interaction (Schegloff, 2007, p.43). Storytelling is one particularly of telling.

'*Yeah-yeah-yeah.*'

13 B: dui: wo juede haoxiang jiu zai zher.

'*Right, I think that's it.*'

At the beginning of this interaction, B reports that she felt the reading session was her worst part (lines 01-02). After the confirmation question-answer sequence (lines 03-05), A reports an opinion about Xiao Jianying who also took the TOEFL test on that day (lines 06-07). A's report can be heard as a sort of disagreement. In response to A's disagreement, B expresses her opinion that the others (including Xiao Jianying) all thought reading was not very difficult (line 08). Literally, B agrees with what A is saying. However, if we carefully analyze the turn designs of line 8, including its prosody and phonetic features, we can find that line 8 expresses only partial agreement. That is, B still insists on her own opinion and disagrees with A. The turn designs consist of the following points. *Tamen dou* 'they all' is an extreme case formulation (Pomerantz, 1986) which is produced by a loud and slow voice. The turn designs make this utterance emphasize *tamen* 'they' in contrast to the speaker herself. In other words, B still insists on her own opinion that the reading session was her worst part. Immediately after her opinion, B uses *yinwei* 'because' to introduce an account (Li & Luo, 2019) explaining her opinion by reporting that they might have taken the GRE test (line 09). After her account, B adds *nizhidaoba*. In other words, *nizhidaoba* is used to emphasize that the reason/account (line 09) ought to be knowable and understandable to A and increases A's accountability to respond (Stivers & Rossano, 2010). A responds *dui dui dui dui dui* 'right right right right right' to show her agreement. Then B expresses her conclusion (line 13).

Excerpt (2) is another example in which *nizhidaoba* is used in the disagreement sequence. In this excerpt, A and B are talking about their mutual friend named Sun Tong. Before this excerpt, A made a lot of positive comments about Sun Tong (the first assessment) , such as saying that Sun Tong was doing well in the company.

Excerpt (2)_ Callfriend_4270_20:16

01 B: .hh wo JUEde jiu gei wo de ganjue, yiban laijiang jiu zhongguoren dou hai man nenggan de.

'*I think it gives me the impression that in general Chinese people are quite capable.*'

02   jiu shi SHUO,.hh (0.5) bu-(0.4) qishi wo- wo j-w- jiu jiu jiu cong wo de GANjue shang lai jiang,

'*That's to say, not- actually,   just from the way I feel,*'

03   keneng suntong zhe ge ren ta- jiu shuo,.h(0.4) cong lilun shanglai jiang a:

'*maybe Sun Tong (is-) that's to say...*'

04   [wo juede ta bu yiding neng dong tebie duo:.

'*I don't think she knows that much.*'

05 A: [en.

'*Mm.*'

06   (0.5)

07 B: yinwei ta qishi zai guo[nei bei-
        '*Because in the domestic sphere she actually was-*'

08 A: [ZAI <GONGSI> li bu yong gan biede, hui gan SHIr jiu xing le,
                                 '*You don't have to do anything else in the company, just do work.*'

09 A: >wo [juede< sun- wo juede suntong gan shir-
        '*I think SunTong does things/work⋯*'

10 B: [dui, wo-
             '*Yeah, I-*'

11 A: wo juede suntong shou   ting   <qiao   de>,
        I   think (Name)   hand   pretty dexterous PRT
        '*I think SunTong is pretty dexterous.*'

12   ranhou ta   GAN shenme shiqing yiding neng gan de   ting   hao,
        then   3SG do   what   thing   must can do CSC pretty good
        '*Then, she must be very good at everything she does.*'

13   >erqie< .hh ting mali ting   kuai de,
               and   pretty deft pretty quick PRT
        '*And (she does things/work) pretty deftly and quickly.*'

14 →   >erqie< ta gan shir   tebie   organized nizhidao[ba.
           and 3SG do thing particularly   you.know.PRT
        '*And she does things/work in an especially organized way, nizhidaoba.*'

15 B: [DUI,wo xiang jiu shi
                                                                 zhe dian=
                                                                 '*Yeah, I think that's it.*'

16   =[ta jiu shi TE KUAI= te mali,
          She's just especially quick and deft.'

17 A: [dui:.
         '*Right.*'

18 B: zhe [○ guo ren dou te ben, dou bu xing:.
        ' ○ *country people are stupid (and) they can't do it.*'

19 A: [dui:.
             '*Right.*'

20 A: [dui, (0.2) erqie ta gan shir tebie organized.
        '*Right, and she does things/work in a particularly organized way.*'

21 B: [( )

22   (0.5)

23 A: yi bu yi [bu de, ta tebie- (.) tebie nazhong de.
        '*Step by step, she (is) particularly- particularly like that kind of⋯*'

24 B: [dui:.

'*Right.*'

25 B: te XI kenenghui[:

'*(She's) maybe particularly careful.*'

26 A: [dui, ta ting xi de.

'*Right, she is pretty careful.*'

In lines 01-04, B presents her opinion about Sun Tong. B's personal feeling is that she thinks Sun Tong may not know much. The second assessment (negative comments) of Sun Tong shows that B and A hold different opinions. B provides an account introduced by *yinwei* 'because' (Li & Luo, 2019) (line 05). However, A launches a disagreement with B. In her disagreement turn, A first expresses, 'In the company you don't have to do anything else, just do work' (line 08). After line 08, A adds some positive comments about Sun Tong. These positive comments sound like the account for her dissenting opinion. After her positive comments, A adds *nizhidaoba*.

That means these positive comments are supposed to be knowable and understandable to B. B first responds with *dui, wo xiang jiu shi zhe dian* 'Yeah I think that's it' to indicate her agreement. And B also repeats A's words: 'She's just especially quick and deft.'. This partial repetition shows partial consent, but B shows her agreement in the local position.

To summarize, the preceding examples have shown some commonalities and the sequence structure can be illustrated as follows:

Participant A: Some opinions

Participant B: Disagreement

Participant A: Disagreement (including partial agreement)
             + reason/account X + *nizhidaoba*

Participant B: Acceptance, agreement

First, *nizhidaoba* is produced after participant A's reason or account utterance is for his/her disagreement utterance. In this way, *nizhidaoba* emphasizes that the reason or the account is supposed to be knowable and understandable to participant B. Second, after *nizhidaoba*, or overlapping with *nizhidaoba,* participant B gives his/her response. That is to say, the reason or the account needs to be responded to, but furthermore participant A uses *nizhidaoba* explicitly to hold the recipients more accountable for responding.

3.2 At the End of the Telling Sequence

[X+*nizhidaoba*] in our data is also used at the end of the telling sequence. Excerpt (3) is a session that occurred before Excerpt (1). In Excerp (3), B talks about how difficult the test questions were. Before this excerpt, B felt that the questions were much harder than before, and that there were many questions but not enough time. Also, A is apparently someone who has taken the TOEFL test before. In the first line of this excerpt, B further explains that she thought the questions were very

strange.

Excerpt (3)_Callfriend_4447_01:43

01 B: >erqie< hai wenti jiu juede jiu juede youdian: youdian GUAI: nazhong de ganjue.
       '*And the questions (were), (I) feel like they were a little weird.*'

02 A: shi ma:.
       '*Really.*'

03 B: dao ye bushi shuo: (.) hen nan, qishi bushi >shuo (hen nan)<
       '*(The questions) were not very difficult, actually (that) is not to say (very difficult),*'

04   .h danshi ta wenzhang hen nan. .hh
       '*But, the articles (were) very difficult.*'

05 A: en[:.
       '*Mm.*'

06 B: [ta na ge juzi, wo ganjue haoxiang na juzi jiu shi hen chang,
          '*Those sentences, I feel like those sentences were just very long,*'

07   (0.2)

08 A: [en.
       '*Mm.*'

09 B: [jiu shi shuo .hh na juzi yiban dou shi na zhong (0.2)
          sanhang sihang nayang cai yi-yi ge juzi. .hh
       '*That is to say, each sentence was generally composed of three or four lines.*'

10   (0.2)

11 A: en.
       '*Mm.*'

12   (.)

13 B: nayangzi de.
       '*Like that.*'

14   (0.2)

15 A: (hh) a[:
       '*Oh.*'

16 B: [>jiu shi shuo < .hh
             congju hen duo, ranhou ni jiu: (.) dei hualaihuaqu de nayang de.
            '*That is to say,*
            there were a lot of (subordinate) clauses, then you have to mark a lot of parts, like that.'

17   (0.3)

18 A: ou[:.
       '*Oh.*'

19 B: [>ranhou< ni dei, .hh ni dei, ni dei xiang bantian,
          '*Then, you have to think for quite a while.*'

20   jiu shi shuo yinwei zhongguoren kan: meiguoren de dongxi hai ting raozui de nazhong [ganjue.

'That is to say, because Chinese people read American stuff/articles, it's difficult to read, like that.'

21 A: [dui dui dui.

         'Right right right.'

22 B: .hh suoyi ni dei xiang bantian daodi shi zenme huishir nazhong ganjue.

      'So you have to spend a long time thinking about it, that kind of feeling.

23   (0.3)

24 A: a:.=

      'Oh.'

25 B: →=**suoyi jiu <MAN> nizhidaoba ¿**

       so   just slow   you.know.PRT

      'So, it's slow nizhidaoba¿'

26   (.)

27 B: wo [dou mei zuo wan.

      'Even I couldn't finish.'

28 A: [dui. tingli bufen ne.

       'Yeah. How about the listening section?'

In line 02, A shows her doubts. However, B does not recount how strange the questions on the test were but instead talks about other aspects of the test that were difficult (lines 03-04). Then in lines 06 and 09, B describes the sentences as being very long and then specifies the length of the sentences. During B's telling, A gives minimal responses (lines 05, 08, and 11). Then, B says a lexico-syntactic construction *nayangzi de* 'like that' (line 13) to signal the end of her telling. Thereby B furnishes A with another opportunity to react to the turn. A, however, still gives a minimal response (line 15). Then, B continues her explanation from the point of view of sentence formation (subordinate clause etc.) (lines 16 and 19). And the reason is given in line 20. Because Chinese people read American stuff/articles, the test sentences are challenging to read. The noticeable turn design here is membership category (Sacks, 1972) (*zhongguoren* 'Chinese people' and *meiguoren de dongxi* 'American stuff/articles') being used. That is to say, it is not her personal feeling that the test questions were difficult, but true from a general perspective. After this reason, A says *dui dui dui* 'right right right' to indicate a strong agreement (line 21). In line 22, B uses *suoyi* 'so' to mark the result or the conclusion (Lü, 1980) that comes about due to the length of the sentence. Then B gives the upshot of her telling by adding *nizhidaoba* (line 25). Target line also uses *suoyi* 'so', but here *suoyi* 'so' can be analyzed as a discourse marker to close the ongoing topic (Fang, 2000; Gao, 2019). Adding *nizhidaoba* can display the stance that the upshot of her telling so far is obvious. After *nizhidaoba*, A gives acknowledgment and turns to the next topic.

      Excerpt (4) is taken from a conversation between two women studying in America. A is

studying for a doctorate. Before this excerpt A told B that she cannot graduate this year because her supervisor has not finished reading her thesis yet and she has to wait until next January. In fact, her supervisor is helping her to find a sponsor and hopes that she can stay after graduation. In lines 01 and 02 of this excerpt, A explains the reason.

Excerpt (4)_Callfriend_5904_17:43

01 A:　>fanzheng< .hh >yinwei wo< xianzai zuo de dongxi ba: laoban bushi tai hui,
　　　'*Anyway, because of what I'm doing right now, the supervisor isn't very good (at it).*'

02　　TA Ne, yuanyi yao zhe ge credit..hh =
　　　'*He is willing to take the credit.*'

03 B:　=en. =
　　　'*Mm.*'

04 A:　=>na wo yao< YI ZOUdiao ba, ta dengyu shuo: zhe xie dongxi jiu jiu baifang zai zhe,
　　　'*So, if I were to leave, it would mean that these things would be in vain.*'

05　　mei ren neng yong HE .hh mei ren neng dong.
　　　'*No one can use (these), nobody can operate (these).*'

06　　(0.2)

07 A:　erqie wo xianzai ne, yinwei ye xie ji pian paper ma, ta ye xiwang ba paper dou fa chuqu,
　　　'*And now, because I am also writing several papers.*'
　　　 '*He also wants me to publish the papers.*'

08　　 hai mei xie wan..hh
　　　'*Not finished yet.*'

09 B:　=o.=
　　　'*Oh.*'

10 A:　=yiyuefen: you liang ge due de, ranhou fanzheng mingnian you san ge,
　　　'*There are two due in January. Then, there are three (conferences/papers) needed next year.*'

11　　.hhh you san ge conferen- you liang ge conference san pian paper ba,
　　　'*There are two conferences and three papers.*'

12　　(.)

13 B:　en.
　　　'*Mm.*'

14　　(.)

15 A:　yao fa chuqu: >zhe xie< .hh
　　　'*(I) need to publish these.*'

16　　wo zhe fangfa yinwei zai wo zhe ge ling y- lingyu libian suan shi: .hh zui kaitou yong de.

'*Because my method can be counted as the first of its kind to be applied in our field.*'

17   (0.2)

18 B: o[:.
         '*Oh.*'

19 A: [>xianzai< xianzai suan diyi ge yong de, hai mei kandao you ren fabiao zhe ge
         dongxi..hh
         '*Now I can be counted as the first person to use (this method).*'
         '*(I) haven't seen anyone else publish this.*'

20 B: =˚en na ting [hao de.˚
         '*Well, that's pretty good.*'

21 A: →   [**suoyi <ta yuanyi> zai zhe bian**
                        so   he willing   at   this side
                        zhe difang dedao yiding   de credit nizhidaoba **h[e h**
                        this area   get   a-certain ASSC   you.know.PRT
                        '***So, he's willing to get a certain amount of credit in this area*** nizhidaoba**,**'

22 B: [o o.
                                                              '*Yeah,yeah.*'

23 A: .hh suoyi ta bu fangshou de.
         '*So, he will not let (me) go.*'

24   (0.3)

25 A: .hh

26   (0.3)

27 A: na: (0.5) qishi wo xianzai jieguo (0.2) shenme dou man hao de,
         '*Then…actually currently my result(s) are pretty good.*"

In lines 04 and 05, A begins to talk about her value, and in lines 07-08 and 10-11, A talks about the paper she is working on and the academic conferences she will attend. In line 16, A describes the method she used as the first of its kind to be used in her field. Up to line 19 of the telling, listener B provides minimal responses. After line 19, listener B gives a positive comment which is a not-minimal response. Then A gives the upshot of her telling and adds *nizhidaoba* (line 21). Line 21 is a repetition of the beginning of the telling in line 02, which is a typical display of the completion of the current telling (Jefferson, 1978; Schegloff, 2011; Naranjo & Paschen, 2016). And using *suoyi* 'so' to mark the result or the conclusion (Lü, 1980) of the telling so far is evident and easy to understand. The listener also gives a response. After A gives the upshot of the overall conclusion again, the telling sequence is possibly closed.

In Extracts (3) and (4), *nizhidaoba* serves to display the stance that the speaker thinks the upshot of his/her telling so far is obvious. The sequence structure can be illustrated using the following schema:

Participant A: Telling

...... ((During A's telling B gives minimal responses))

Participant B: Not-minimal response

Participant A: Upshot of the telling X +*nizhidaoba*

Participant B: Acknowledgement

Participant A: Upshot of his/her telling again

((The telling sequence will be ends))

4. Conclusions

Through examining natural Mandarin conversation, this study has examined how *nizhidaoba* as a response-mobilizing device seeks acknowledgement, acceptance, or agreement in different sequential environments. Specifically, we have investigated [X+*nizhidaoba*] (TCU-Final, Turn-Final) used in two sequential environments (i.e., the disagreement sequence and the end of the telling sequence).

Firstly, [X+*nizhidaoba*] is used to display the the speaker's stance that the listener must take into account in order to understand X. Therefore, the speaker's opinion or the telling is understandable to the listener(s). Secondly, [X+*nizhidaoba*] is used to increase the listener's accountability to provide a response (Stivers & Rossano, 2010). In the disagreement sequence, participants tend to add *nizhidaoba* after the account of his/her disagreement utterance. In this way, the speaker shows the stance that he/she thinks the listener should know the reason and his/her disagreement should be understood. Therefore, the listener should accept or agree with the speaker's opinion(s). At the end of the telling sequence, participants tend to add *nizhidaoba* after the upshot of his/her telling. In this way, the speaker displays the stance that the upshot of her telling so far is obvious. Therefore, the listener should acknowledge it.

In addition, although *nizhidaoba* can be used as a response-mobilizing device in different sequences, the social action performed by *nizhidaoba* differs depending on the communicative purpose of the participants in the conversation.

Acknowledgement

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Appendix

Appendix A: Symbols used in transcript

[ ]	overlapping speech
=	fast, immediate continuation by a new turn or segment (latching)
(.)	micro-pause
(1.0)	pauses of 1.0 second
hehehe	short and syllable-like laughter
.h, .hh	breathing in, according to its duration
h, hh	breathing out, according to its duration
:,::,:::	lengthening of ca. 0.2-0.8 seconds, up to ca. 1 second
→	specific line in the transcript which is referred to in the text
?	final pitch movements: high rise
,	final pitch movements: mid-rise
.	final pitch movements: low fall
ACcent	primary, or main accent
< >	to indicate that the talk between them is

> <　　　　to indicate tha the talk between them is compressed or rushed

(may i)　　assumed wording

(may i say/ let us say)　　　possible alternatives

Appendix B: Abbreviations in glosses

3SG　　　third person singular

ASSC　　associative (*de*)

EXP　　　experiential aspect (-guo)

PRT　　　particle

Pl　　　　plural (-men,-xie)