THE PRAGMATIC-DISCURSIVE STRUCTURE OF CHINESE COMPLIMENTS

IN NATURALLY OCCURRING CONVERSATION

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ABSTRACT

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Studies across different languages over the past three decades have claimed that compliments are formulaic in nature, realized by only a few syntactic and semantic formulae. Much of the research employs elicitation or ethnographic field notes data, which biases the analysis to single utterance, explicit and formulaic compliments. However, my observations of Chinese compliments in naturally occurring conversation paint a different, much more sophisticated, picture.

The current study investigates the realization of spontaneous Chinese complimenting behavior in the speech communities of Shanghai and other cities in China. Over 200 speakers from different walks of life were audio-recorded in a vast array of natural settings. Three hundred compliment-response sequences were selected for analysis. Adopting a combination of the pragmatic speech act analytic approach and the discursive pragmatic analytic approach, the current study examines the pragmatic-discursive structure of Chinese complimenting in conversation sequences over multiple turns involving two or more parties.

Results of the study reveal that Chinese compliments and compliment responses are not isolated, single utterance acts, but rather multi-turn discursive events. Chinese compliments operate as pragmatic-discursive strategies working together over the discourse in a core and support relationship. Among the 3,835 compliment strategies identified, 525 are core strategies and 3,310 are support strategies. The core compliment strategy is normally the first general summative statement initiating a compliment topic. Seven major support compliment strategies—agreement, comment, example, repetition, intensification, quote, and comparison—fulfill three major pragmatic-discursive functions: to align with, to elaborate, or to emphasize the core or another support strategy. The seven major support compliment strategies are further realized by a wide variety of substrategies and linguistic forms with no formulaicity and predictability in lexical or syntactic distribution. The different pragmatic-discursive strategies interact such that the participants negotiate and "co-construct" the compliment event. The analysis indicates that context, both interaction-external and interaction-internal, is crucial in the construction and interpretation of a compliment action.

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there were surgeries, personal setbacks, loss of family members and close friends. Living

in physical pain is difficult; seeing your loved ones battling cancer to their last breath was

devastating. There were also feelings of loneliness, embarrassment, doubt, and a sense of

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that inner strength, I know. Sometimes we just need someone to help us find it, but it IS

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RRL

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Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

Compliments and compliment responses have been perhaps the most studied speech acts in the last three decades. Ever since Manes and Wolfson's (1981) monumental discovery that explicit compliments in middle-class American speech are "formulaic," vigorous research studies have been conducted in different speech communities in the fields of pragmatics, sociolinguistics, discourse analysis, and others, almost all of which support the claim. Studies on Chinese compliments are no exception. Two compliment events I experienced, however, shocked me and made me question the prevailing conclusions of the compliment research.

The first event took place when I was collecting pilot data in China. I caught myself on tape in the following compliment-response sequence with my cousin Jin, who was paying an unannounced visit to my mother. Present also were his wife Zhen and their son. As I had not seen my cousin for over 10 years, I was truly struck by his young looks.

Excerpt 1.1 [2][1] "Jin hasn't changed a bit."

01	→	融：	1.锦倒一点也勿变噢我看	Rong: 1.Jin hasn't changed a bit.
02			侬。	
03		锦：	也老了呀，哪能勿变！总	Jin: [I'm] Also getting old, how
04			归老额呀，勿可能勿老	could there be no change! I'm

---

[1] The number in the square brackets is the sequence number in the 300 compliment-response sequences throughout the study.

05			额。		[unavoidably] getting old, it's
06					not possible not old.
07	→	融:	2.勿变，3.一点勿变，	Rong:	2.No change (Has not changed),
08	→		噢？（看着母亲）		3.no change (has not changed)
09					at all, don't you think?
10					(looking at mom)
11		珍:	伊老额。	Zhen:	He is old.
12		锦:	真额老，也老额，哪能会	Jin:	Really old, also old, how could
13			得勿老呢。		it be not old.
14	→	融:	4.勿老，5.勿老。	Rong:	4.Not old, 5.not old.
15		锦:	老额咾。	Jin:	I'm old.
16	→	融母:	6.勿老。	Rong's Mom:	6.Not old.
17	→	融:	7.一点勿老。	Rong:	7.Not a bit old.
18		锦:	老伐啦？	Jin:	[Am I] old?
19	→	融母:	8.勿老，9.一眼也勿老。	Mom:	8.Not old, 9.not at all old.
20		锦:	〔阿拉自家看看也老！	Jin:	[I [couldn't] look at myself,
21					so old!
22	→	融:	〔10.一点勿老，11.是勿	Rong:	[10.Not at all old, 11.truly
23			老（笑）。		not old (laughs).
24		锦:	到底是国外辛苦呀，对	Jin:	After all, life is much harder
25			伐，迭个呒没办法额，因		overseas, right? You have no
26			为，因为各方面额，消费		choice, because... because
27			全勿一样。		everything, living expenses are
28					all different [from here].
29		融:	生活节奏快眼。	Rong:	The pace of life is much
30					faster.
31		锦:	嗳。	Jin:	Yeah.

After briefly chatting on several other topics, the conversation returned again to my cousin's appearance.

32	→	融:	12.锦真额一点呒没变化，	Rong:	12.Jin really hasn't changed
33	→		噢？2.我看伊十年还是格		a bit, right? (to mom) 2.After
34			能样子。		ten years, he still looks the
35					same.
36		锦:	〔呒没，呒没，也……	Jin:	[No, no, also...
37		珍:	〔老了交关。	Zhen:	[[He has] aged a lot.
38	→	融:	13.老，老样子，14.老样	Rong:	13.Same...same, 14.just like
39	→		子。		before.
40		锦:	珍讲老总归老（笑）。	Jin:	If Zhen says I am old, I am
41					old (laughs).
42		融:	（笑）	Rong:	(laughs)

43	→	融母：	15.伊拉两个头全勿老。	Mom:	15.Both of them look very young (*not old*[2]).
44					
45	→	融：	16.嗳。（笑）	Rong:	16.Yeah. (laughs)
46		锦：	呶阿拉平常蛮注意保养	Jin:	Well, [actually] we pay a lot
47			额，蛮注意保养额。是迭		of attention to health care,
48			个，侬看天天，我像我现		pay a lot of attention to
49			在烟酒勿碰额。		health care. Uh, you see every
50					day, you know now I do not
51					touch cigarettes or alcohol.
52	→	融：	17.嗳，好呀！	Rong:	17.That's so great!
53		锦：	对伐，现在一直勿碰额。	Jin:	Yeah, I don't touch them at all
54			就是，迭个，有条件额，		now. Uh, when we have the
55			伊拉（头转向妻子和儿		financial means, they (turns to
56			子）假期里去旅游一趟。		wife and son) travel during the
57					vacation.
58		融：	嗯。	Rong:	Um-hum.
59		锦：	去年子到北京去了一趟，	Jin:	Last year they went to Beijing,
60		融：	嗳，	Rong:	Uh-huh,
61		锦：	北戴河，北戴河去，伊拉	Jin:	Beidaihe (famous resort area),
62			今年廿号要到，到青岛		went to Beidaihe. This year, on
63			跟，啥地方？大连对伐？		the 20th, they are going to, to
64			青岛跟大连伊拉去，去，		Qingdao and, what's the other
65			去白相。		place? Is it Dalian? Qingdao
66					and Dalian (both resort cities
67					on the coast), they are going,
68					going to enjoy themselves
69					there.
70	→	融：	18.蛮好。	Rong:	18.Great.
71		锦：	阿拉叫姆妈也是，叫我姆	Jin:	We also asked our mom, asked my
72			妈专门到，到北京去一		mom to take a trip to
73			趟……		Beijing...

Having grown up in a culture rooted in restraint and reservation, I was fascinated by the compliment-response exchanges, not just the length; the intensity of the compliment force and rejection force, the persistence on each side to hold onto his or her own position, the back and forth, tug-of-war like interaction, the inviting in and volunteering in of the third parties..., nothing of the same had ever been captured in my observation notebook data, nor reported in the compliment research literature. I was

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[2] Italics are used to mark the literal English translation of the original Chinese text throughout the study.

equally surprised by my spontaneity, the total unawareness of my own speech behavior, in spite of the fact that I was the one who turned on the audio-recorder when my cousin's family walked into the room. When I listened to the tape afterwards, I could not believe what I said and how I said the compliments. My assumptions of what a Chinese compliment would be like did not match my actual complimenting behavior.

The second event happened in the same summer in an acupuncture treatment room of a hospital affiliated with a university of traditional Chinese medicine.

Excerpt 1.2 [82] "It's right up his alley."

Situation: Prof. Chen (F) takes her friend to Dr. Zhang (M) for acupuncture treatment. Dr. Zhang's friend Prof. Zhu (M) is leaving the room. Prof. Chen knows Prof. Zhu. An intern is present, observing Dr. Zhang treating the patients.

01		陈教授：朱先生，侬哪能今朝来	Prof.Chen: Prof.Zhu, what brought you
02		这里？打针灸啊？	here today? Did you come
03			for acupuncture treatment?
04		朱教授：没有，来看看张医生。	Prof.Zhu: No, I came to see
05			Dr.Zhang.
06		陈教授：你认识张医生啊？	Prof.Chen: You know Dr.Zhang?
07		朱教授：我跟张医生么是老朋友	Prof.Zhu: Me and Dr.Zhang, we go way
08		了。怎么了？	back. What's wrong?
09		陈教授：我朋友，脚不好，请张	Prof.Chen: My friend here is having
10		医生看看。	trouble with her leg.
11			She's here to see
12			Dr.Zhang.
13	→	朱教授：噢，那好，1.他这个，	Prof.Zhu: Oh, no problem. 1.It's
14		最有办法！	right up his alley.
15			(*This, he has the best*
16			*expertise!*)
17	→	陈教授：2.对。	Prof.Chen: 2.Exactly. (*Yes*.)
18	→	朱教授：3.他有，4.出国来的。	Prof.Zhu: 3.He has [the expertise],
19			4.he's been overseas.
20	→	陈教授：5.所以就寻他来了。	Prof.Chen: 5.That's why we're here to
21			see him.
22	→	朱教授：6.嗳，对，对，对。	Prof.Zhu: 6.Yeah, right, right,
23	→	7.他有办法。（对张医	right. 7.It's right up
24		生说）再见啊！	his alley. (*He has the*
25			*expertise*.) (to Dr.Zhang)
26			See you later.

27	张医生：(treating the	Dr.Zhang: (treating the patient,
28		patient, hearing the	hearing the talk, didn't
29		talk, didn't say a	say a word.)
30		word.)	

I was again surprised. Similar to Excerpt 1.1, there is more than one compliment utterance. Different from Excerpt 1.1, the compliment-response interaction presents a different pattern. Instead of interacting with the complimentee Dr. Zhang, the complimenter Prof. Zhu interacts with the third party Prof. Chen in an elaborated back-and-forth compliment sequence with no response from the complimentee present in the room. Furthermore, while one can feel the complimenting force of some utterances in the excerpt, the complimenting force needs to be accounted for, as the form of these utterances is not as explicit as that in Excerpt 1.1.

Were the compliment examples described above idiosyncratic? Later that summer, in doctors' offices, in friends' houses, at reunions, at dinner parties, in neighborhoods, on working premises..., I repeatedly encountered similar compliment-response sequences, some of them were mirror images of the ones reported above. If the occurrences cited above were not anomalies, then how do we account for them? The structure of the compliment sequences apparently does not fit into the formulaic formulas prescribed by most compliment studies then. Analysis at utterance level or as an adjacency pair, which dominated the compliment research at the time, does not seem to be adequate—the exciting, intricate dynamics of the interaction seem to defy any existing analytic framework.

The discrepancy between what I thought a speaker would say and what a speaker actually says is surprising, but not uncommon. In Wieland's (1995) study on French compliments, 59 of the 62 participants being interviewed had the impression that

compliments are given more frequently in American culture than in French culture. Audio-taped data revealed that in dinner conversations, more compliments were made by the French speakers overall than by the American speakers. Similarly, Golato (2002) observed that most German exchange students and German native speakers she had talked to informally claimed to be embarrassed to receive compliments, and insisted that they reject them. Yet, the analysis of the video-taped data showed that "German native speakers do accept compliments. They actually overwhelmingly accept compliments" (p. 557). Only the appreciation marker was different—instead of a "thank you," they used an assessment.

To bridge the gap between intuition and reality and reveal the rules of actual language use, researchers in various fields of linguistics and second language acquisition have exerted tremendous effort and carried out numerous empirical studies. Vigorous research in compliments and compliment responses is a representation of this endeavor. Since the pioneering work by Pomerantz (1978) and Manes and Wolfson (1981), compliments and compliment responses have been studied and compared in ten different varieties of English and more than nineteen other languages (see Chapter II Literature Review). Different perspectives studied include pragmatics, sociolinguistics, second language acquisition, interlanguage analysis, intercultural or cross-cultural communication, intralanguage analysis, conversation analysis, discourse analysis, speech act theory, speech communication, politeness theory, variation theory, etc. Different aspects examined include structural forms, frequency distributions, situational distributions, discourse features, topics, functions, mode/style of expression, social values, role of age, gender, distance and status, etc., and in recent years, sequential organizations.

Indeed, research on the speech acts of compliments and compliment responses has grown from an infant to a blossoming young lady. It has contributed significantly not only to our understanding of the structure and the rules of use of this specific speech event, but also to our understanding of pragmatic competence and language acquisition in general. However, blossoming the research is, mature it is not. When examining the impressive literature on compliments and compliment responses, it becomes immediately obvious that there is a significant gap between my pilot data and the data presented in the majority of the compliment studies. Although two decades ago, Wolfson (1989a, p. 233) suggested, replies to compliments among Americans in many instances led into a long sequence of exchanges, whereby commentary on the complimented item was provided and "an elaborated affirmation of approval and solidarity" was accomplished, although Herbert (1991) noted that implicit compliments have not been given proper attention and should be attended to, and although Holmes (1988, p. 463) proposed that the study of compliments would benefit from an examination of naturally occurring tape-recorded data, a look at the literature makes it very clear that the majority of the studies still dealt almost exclusively with explicit, formulaic compliments. Analyses have largely focused on compliments or compliment responses at utterance level, or on compliment-response adjacency pairs. Boyle (2000) argues that the cause for this state of affairs could be attributed to the methodology employed in the studies. Most researchers in the studies adopt what Boyle calls the "reduced" ethnographic methodology pioneered by Manes and Wolfson (1981), and employ such data collection methods as the "notebook method" or questionnaires and interviews or role plays. There are many highly acclaimed advantages, e.g., Discourse Completion Tasks (DCT) questionnaires and interviews provide the

researchers with large amount of comparable data rather quickly with a high degree of control over extralinguistic variables (Beebe & Cummings, 1996); observational "notebook" method allows collection of data that are authentic and proximate to life (Kasper, 2000) from a wide range of speakers and across various settings (Kasper & Dahl, 1991). Still these methods of data collection are flawed. Among some critical flaws, the DCT questionnaires and interviews elicit responses that are "in a crucial sense metapragmatic" (Golato, 2003, p. 109), they ascertain the canonical shape of speech acts in the minds of the speakers (Beebe & Cummings, 1996, p. 80); role plays are predominantly motivated by the researcher's goals rather than those of the interactants (Kasper, 2000); the observational "notebook method" suffers from data inaccuracy caused by limitations in human memory (Yuan, 2001). These ethnographic methods of data collection "restrict the type of utterance that can be recorded to the short, the simple, the unambiguous, and the memorable (Jaworski, 1995, p. 65), and this particular [ethnographic] methodology therefore favours the collection of explicit, formulaic compliments" (Boyle, 2000, p. 28). Golato (2003) further argues that many such studies that purport to describe actual language use,

> do not—in fact, cannot—describe actual language use, simply because their analyses are not based upon data that illustrate actual language use with sufficient granularity. In other words, due to an inappropriate choice of data collection procedure, the claims of many published articles on compliment and compliment responses may need to be attenuated. (p. 91)

To study actual language use, to find out the organization of speech events in their natural settings, one's data should closely correspond to "naturally occurring interactional environments which seem to be the natural, primordial home for language use" (Schegloff, 1996, p. 468). To determine the action an utterance is performing, sequential

analysis of talk is crucial; only audio- or video-recorded data will allow for such analysis (Schegloff, 1995). Research results from studies employing such data (e.g., Boyle, 2000; Golato, 2002, 2005; Wieland, 1995) prove that "the audio- or video-recording of naturally occurring data is capable of producing a much less formulaic collection of compliments, partly because the machine is not limited in the way that human memory is, and partly because tape recordings and transcripts enable the researcher to reveal the complex, local, interactive constitution of a compliment" (Boyle, 2000, p. 28).

Purpose of the Study

China is now in the middle of an enormous social and economic change, occurring at the speed of lightening, with the force of a volcano, and a scope unparalleled in Chinese history. It is not an overstatement that China is and will remain the center of the world's attention for many years to come. Big corporations, enterprises, research teams, social organizations all over the world are racing to China to join the 21st Century venture. However, the key to success in China lies not only in the possession of absorbing capital, cutting-edge technology, efficient managerial skills, but more essentially, in the understanding of the Chinese rules of speaking, relating, and communicating. Like all speech acts, compliments and compliment responses can show us the rules of language use in a speech community. Both compliments and compliment responses are components of conversational routines and are critical elements of socializing tools and face maintenance devices. Chinese society, in a way, is an intricate web of relationships. Fluid, person-centered social networks—"*guanxi*" (literally means "relationship" or "connections"), rather than fixed social institutions, lie at the heart of

Chinese culture and social structure (Fei, 1939/1946; Yan, 1996). "*Guanxi*" is so pervasive in every realm of life that it is deemed "one of the most noted phenomena in contemporary China" (Lin, 2002, p. 57) and absolutely essential to successfully completing any task in virtually all spheres of social life (Gold, Guthrie, & Wank, 2002). Learning to compliment and respond to compliments in the Chinese way, an important skill in the communication enterprise, will help non-native speakers weave their way through a web to their goal of success.

What is the Chinese way of complimenting? The purpose of the present study is to study the realization of Chinese complimenting behavior by native speakers in China. Different from most other compliment research, the present study focuses on actual language use—what people actually say, rather than intuition or metapragmatic knowledge—what people think they would say in a given speech setting. It thus targets a large quantity of spontaneous, naturally occurring conversations audio-taped in natural settings as its data source. It goes beyond the single utterance analytic approach by examining the organization of complimenting in conversation sequences over multiple turns involving two or more parties. Specifically, it answers the following question: What is the pragmatic-discursive structure of Chinese compliments in naturally occurring conversation? It is hoped that the result of the present study will help bridge the gap in compliment research.

Chapter II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This chapter reviews the pertinent literature related to the present study. The chapter begins with a brief overview of the research on the speech acts of compliments and compliment responses. It then moves to examining the major approaches adopted in the empirical studies of complimenting behavior. A summary discussion of the strengths and the major issues in these approaches will follow. The chapter concludes with the research question.

The speech acts of compliments and compliment responses certainly have been the most studied speech acts in the last three decades. Ever since the pioneering work by Pomerantz (1978) and Manes and Wolfson (1981), compliments and compliment responses have been studied in 10 different varieties of English: American English (Boyle, 2000; Gathman, Maynard, & Schaeffer, 2008; Herbert, 1986, 1987, 1989, 1990; Johnson, 1992; Johnson & Roen, 1992; Knapp, Hopper, & Bell, 1984; Manes, 1983; Manes & Wolfson, 1981; Miles, 1994; Miles & Yangyuen, 1991; Pomerantz, 1978; Sims, 1989; Wolfson, 1981a, 1981b, 1983, 1984, 1988, 1989a; Wolfson & Manes, 1980), African American English (Henderson, 1996), Australian English (Cordella, Large, & Pardo, 1995; Sharifian, 2005; Tang & Zhang, 2009; Tran, 2008), British English (Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk, 1989; Lorenzo-Dus, 2001; Ylänne-McEwen, 1993), Canadian English (Farenkia, 2012b), Filipino English (Zhang, 2013), Hawai'i Creole English (Lee, 1990), Irish English (Schneider & Schneider, 2000), New Zealand English

(Holmes, 1986, 1988; Holmes & Brown, 1987), and South African English (Chick, 1996; Herbert & Straight, 1989).

Compliments and compliment responses have also been studied and compared in more than 19 other languages: Egyptian, Jordanian, Kuwaiti, Najdi Saudi Arabic, and Syrian Arabic (Al Amro, 2013; Al Falasi, 2007; Farghal & Al-Khatib, 2001; Farghal & Haggan, 2006; Migdadi, 2003; Mursy & Wilson, 2001; Nelson, Al-Batal, & Echols, 1996; Nelson, El Bakary, & Al Batal, 1993), Chinese (Chen, 1993; Chen & Tang, 2009; Chen & Yang, 2010; Chiang & Pochtrager, 1993; Fong, 1998; Guo, Zhou, & Chow, 2012; Lee, 2009; Lin, Woodfield, & Ren, 2012; Liu, 1995; Loh, 1993; Rose & Ng, 1999; Spencer-Oatey & Ng, 2002; Tang & Zhang, 2009; Wang & Tsai , 2003; Wu & Takahashi, 2016; Yang, 1987; Ye, 1995; Yu, 2004, 2005; Yuan, 1996, 1998, 2002; Zuo, 1988), Filipino (Mojica, 2002), Finnish (Ylänne-McEwen, 1993), French (Kerbrat-Orecchioni, 1987; Wieland, 1995), Cameroon and Canadian French (Farenkia, 2012a), German (Golato, 2002, 2005; Huth, 2006; Ravetto, 2012), Greek (Sifianou, 2001), Italian (Ravetto, 2012; Sidraschi, 2014), Japanese (Barnlund & Araki, 1985; Billmyer, 1990; Daikuhara, 1986; Matsuura, 2004; Saito & Beecken, 1997), Korean (Han, 1992; Jeon, 1996), Malaysian (Azman, 1986, as cited in Holmes, 1986), Persian (Pour & Zarei, 2017; Sharifian, 2005, 2008), Polish (Herbert, 1991, 1997; Jaworski, 1995; Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk, 1989), Brazilian Portuguese (Barbosa, 1996), Russian (Mironovschi, 2007), Spanish (Aakhus & Aldrich, 2002; Kryston-Morales, 1997; Lorenzo-Dus, 2001; Maíz-Arévalo, 2012), Mexican-American Spanish (Valdés & Pino, 1981; Yanez, 1990), Thai (Cedar, 2006; Gajaseni, 1994); Turkish (Ruhi, 2006); Vietnamese (Tran, 2007, 2008), and other cultural

groups addressed in Manes (1983) and in Wolfson (1981a, 1989b). This impressive list is still incomplete.

The vast majority of studies on compliments and compliment responses adopt the comparative or intercultural approach. Early research in this area was guided by insights from ethnography, and sociolinguistics, while more recent work takes on politeness theories (Chen, 2010), conversation analysis, and discursive pragmatics as the theoretical framework. Different aspects studied include linguistic structure of compliments (e.g., syntactic, lexical) and compliment responses (e.g., semantic/functional strategies), discourse structure (e.g., adjacency pairs, sequential organizations, discourse distribution, discourse function), situational distribution (e.g., setting/context), topics, functions, mode of expression (e.g., explicit, implicit), social values, social demographic distribution (e.g., age, gender, status, distance, education), etc. These are studied within one language or compared interlingually or cross-culturally (between different languages), intralingually (e.g., diachronic development), or across varieties of the same language (e.g., Mainland Mandarin vs. Taiwan Mandarin; varieties of French). With only a few exceptions (e.g., Johnson, 1992; Johnson & Roen, 1992), almost all the studies have focused on speech, although studies of written messages in computer-mediated, online communication have appeared in recent years (e.g., Maíz-Arévalo & García-Gómez, 2013; Mironovschi, 2007; Placencia & Lower, 2013). The study of multimodal formats (e.g., prosody, embodiment, the material context) as an integral part co-constructing compliment activity has also appeared (see Keisanen & Kärkkäinen, 2014). Data collection strategies involve gathering naturally occurring compliments or compliment-response sequences in a variety of everyday speech situations as well as eliciting compliments using oral and/or

written discourse completion questionnaires (DCT) (the majority), role plays and structured interviews. Since this dissertation will restrict its scope to pragmatic and discursive structure of compliments, only relevant studies will be reviewed here (for a comprehensive review of the studies of compliments as well as compliment responses, see Chen, 2010; Golato, 2005). In the following sections I will review the major analytic approaches adopted in the empirical studies of the speech behavior of complimenting, focusing mainly on how each approach accounts for the structure and function of the compliment acts: linguistic form, semantic/functional structure, discourse structure, and social interaction.

Linguistic Form

Linguistic structure analysis has been adopted to analyze compliments in most of the compliment studies. Linguistic analysis includes mainly syntactic structure, lexical distribution, compliment focus, and rhetorical and stylistic forms.

Syntactic Structure

As Wolfson (1978) first discovered, and discussed in a series of articles (Manes & Wolfson, 1981; Wolfson, 1983; Wolfson & Manes, 1980) compliments seem to be precoded and highly recognizable in structure, relying on only a few syntactic formulae. Based on 686 naturally occurring compliments (collected through ethnographic field notes[1]) by

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[1]The terms "ethnographic field notes," "ethnographic notebook data," "observational field notes," and "natural data" are used interchangeably in this study to refer to the data collection method pioneered by Wolfson and Manes (1980). Field workers write down the compliments they observe, and receive or give themselves in their daily lives. They record the exact wording of the exchange and other contextual information as soon as possible after the exchange has taken place. The data collected are subsequently categorized and analyzed statistically. Wolfson (1983, p. 95) states that "It is, in fact, my conviction that ethnographic fieldwork is the only reliable method of collecting data about the way speech acts function in interaction."

middle class Americans, they found that four basic syntactic patterns constitute 86.2% of the data. This general finding has been corroborated by subsequent studies in New Zealand, South African, Filipino (English), and other American speech communities (e.g., Herbert, 1989; Holmes, 1988; Knapp, Hopper, & Bell, 1984; Sims, 1989; Zhang, 2013) and in written discourse such as peer-review texts (Johnson, 1992). The vast majority of the compliments the researchers analyzed are represented by only three or four major syntactic patterns. Table 2.1 presents data from four studies.

Table 2.1

Syntactic Patterns of Compliments in English Speech Communities

	Wolfson & Manes US (Spoken) %	Holmes NZ (Spoken) %	Johnson US (Written) %	Zhang Filipino (DCT) %
1. NP is/looks (int) ADJ. e.g., "You look good." "Your hair is really great."	53.6	41.4	34.8	48.5
2. I (really) like/love NP. e.g., "I like your shirt."	16.1	15.9	17.4	6.4
3. PRO is (really) (a) ADJ NP e.g., "That's a very nice briefcase."	14.9	13.0	5.4	13.2
4. ADJ NP e.g., "Really cool laptop."	1.6	7.7	3.1	14.9
Total	86.2	78.0	60.7	83.0

NOTE: Wolfson & Manes: N = 686; Holmes: N = 517; Johnson: N = 256; Zhang: N = 235

The cross-cultural studies on compliments echo the above finding. Herbert's (1991) study on Polish compliments, for example, finds four basic syntactic patterns which occurred in 83.7% of the total 400 compliments. Yanez's study (1990) on Chicano women's compliments in Spanish finds three basic patterns, while Kryston-Morales's

(1997) study of Puerto Rico Spanish compliments (elicited dialogue data) finds syntactic

patterns identical to the English patterns (with the exception of the subject pronoun drop

or the syntax inversion, characteristic of Spanish language). Nelson, El Bakary, and Al

Batal (1993) show that 78% of the 60 Egyptian compliments they collected (interview

recall data) make use of three syntactic patterns, while only four syntactic patterns

account for 86% of the 835 Jordanian compliments collected by Migdadi's (2003)

(mainly ethnographic field notes data). The first pattern, "NP (INT) ADJ (INT)" (e.g.,

"You are very chic."; "Your cookies are very delicious."), similar to the widely used

American form "NP is/looks (int) ADJ," is the most frequent of all patterns, accounting

for 50% of the Egyptian data and 64% of the Jordanian data. Al Amro's (2013) 592

Najdi Saudi Arabic compliments exhibit similar patterns as those in Nelson et al.'s and

Migdadi's studies. Most of the 660 Turkish compliments collected by Ruhi and Doğan

(2001) fall into two linguistic strings: "NP+ADJ" and "NP+PRED." The syntactic

formulaicity is also confirmed for German (Golato, 2005) and Italian compliments

(Ravetto, 2012) in the tape-recorded naturally occurring conversations. The most

common syntactic structures appeared in the Italian data are "(INT)+ADJ+NP" (e.g., *che

bello questo telefonino!* "what a nice mobile phone!"; *bel vestito!* "nice dress!") or

"VERB+ADJ+NP" (e.g., *hai un bel paio di scarpe* "you have a nice pair of shoes").

Golato (2005) describes the observed syntactic structure of German compliments

in general linguistic terms. Golato also found little syntactic variation within compliment

turns. The two most striking syntactic characteristics are "verb-first constructions" and

"right dislocation." Within the corpus of 62 first compliment turns (of the 62 compliment

sequences), nearly half (27) have "verb-first constructions," i.e., no overt reference to the

assessable. These "verb-first constructions" consist of only an appreciatory sound (e.g., *mmmmhh*), an adjective (e.g., *schö:ön* "nice"), an appreciatory sound + adjective (e.g., *m::m lecker* "m::m tasty"), or a verb + adjective (e.g., *schmeckt gut*, *inge* "tastes good, inge") (Golato, 2005, p. 73). Compliments with "right-dislocated elements" have two referential expressions within the same turn. The speaker places a demonstrative pronoun at the beginning of the compliment turn and a full noun phrase beyond the sentence bracket/field (e.g., *die is hervorragend die melone* "this is excellent this melon").

Chinese compliments are no exception. Yuan's (2002) study on compliments in Kunming Chinese reports the same syntactic formulaicity. About 94% of both the DCT and the natural compliments (ethnographic field notes data) fall into one of four syntactic structures, and the similarities between the DCT and natural data are extremely striking. Table 2.2 compares the most common syntactic patterns of compliments from two different Chinese speech communities.

Table 2.2

Syntactic Patterns of Compliments in Chinese Speech Communities

	Yuan (2002) Kunming Mandarin (DCT) %	Yuan (2002) Kunming Mandarin (Natural) %	Wang & Tsai (2003) Taiwan Mandarin %
1. (NP) (INT) ADJ/VERB (OBJECT) e.g., "你那双拖鞋很漂亮耶。 Your slippers are very pretty."	61.45	64.06	78.41
2. (NP/PRON) V 得/*DE* (INT) ADV e.g., "你的字写得好漂亮啊！ *your characters are written so* *beautifully* Your handwriting is so beautiful!"	21.82	19.14	9.91

3. (NP/PRON) (INT) BE 个/*GE* ("a") NP e.g., "你真是个多面手。 *you really are one many-sided hand* You're really an all-round talent."	7.02	5.86	0.44
4. (NP) (INT) 有/*YOU* ("have") NP e.g., "你很有眼光。 You have very good taste."	3.65	4.69	5.73
Total	94.94	93.75	94.49

NOTE: Yuan: (DCT) N = 1,865, (Natural) N = 256; Wang & Tsai (audio-taped): N = 454

The four patterns in Table 2.2 are based on Yuan's coding (with minor adjustments).

Yuan's original pattern 2 is "(NP/PRON) V 得/*DE* (complement particle) Complement."

Wang and Tsai used "ADV" instead of "Complement." Since complement for this

syntactic pattern functions very much like an adverbial in English, it is changed to ADV

for ease of comparison. The most common syntactic pattern 1 in Kunming Mandarin is

similar to the most popular pattern "NP is/looks (int) ADJ" of American English, while

the syntactic pattern 3 in Kunming Mandarin resembles the pattern 3 "PRO is (really) (a)

ADJ NP" of American English. The high frequency of pattern 2 is the result of syntactic

differences in the Chinese language. Wang and Tsai (2003) coded their Taiwan Mandarin

compliments a little differently. However, the first three of the four most frequently

occurring patterns in their data ("NP (BE) (INT) ADJ," "(PRON/NP) LOOK ADJ," and

"(INT) ADJ") can actually be subsumed under Yuan's pattern 1. Their pattern 4 is the

same as Yuan's pattern 2. We can see Wang and Tsai's Taiwan Mandarin compliments

exhibit a great preference for (Yuan's) syntactic pattern 1 too, accounting for 78.41% of the

454 compliments. The frequency of occurrence of the patterns in Table 2.2 is almost

exactly the same as that of Yuan's data (except for pattern 3). The common "I (really)

like/love NP" in American English finds only one occurrence in Kunming Mandarin and

four occurrences (0.9 %) in Wang and Tsai's Taiwan Mandarin data. Ye (1995) shows similar results (see Ye's comment on this in the section on Focus). The same is confirmed for many other languages too (see examples in the next section).

Lexical Distribution

Formulaicity and predictability was also discovered in lexical distribution. Wolfson and Manes (1980) found that 80% of the compliments in their corpus were adjectival compliments, two-thirds of which depended on only five adjectives to carry the positive semantic load. Most of the non-adjectival compliments relied on five semantically positive verbs to express the positive affect, with "like" and "love" accounting for 86% of the data. This finding was confirmed by most of the compliment studies across different languages and speech communities (e.g., Al Amro, 2013; Golato, 2005; Herbert, 1991; Holmes, 1988; Johnson, 1992; Kryston-Morales, 1997; Lee, 1990; Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk, 1989; Migdadi, 2003; Mojica, 2002; Nelson et al., 1993; Ravetto, 2012; Wang & Tsai, 2003; Yanez, 1990; Ye, 1995; Zuo, 1988). Tables 2.3 and 2.4 (arranged by language chronologically) present data from some representative studies (see pp. 20–22).

As can be seen, the compliments in these speech communities are predominantly adjectival. Most of the adjectives lack specificity. Due to their "weak semantic load" (Manes & Wolfson, 1981), they are usable with almost any compliment subject. Both Herbert and Ye consider the relatively high frequency of adverbial compliments in Polish and Chinese and their great infrequency in English to be a result of syntactic differences between these languages. For example, verbs of sensory perception, such as "like" and "taste," "regularly take adverbial modifiers in Polish and adjectival ones in English" (Herbert, 1991, p. 388). However, the unique use of nouns in Chinese compliments

Table 2.3

Distribution of Positive Semantic Carriers

Author(s) Research Year	Language	Method	Corpus Size	Adj/Stative, Adjectival %	Adverb, Adverbial %	Verb %	Noun %
Manes & Wolfson (1981)	American English	Natural, note-taking	686	80.0	2.7	16.1	
Holmes (1988)	New Zealand English	Natural, note-taking	517	65.0		15.9	
Johnson (1992)	American English	Natural, written text	256	62.6	20.7	17.4	
Herbert (1991)	Polish	Natural, note-taking	400	56.0	27.0	0.3	
Nelson *et al.* (1993)	Egyptian Arabic	Interview (recall), question-naire	60	70.0			
Migdadi (2003)	Jordanian Arabic	Natural, note-taking, recording	835	77.0	0.4	9.0	13.0
Al Amro (2013)	Najdi Saudi Arabic	Natural, note-taking	592	65.0		10.4	19.2
Ye (1995)	Chinese	DCT	763	54.4	27.4	2.3	15.8
Wang & Tsai (2003)	Chinese	Natural, audio-taped	454	56.0			
Kryston-Morales (1997)	Puerto Rico Spanish	Elicited dialogue	280	55.7		6.1	
Golato (2005)	German	Natural, audio-video-taped	62	62			

Table 2.4

Most Commonly Used Positive Lexical Items in Respective Semantic Category

Author(s) Year Language	Corpus Size	Lexical Category	Most Commonly Used Positive Lexical Items	Percent
Wolfson & Manes (1980) Am. English	686	Adjective Verb	nice, good, beautiful, pretty, great like, love (enjoy, admire, be impressed by)	66.7 86.0
Holmes (1988) New Zealand English	517	Adjective Verb	nice, good, lovely, beautiful, great, neat like, love	66.7 90.0
Johnson (1992) Am. English	256	Adjective Verb Adverb	good, interesting, clear, organized, excellent, informative enjoy, like well, clearly	62.6 71.6 71.0
Herbert (1991) Polish	400	Adjective Adverb	*ladny* "nice, pretty," *fajny* "first-rate," *sliczny* "lovely," *piekny* "beautiful," *swietny* "great," *wspanialy* "wonderful" *ladnie* "nice(ly)," *slicznie* "lovely"	75.0 70.0
Nelson *et al.* (1993) Egyptian Arabic	60	Adjective	*Hilw* "pretty," *Kwayyis* "good," *shiiK* "chic," and *Tayyib* "kind"	66.0
Migdadi (2003) Jordanian Arabic	835	Adjective Noun Verb	*hilu* "pretty," *ahla* "prettier," *mumtaaz* "excellent," *kwayis* "good," *zaaki* "delicious," *mratab* "organized," *maliiti* "fine" *halaawah* "prettiness," *anaaqah* "neatness" *Taajib* "impress," *bijannin* "amazes (somebody)," *bahaniik* "congratulate you," *halyaanih* "(you) have become prettier"	65.0 39.0 55.0
Al Amro (2013) Najdi Saudi Arabic	592	Adjective Noun Verb intensifier	*helu* "pretty," *yehabel* "amazing," *zeen* "good," *qamar* "moon-like" *alhalawa* "prettiness," *rajel* "man" *aheb* "like," *tal'aa helwa* "have become pretty," *ahaneek* "congratulate" *marah* "very," *wallah* "by God"	76.3 38.0 41.5 81.9

Ye (1995) Chinese	763	Adjective/ Stative Verb Adverb Noun	漂亮 "pretty," 不错 "not bad, good" 好 "well," 不错 "quite well," "not bad, good" 两下子 "some know-how" 手 "-hand" as in 一把手/好手/一手 "good-hand"	
Wang & Tsai (2003) Chinese	454	Adjective/ Stative	好看 "good-looking," 不错 "not bad," 漂亮 "pretty," 好 "good," 厉害 "terrific"	56.0
Mojica (2002) Filipino	270	Adjective Adverb	*ganda* "pretty/nice," *galing/talino* "smart/brilliant," "cute," *guwapo* "handsome," *seksi* "sexy," *galing* and *husay* "good/well" *galing* and *husay* "good/well"	
Golato (2005) German	62	Adjective appreciatory sounds	*schön* "nice," *gut* "good" *mmmh* (with food evaluation), *ohh*, *aah* (with food & non-food evaluations)	43.0 No %
Ravetto (2012) Italian	307	Adjective intensifier para-verbal signals	*bello* "nice," *bravo* "good, clever," *buono* "tasty, good" *proprio* or *davvero* "really" *mmh*, *oh*	

reflects the social process of categorization, a speech behavior influenced by the

Confucian tradition: "名不正, 言不顺" "nothing is perfectly justifiable without being

placed into the right categories" (literal meaning: If the name is not correct, the speech

cannot be used appropriately).

> That is, to attack, accuse, or merely make a criticism of a person, first put him/her into a low, negative category. In the same manner, to praise or compliment somebody, first raise him/her up to the top categories. Consequently, the naming of the top categories becomes a compliment marker in the complimenting event implemented by the use of nouns. (Ye, 1995, p. 264)

However, semantically positive nouns are rare in Wang and Tsai's (2003) Chinese data,

and their range is enormous.

Verbs, which are commonly used in English compliments (e.g., Holmes, 1988;

Wolfson & Manes, 1980), turned out to be rarely found in compliments of many other

languages. For example, the verb "like" or "love" never appeared in Youngsook Jeon's (1996) Korean compliments (DCT data) or Migdadi's (2003) Jordanian Arabic compliments. They also occurred in very low percentage in Al Amro's (2013) Najdi Arabic compliments. The words *saranghada* "love" or *chota* "like" in Korean sound too strong to be used in compliments or even in other situations in everyday conversation, while *amoot* "love" in Najdi Arabic expresses deep feeling and emotion which might not be appropriate with all interlocutors (Al Amro, 2013; Lee, 1990). The Jordanian Arabic verb *uhib* which corresponds to English "like" or "love" is avoided due to its envying function. It indicates that the speaker wishes to have the object complimented. The same is found true for Najdi Arabic verbs *aheb* "like" and *amoot* "love." Similarly, "喜欢 [xǐhuān], like" in Chinese is avoided due to its possible misinterpretation as "I want your NP" (Yuan, 2002). The verbs found in Wang and Tsai's (2003) data were "适合 [shìhé], fit," "喜欢 [xǐhuān], like" and "羡慕 [xiànmù], admire"; only "羡慕 [xiànmù], admire" occurred four times in the data, the others, once. In Kryston-Morales's (1997) Spanish data, the expression "*Me gusta*," commonly translated as "I like" is used more for expressing preference in things such as food. The expression "*Me encanta*" which can be translated as "I adore, I'm enchanted by, or I love" was used even less. In Golato's (2005) German compliments, only one compliment uses a construction equivalent to "I love..." "I like...." Among all the compliments, 35% contain no verb. The most common verbs used are *sein* "to be" and *haben* "to have." The positive value of a compliment is usually not carried by the verb.

Focus

Herbert (1991) noticed a marked infrequency of first person focus in his Polish compliments in contrast to his American English data (1987). First person focus never showed up in the Japanese compliments either (Daikuhara, 1986). Ye (1995) and Yuan (2002) found a similar lack of speaker's perspective in their Chinese data. Table 2.5 presents a synthesis of Herbert's (1st, 2nd, and 3rd Person Focus), Ye's (Agent, Object/Action), and Yuan's (1st, 2nd, 3rd Person/Impersonal, Combination, and Dropped Focus) analysis systems.

Table 2.5

Distribution of Personal Focus

	Herbert (1987) American English %	Herbert (1991) Polish %	Ye (1995) Chinese %	Yuan (2002) Chinese (DCT) %	Yuan (2002) Chinese (Natural) %
Agent 1st Person (**I** like...)	32.8	5.75	0.7	2.09	2.34
Agent 2nd Person (**You** are...; **You** look...)	29.0	75.75	67.7	37.69	17.97
Object/Action (**Your hair** looks...)			31.6	37.69	64.45
Agent, 3rd (impersonal) (**That**'s a...)	38.0	18.50			
Combination				0.97	3.13
Dropped				21.55	12.11
Total	99.8	100.00	100.0	99.99	100.00

NOTE: Herbert (Polish): N = 400; Ye: N = 763; Yuan: (DCT) N = 1,865, (Natural) N =235

Herbert (1991) suggests that the lack of first person compliments in Polish is partly a function of the nature of the compliment being "an assertion of admiration for some possession, achievement, skill, etc., bearing directly on the addressee or on objects/persons closely related to the addressee" (p. 392), and partly a function of the then consumer-troubled society in force. It is not a coincidence that almost half of the

75.75% of second person structures focus directly on possession, which constitutes 49.25% of the compliment topics.

Ye (1995) relates the lack of speaker's perspective to the low frequency of the use of verbs such as "喜欢 [xǐhuān], like" in Chinese compliments. "喜欢 [xǐhuān]," being semantically stronger than "like" and implying the speaker's preference and willingness, is used for indirect requesting more often than complimenting (see Yuan's and Wang & Tsai's agreement on this in the section on Lexical Distribution). Furthermore, while in the Western tradition the use of "I" is thought to be less evaluative and imposing compared to the use of other perspectives, Chinese perceive the use of "我 [wǒ], I" when saying "我喜欢 [wǒ xǐhuān]..., I like..." as being much more subjective, evaluative than any other focus, for the speaker's perspective highlights his/her opinion. Ye's view is shared by Sifianou (2001). Sifianou found that Greek compliments are usually addressee-oriented. The frequent complimenting formula "I (really) love/like NP" in American English is almost absent from her Greek data due to its implication of "personal judgment." Instead, verbs like "have" which present the positive evaluation as inherent to the entity referred to and thus representing a more "general view," are used in many Greek compliments. Such preference could be seen as "removing the subjectivity and possible insincerity involved in complimenting utterances" (p. 413).

The lack of first person pronouns (i.e., *ich* "I" and *wir* "we") is also a striking feature in German compliment turns (Golato, 2005). Similar to Sifianou's Greek compliments, 45% of all compliments in Golato's data contain the semantically neutral verb *sein* "to be" and verb *haben* "to have." What's more, 35% contain no verb at all, and nearly half of the compliments have the topic (or subject) position empty. If a

pronoun is used at all, it is either a second or a third person pronoun. Golato concludes that "Germans do not seem to phrase compliments in terms of their own likes and dislikes." Compliments in German are "remarkably 'objective' or 'referential' in their design and not as 'personal'" (p. 82).

Comparing Ye's and Yuan's Chinese compliments in 2nd or 3rd person focus in Table 2.5, we see some differences. The participants in Ye's study use the second person Agent focus far more frequently than those in Yuan's study, while the third person Agent (impersonal) focus is not used at all in Ye's study. There is also a big increase of the third person/impersonal focus in Yuan's natural data over the DCT data. On closer examination, the differences can be attributed partly to the differences of the two coding systems and partly to the effect of topic differences in the two studies. Ye groups Object/Action focused compliments (**Your hair** looks...) under the second person focus, while Yuan groups them under the third person focus. If Ye's Object/Action focused compliments are grouped under the heading of third person focus, then the two groups in DCT data have about the same frequency (31.6% vs. 37.69%). In addition, Yuan's coding system codes deletion of subjects ("Dropped," 21.55%) which could be either in second or third person focus if not dropped. The high frequency of second person agent focus (**You** are...; **You** look..., 67.7%) in Ye's study is due to the topic constraint in the study. Only two topics are presented in the DCT questionnaire: (physical) appearance and performance (related to the agent's accomplishment), which regularly focus on agent. However, the big increase of the third person/impersonal focus in Yuan's natural data over the DCT data can be attributed to the fact that speakers of Kunming Chinese tend to emphasize the object of the compliment by placing it in the prominent subject position, especially when

the object of the compliment involves the complimentee's ability, possession, child, or clothing (e.g., "你这个裙子穿起来还蛮好看的。 *This dress* of yours looks good [on you]."). The high frequency (73%) of such topics in Yuan's natural data explains why 64.45% of the compliments are in the third/impersonal focus. Subject pronoun drop is common in Chinese, accounting for 2l.55% of Yuan's (2002) DCT compliments, and 18.94% of Wang and Tsai's (2003) audio-taped naturally occurring compliments. The same is found in Puerto Rico Spanish compliments (Kryston-Morales, 1997).

The formulaic nature of compliments is linked directly to the "social lubricants" function of compliments (Wolfson, 1983, p. 89). In a society in which strong relationships are scarce due to the mobility of its members, compliments function primarily to create or maintain social solidarity between people, especially between status equals (Manes & Wolfson, 1981; Wolfson, 1983, 1988). The syntactic and semantic regularity of compliments

> makes compliments identifiable no matter where in the discourse they occur or what precedes them. Even more important, it makes it possible for people of widely different backgrounds to minimize speech differences which might otherwise interfere with their attempt to create solidarity. (Manes & Wolfson, 1981, p. 131)

Manes and Wolfson's finding is widely supported by the compliment studies conducted in different speech communities, e.g., Cordella et al. (1995); Herbert (1986, 1990); Holmes (1986, 1988); Johnson (1992); Knapp et al. (1984); Ruhi and Doğan (2001), to name only a few.

Rhetorical Stylistic Pattern

However, not all compliments are formulaic. Based on 450 Greek compliments collected ethnographically, Sifianou (2001) discovers that "routine" (formulaic)

compliments between acquaintances (i.e., compliments resulting from social obligations to say something nice to an acquaintance or friend) are as common as non-routine creative compliments between close friends. In Greek, young, closely related people, in particular, seem to be very creative, poetic and playful with their use of compliments (p. 424). The following are two examples from Sifianou's data (with the author's original Greek orthography omitted):

> (1) A: My dear mother, I split up with Alexander.
>   B: So what? A doll like you will find a thousand like him and even better (ones). (p. 418)

> (2) A: Have I ever told you that you are the best (thing) that has ever happened in my life?
>   B: Only when you want to ask for a favor.
>   A: And the most witty?
>   B: Come on tell me more. I like it. (p. 422)

Non-routine (non-formulaic) compliments are observed in other languages too. For example, Nelson et al. (1993) find that a major difference between Egyptian and American compliments is that Egyptian compliments tend to be longer and contain more comparatives and metaphors (e.g., *shaklak 'arus innahardu* "You look like a bridegroom today"). The same is found in the difference between American and Syrian compliment/compliment response sequences (Nelson, Al-Batal, & Echols, 1996). The Arabic sequences are much longer than the English. They contain more words and are more likely to continue beyond the initial compliment and corresponding response. Migdadi's (2003) study of Jordanian compliments echoes the above finding. The Jordanian Arabic compliments are long and frequently strengthened by internal modifiers (intensifiers, e.g., *ktiir* "very," *wallah* "really") or external modifiers (e.g., repetition, explanation, comparison) (see next section on bound semantic formulas/external modifiers). Teasing is also a case in point (Sifianou, 2001).

Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk (1989, pp. 81–82) did not restrict her data to direct formulaic compliments only. Nor did she exclude borderline cases. She found in her Polish compliments that the actual semantic-syntactic patterns are not constrained with respect to the selection of the interactional mood or stylistic figures.

Interactional mood:

(1) *Doceniam autentycznosc i szczerosc Panskich wierszy.*   (indicative)
    I appreciate the authenticity and sincerity of your poems, Mr. X.
(2) *Wiesz, ze masz muzykalny glos?*   (interrogative)
    You know you have a good voice?
(3) *Zobaczcie ten film Wajdy koniecznie!*   (imperative)
    You must see this Wajda film!
(4) *Ale pieknosc!*   (exclamatory)
    What a beauty!
(5) *No, jesli taki aktor nie ma tu wstepu, to kto ma?*   (conditional)
    Well, if such an actor is not admitted here, who is?

Stylistic figures:

(1) *Ale ma glowke!*   (metonymy)
    He's got some brains, hasn't he?
(2) *Ta dziewczyna to aniol.*   (simile)
    That girl is an angel.
(3) *Ale z ciebie Gary Cooper.*   (metaphors)
    What a Gary Cooper you are.
(4) *Wszystkie Ewy sa piekne.*   (synecdoche)
    All Eves (women) are beautiful.
(5) *Czy nie jest fajna?*   (rhetorical question)
    Isn't she great?
(6) *Niczego sobie dziewczyna, calkiem niezla.*   (litotes)
    She's quite something, not bad.
(7) *Cudowna, niezwykla!*   (hyperbole)
    Wonderful, unusual!

Researchers attribute the use of non-routine compliments to the different functions compliments play in different speech communities. In some societies, compliments are used to follow social conventions of polite behavior. A compliment functioning as such "will not necessarily be a sincere one" (Cordella et al., 1995, p. 248). The insincere

compliment is used because it is expected in that circumstance. In such a case, the mere meaning of the words is almost irrelevant and the linguistic expressions are exploited to fulfill a social function (Malinowski, 1923/1975; Ruhi & Doğan, 2001). Formulaic compliments are usually saved for these cases in which one needs something handy to respond automatically to a situation (Sifianou, 2001). However, in a positive politeness orientated culture such as Greek, Turkish, Arabic, or Polish (Jaworski, 1995), compliments serve to actually praise the addressee side by side with establishing harmony with him/her (Migdadi, 2003). Compliments function as face-enhancing positive politeness devices offering concern, understanding and cooperation. People may attempt to avoid routine formulaic compliments with the purpose of adding color and fun to the relationship, to express genuine feelings, to show affect, or to avoid the risk of an FTA. These are non-routine ways of maintaining closeness and complicity between interlocutors, especially in close relationships (Sifianou, 2001).

Despite the differences in actual realization of compliments, the syntactic and semantic formulaicity of compliments is overwhelmingly recognized across different languages.

Semantic Functional Structure

Although a semantic/functional approach for analysis is employed by most of the compliment response studies, Yuan (1998, 2002) was one of the first few studies (e.g., Kryston-Morales's, 1997) that adopted both a syntactic and a semantic/functional approach to analyze the compliment event, and extended the study of a single speech act to "a speech act set" examined in the research of other speech acts such as apology and

request (Blum-Kulka, House, & Kasper, 1989; Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1984; Cohen & Olshtain, 1981). Administering Discourse Completion Tests (DCT) both orally and in writing, Yuan collected compliments that were longer and contained more tokens. She found that the majority of the compliments in her DCT data were explicit compliments (1,745, 58.58% of the total 2,979 compliment tokens; implicit compliments consisted of only 120 or 4.3%). Half of the 1745 explicit compliments (866, 49.63%) co-occurred with two or more other compliment utterances. The natural ethnographic field note data exhibited similar pattern. Yuan classified the compliment event in terms of the semantic formulas used, i.e., as utterances that "represent the means by which a particular speech act is accomplished in terms of the primary content of an utterance, such as a reason, an explanation, or an alternative" (Hartford & Bardovi-harlig, 1992, p. 34, as cited in Yuan, 2002, p. 192). She categorized the semantic formulas into two types: unbound semantic formulas and bound semantic formulas. Unbound semantic formulas refer to those utterances that can act independently as compliments, whereas bound semantic formulas refer to ones that cannot be considered as compliments by themselves, but must be attached to or co-occur with an unbound semantic formula to be interpreted as a compliment. For example, when someone says "Delicious cookies. How did you make these cookies?," the first part "Delicious cookies" is an unbound semantic formula because it can stand alone as a compliment. However, the second part "How did you make these cookies?" is a bound semantic formula, because by itself it is an information question and does not carry positive meaning. It has to co-occur with the unbound semantic formula "Delicious cookies" to be interpreted as a compliment. The bound semantic formulas were further classified into different types.

Although studies on compliments prior to Yuan (1998, 2002) had studied
"explicit compliments," "implicit compliments," and "understated compliments" (e.g.,
Kerbrat-Orecchioni, 1987; Wieland, 1995; Ye, 1995), or compound terms such as
"compliment with explanation" and "compliment of comparison" (Wieland, 1995),
"compliment plus a question" and "compliment plus a comment" and even "compliment
plus a compliment" (Kryston-Morales, 1997), Yuan was the first one to differentiate the
core of a compliment (something that makes an utterance a compliment) from other
supportive moves (such as a "comparison" or "explanation," the presence and absence of
which do not affect the compliment status of an utterance). It made the coding system
more comparable to those used in other speech acts such as requests which are often
coded as "head acts" and "adjuncts" (Blum-Kulka, 1989; Blum-Kulka et al., 1989; Blum-
Kulka & Olshtain, 1984) where the head act realizes the request but the adjunct is
external to the head act and unnecessary to the request though intensifying it. The
difference is that an adjunct in requests can become a head act (an indirect request) in the
absence of an explicit request, whereas a bound semantic formula in compliments cannot
be coded as an unbound semantic formula (or compliment) since "an utterance without
any explicit or inferable positive connotation can be ambiguous in meaning" (Yuan, 2002,
p. 217).

Yuan's analytic framework and coding system are replicated, without variation
(Pour & Zarei, 2017; Zhang, 2013) or with variations, in the studies of compliment
events in English by native Spanish speakers in Puerto Rico (Kryston-Morales, 1997), in
Jordanian Arabic (Migdadi, 2003), Mainland and Taiwan Chinese (Lin, Woodfield, &
Ren, 2012), Cameroon and Canadian French (Farenkia, 2012a), Canadian English L1 and

French L2 (Farenkia, 2012b), Filipino English (Zhang, 2013), Persian (Pour & Zarei, 2017), etc. Most of these studies elicited compliments from college (or secondary school) students using written DCTs as the method of data collection. Only Yuan (2002) and Migdadi (2003) went beyond the college campus and collected data in all different situations using a mixture of elicitation and natural observational field notes.

Unbound Semantic Formula / Head Act

The unbound semantic formulas or "head acts" are defined as utterances that can act independently as compliments (Yuan, 2002) or as "minimal units employed to express admiration" (Farenkia, 2012a, p. 1392). The unbound semantic formulas/head acts consist of explicit compliments and implicit compliments. Explicit compliments are those which overtly carry positive meanings realized with at least one positive semantic carrier (Ye, 1995), e.g., "delicious" in "Delicious cookies." Implicit compliments are those usually without a positive semantic carrier at the level of linguistic form (or compliments realized in the form of different speech acts), but the positive meaning can be inferred from what is said in a particular context (Herbert, 1997; Kerbrat-Orecchioni, 1998; Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk, 1989; Wieland, 1995; Ye, 1995; Yu, 2005). For example, when a speaker says after eating some delicious cookies, "Can I have the recipe?," the question is considered an implicit compliment in the context as it implies that the speaker likes the cookies since people only ask for the recipe if they think the cookies are good.

Table 2.6 displays the type and distribution of the main compliment strategies used in the compliment studies of Kunming Chinese, Jordanian Arabic, Filipino English, and Persian: the unbound semantic formulas, bound semantic formulas, "non-

compliments" (i.e., utterances that cannot be considered as compliments, "either bound

semantic formulas occurring by themselves or other replies that do not carry any positive

meanings" (Yuan, 2002, p. 193)) and "opt outs" (i.e., not paying compliments when the

situation calls for them). Table 2.6 also displays the type and distribution of the unbound

semantic formulas. (The data has been reorganized and summarized according to the

statistics given in the studies to the best of my understanding.)

Table 2.6

Type and Distribution of Compliment Strategies

Compliment Strategies	Yuan (2002) Kunming Chinese DCT		Yuan (2002) Kunming Chinese Natural		Migdadi, (2003) Jordanian Arabic Natural		Zhang (2013) Filipino English DCT		Pour & Zarei (2017) Persian DCT	
	Raw	%	Raw	%	Raw	%	Raw	%	Raw	%
Compliment										
Unbound SF	1865	62.6	256	65.6	832	62.3	257	68.0	673	42.1
Explicit	(1745	93.6)	(242	94.5)	(736	88.5)	(235	91.4)	(562	83.5)
Implicit	(120	6.4)	(14	5.5)	(96	11.5)	(22	8.6)	(111	16.5)
Bound SF	879	29.5	134	34.4	504	37.7	80	21.2	383	24.0
Non-Compliment	163	5.5	0	0	0	0	36	9.5	443	27.7
Opt Out	72	2.4	0	0	0	0	5	1.3	99	6.2
Total	2979	100.0	390	100.0	1336	100.0	378	100.0	1598	100.0

NOTES: SF = semantic formula. The numbers in the brackets present the distribution of the substrategies of the unbound semantic formulas.

Table 2.6 indicates that compliments in these different speech communities most

frequently take the form of an explicit statement either alone or in combination with a

bound semantic formula. The relatively high frequency of non-compliments in Pour and

Zarei's (2017) study may be due to the fact that the informants were not able to

distinguish expressions of thanks from expressions of compliments because borders

between the two expressions are blurred (e.g., *Merci dorostesh kardi!* "Thanks for fixing

it!"). The same is reported in Zhang's (2013) study.

Farenkia's two studies (2012a, 2012b) (DCT data) comparing Cameroon French and Canadian French compliments (by secondary school students), and comparing Canadian English L1 and Canadian French L2 compliments (by college students) find the same result. Table 2.7 below shows that the explicit/direct head acts are preferred across the groups, while implicit/indirect head acts only occurred five times in the Cameroon French group and once in the Canadian English L2 group. However, different from the other studies, the explicit/direct head acts in Farenkia's studies consist of not just single head acts, but also multiple head acts which are comprised of double, triple, even quadruple head acts.

Table 2.7

Type and Distribution of Head Acts

Head Acts Only	Cameroon French		Canadian French		Canadian French L2		Canadian English L1	
	Raw	%	Raw	%	Raw	%	Raw	%
Explicit/Direct Head Acts	57	91.94	52	100.00	75	100.00	114	99.13
Single Head Acts	17	29.82	**25**	**48.08**	24	32.00	38	33.33
Double Head Acts	**34**	**59.65**	19	36.54	**43**	**57.33**	**66**	**57.89**
Triple Head Acts	4	7.02	8	15.38	7	9.33	10	8.77
Quadruple Head Acts	2	3.51	0	0	1	1.33	0	0
Implicit/Indirect Head Acts	5	8.04	0	0	0	0	1	0.87
Total	62	100.00	52	100.00	75	100.00	115	100.00

As can be seen in Table 2.7, except for Canadian French participants who employ single head acts more frequently, all other groups show a high preference for double head acts (see the numbers in boldface). The following are some examples of multiple head acts in Farenkia's data (with the author's original French orthography omitted):

Double head acts:
(1) Nice car. I like that style. (Canadian English L1)
(2) Your presentation [was] super, excellent. I really found it interesting.
    (Cameroon French)

Triple head acts:
(3) Bravo, you played well. You were the best on the pitch. (Canadian French)
(4) I love your new house. It's very big. It's well decorated. (Canadian French L2)

Quadruple head acts:
(5) You played very well. You were the best player. Bravo! The match was excellent. (Cameroon French)
(6) You had a very good hockey game today. You worked hard and you skated fast. Great job! (Canadian French L2)

Farenkia found that the participants often repeat a head act such as in Example 2. The repetition or combination of compliments could be interpreted as a strategy to intensify the positive evaluation.

Lin, Woodfield, and Ren's (2012) study (DCT data) comparing the uses of compliment strategies by Mainland and Taiwan Chinese students show a much higher occurrences of implicit compliments. Although explicit compliments are the most favored strategy for both groups (81.1% and 72.9%), the implicit compliments consist of 18.0% of the 567 strategies for Mainland Chinese group and 26.1% of the 516 for Taiwan Chinese group. However, on closer examination, the difference is more of a coding difference. Lin et al.'s implicit compliment strategies include "admiration," "assumption," "contrast," "evaluation," "explanation," "joke," "request," and "want statement," which are considered as bound semantic formulas or external modifications in other studies (see analysis in the next section).

Bound Semantic Formula / External Modifications

Bound semantic formulas or external modifications cannot stand alone, but must be attached to or co-occur with an unbound semantic formula or a head act to be interpreted as a compliment. Six bound semantic formulas are identified in Yuan's (2002) data: "explanation," "information question," "future reference," "contrast," "advice" and

"request." An "explanation" provides a reason as to why the object of the compliment is thought to be good (e.g., "喔，漂亮了，一个家再反这份，再反这份配上那个蓝颜色的地毯太舒服了，一处也不想去了，一天就想在家首。Wow, [it's] beautiful. **A house with a, with a blue carpet like this [is] so comfortable. [You] don't want to go anywhere, but only want to stay home.**"). (Migdadi (2003) also includes illustrative remarks about the aspect praised in this category.) "Information question" is used to get information about the complimented object (e.g., "哎呀，这个地毯太好看了。你在哪点买的？ Gosh, this carpet is so pretty. **Where did you buy it?**"). A complimenter can use "future reference" to note that the complimentee will have a great future due to his/her good quality ("蛮能干了嘛！二天当个博士没得问题。 Quite capable [Particle]! **There shouldn't be any problem [for you] to get a Ph.D. in the future.**"). The semantic formula of "contrast" compares or contrasts the object or quality of the complimentee to that of another one ("你家这个太乖了嘛，哪个像我家的，深更半夜不睡觉，喊她做点事讨价还价的，点都不听话。 This child of yours is so good [Particle], **not at all like mine, who doesn't come home until midnight. When [I] ask her to do things, [she] bargains. [She's] not obedient at all.**"). "Advice" refers to the case where besides giving a compliment, the complimenter also gives advice or suggestion to the complimentee as to what to do or say ("你这个房子装修得好，钱花得值得！有了钱呢就是要享受。钱嘛是死的，你摆都起嘛还不是摆都，拿了就要花。 This house of yours is very well renovated. The money was well spent. **[One] should enjoy [life] when one has money. Money [Particle] is lifeless. [It] doesn't change if you just let it sit there [Particle]. [We] should spend [it] when we have [it]**"). With

"request" a complimenter expresses her hope to get something or to have the interlocutor do something on her behalf ("你的这件衣裳好瞧，借我穿两日嘛。 This dress of yours is good looking. **Lend it to me and let me wear it for a couple of days [Particle]**."). (The examples here are cited from Yuan, 2002.)

Yuan's coding system is replicated in studies of different languages. While the use of unbound semantic formulas/head acts shows a great similarity across studies of different languages, wide variations are found in the classification of bound semantic formulas/external modifications. Table 2.8 (on the next page) displays the type and distribution of the bound semantic formulas in the compliment studies of Kunming Chinese, Jordanian Arabic, Filipino English, and Persian.

Table 2.8 reveals that the most frequently used bound semantic formulas are "explanation," "information question," or "contrast" (see the numbers in boldface). However, cultural specific semantic formulas also appear, such as "repetition" (the compliment is repeated one or more times) and "invocation" by Jordanian Arabic speakers in Migdadi's (2003) data. He attributes the "repetition" to the Arabic discourse feature of verbosity (Nelson et al., 1993). "Invocations" such as "*m aafallah*" ("God's grace be upon [the aspect praised]"), or "*assalatu Tannabi*" ("Prayer be upon the prophet") serve to counteract the envy triggered by the compliment (e.g., "The grace of God be upon you. This jacket is really pretty. Where did you buy it?"). Migdadi's "compliment with FTA" refers to a compliment that is preceded or followed by an FTA such as "criticism," "request," or "advice" (e.g., "[These are] nice shirts, but aren't they almost old-fashioned?"). The compliment in such combinations serves to soften the threat of the adjacent FTA by attending to the hearer's need to be positively valued.

Table 2.8

Type and Distribution of Bound Semantic Formulas

Bound Semantic Formulas		Yuan (2002) Kunming Chinese DCT		Yuan (2002) Kunming Chinese Natural		Migdadi, (2003) Jordanian Arabic Natural		Zhang (2013) Filipino English DCT		Pour & Zarei (2017) Persian DCT	
		Raw	%	Raw	%	Raw	%	Raw	%	Raw	%
Explanation		**384**	**43.7**	**47**	**35.1**	**163**	**32.3**	**11**	**13.8**	**91**	**23.8**
Information Question		**184**	**20.9**	14	10.4	**67**	**13.3**	**38**	**47.5**	**148**	**38.6**
Future Reference		116	13.2	1	0.7	48	9.5	8	10.0	22	5.7
Contrast		106	12.1	**39**	**29.1**	31	6.2	2	2.5	22	5.7
Advice	FTA	61	6.9					10	12.5	57	14.9
Request		28	3.2			48	9.5	7	8.8	36	9.4
Criticism											
Repetition						**62**	**12.3**				
Invocation						**52**	**10.3**				
Conversation Opener				24	17.9						
Address Term				8	6.0						
Appreciation Token				1	0.7						
Small Talk + C						17	3.4				
Alerter + C						16	3.2				
Other								4	5.0	7	1.8
Total		879	100.0	134	100.0	504	100.0	80	100.0	383	100.0

NOTES: C = compliment. FTA = face-threatening act.

Farenkia's two studies (2012a, 2012b) report a wide variety of external modification devices. Ten different types were identified in the first study, and 18 in the second study. Table 2.9 illustrates the type and the distribution of the external modification devices for the four groups (for ease of comparison, I have subsumed "greeting," "self-introduction," "apology," and "exclamation" used in the second study under the category of pre-compliments. All the frequency data have also been converted to percentage data).

Table 2.9

Type and Distribution of the External Modifications

External Modifications	Cameroon French %	Canadian French %	Canadian French L2 %	Canadian English L1 %
Pre-compliments	**46.30**	**37.89**	**18.94**	5.25
Address form	**(19.14)**	**(10.53)**		
Greeting	**(16.67)**	(1.05)	**(12.63)**	0
Self-introduction	(2.47)	0	(4.21)	(1.75)
Apology	(6.17)	**(7.37)**	(2.10)	(1.75)
Exclamation	(1.85)	**(18.95)**	0	(1.75)
Question	3.70	4.21	**34.73**	**28.94**
Thanks	**24.69**	**30.53**	**17.89**	**22.80**
Wish	**11.73**	**10.53**	**12.63**	3.30
Comment	**6.79**	**6.31**	10.52	**27.19**
Advise	3.08	3.16	1.05	3.50
Offer			0	2.63
Sadness			0	1.75
Request	2.47	3.16	1.05	0.87
Suggestion			1.05	0.87
Joy	0.62	0	0	0.87
Promise	0.62	3.16	0	0.87
Surprise			0	0.87
Preference			1.05	0
Regret			1.05	0
Joking	0	1.05		
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

NOTES: Cameroon French N = 99, Canadian French N = 64, Canadian French L2 N = 75, Canadian English L1 N = 83. The numbers in the brackets present the distribution of the substrategies of the pre-compliments.

As can be seen in Table 2.9, the participants of all groups use many other speech acts to externally modify their compliments. Overall, the Cameroon French and Canadian French groups favor (in decreasing order of frequency) "pre-compliments," "thanks," "wishes," and "comments," while the Canadian French L2 and Canadian English L1 groups prefer "questions" and "thanks" (see the numbers in boldface). According to Farenkia, the wide variations of the strategy use in different language groups are

attributable to situational variables such as topic, social distance, age, gender, particularly the social functions these strategies play in different cultures. For example, "gratitude" expressions are most frequently used with compliments on food, "information questions" with compliments on possession. The striking differences in the use of "pre-compliments/alerters" among different language groups may indicate differences in the perception of compliments to strangers: as face-enhancing devices or face-saving devices (see analysis later).

Yuan's (2002) and Migdadi's (2003) natural observational data find some other bound semantic formulas which did not occur in the DCT data: "conversation opener," "address term," "appreciation token" (appeared only once), "small talk," and "alerter" (see Table 2.8). From the example given, Yuan's "conversation opener" includes greetings (e.g., "喔，你好。听说你回来了，还一直没见到你。年轻了，比以前还年轻。 **Hi, how are you! [I] heard you were back but didn't see you**. [You look] young, even younger than before."). Migdadi (2003) defines "small talk" as utterances preceding the compliments that are not related to the topics of the praise (e.g., "**Oh, brother, this is the problem of cars.** What is this handsomeness. You must be preparing for an important occasion."). "Alerter," originally used by Blum-Kulka et al. (1989) to refer to linguistic expressions (e.g., Sir, John, Mr. etc.) that alert the addressee to the upcoming request, is defined as an utterance which prepares the addressee for the upcoming compliment (e.g., "**Believe me I am being sincere**, this garment is very nice on you."). Most of these bound semantic formulas appear before an unbound semantic formula.

Although Yuan and Migdadi find some pre-compliments in their data, Farenkia discussed them in more detail. He defines pre-compliments as those supportive moves that essentially appear before the complimenting acts proper/head acts. They include "address forms," "interjections," "greetings," "self-introductions" and "apologies." These pre-compliments function either to intensify or soften or mitigate (as face-saving devices) the head acts. The "address forms" (e.g., terms of respect, kinship terms, and terms of friendship, affection, closeness) are employed to initiate contact with the complimentee prior to the complimenting act proper, and to intensify the compliments by displaying respect, conviviality, etc. "Interjections" (e.g., *Wow*, *Hum*, *Mhm*, *Ah*, *Hey*, *Ooohh*, *Oh my god*, *Shit*, *Ummm*, *Oh* and *Oh la la*) are employed to catch the attention of the complimentee and to express positive emotions concerning the compliment topic (e.g. surprise, pleasure, etc.). "Greetings" and "self-introductions" are used to initiate contact and soften an upcoming compliment (e.g., "Hi, I would like to tell you that you did a great job." "Good morning, buddy, I would really like to know you and use the opportunity to tell you that you were amazing." "Hi, my name's Malaica and I really enjoyed your presentation."), while the "apologies" mainly serve as face-saving devices prior to compliments to strangers. The most frequently used forms to express apology are *Excuse-moi* "Excuse me" and *S'il te plait* "Please" (e.g., "Excuse me, I want to tell you that your presentation was excellent. I loved it."). (The author's original French orthography in these examples is omitted.) The use of "pre-compliments/alerters" showed some striking differences among different language groups. Cameroon French and Canadian French L2 participants displayed a strong preference for greetings and self-introductions, whereas Canadian French informants favor apologies and address forms.

Canadian English L1 informants did not use many pre-compliments, but preferred the external modifier "comment" (see Table 2.9). Farenkia concludes that the result may indicate differences in the perception of compliments to strangers. By employing so many pre-compliments of greetings, address forms, and apologies to open their compliments, Cameroonian and Canadian French participants seemed to regard compliments to strangers as face-threatening acts that needed to be mitigated.

The results from the studies adopting the semantic/functional analytic approach indicate that the speech act of complimenting is not as simple as a single utterance formula. Yuan (2002) observes that the use of semantic formulas such as "conversation openers" of greetings indicates that compliments are "part and parcel of real life conversations and therefore do not always occur by themselves" (p. 202). Farenkia (2012a) also comments that the abundant use of external modifications shows that the participants considered complimenting as a complex activity that comprises other speech acts. It is also a reflection of a complex politeness system at work.

However, there are some problems concerning the data, strategy categorization, and interpretation. When comparing the strategies used in different studies, there seems to be disparity in categorization among different studies. Some strategies with the same name may differ in semantic content and function. They are thus not really comparable. For example, in Yuan's (2002) and Migdadi's (2003) categories, the "explanation" strategy gives a reason or supporting illustrative remarks about the aspect praised and functions to intensify the compliment force (e.g., "Oh father, how beautiful this blouse is! **Because it is the color of your eyes**") (Migdadi, 2003). Farenkia's (2012a) "comment" however, not only adds information concerning the addressee or complimented object, it

can also add information about the speaker (e.g., "Congratulations, **I watched your game**, you have a great talent"; "You were very good this morning. **I wanted to let you know that**"). In some cases, the "comment" prepares the addressee for the forthcoming compliment (e.g., "**I listened to you in class today**, you did a good job"). Farenkia explains that in using this strategy, the speaker addresses the communication needs of the recipient. The strategy can be used to strengthen or soften the illocutionary force of the compliment depending on the situation.

In general, Yuan's bound semantic formulas function primarily as compliment strategies, strengthening the positive illocutionary force of the main compliment, while a considerable amount of Farenkia's and Migdadi's external modifications function as politeness strategies minimizing the potential face threat of an upcoming compliment. For example, "**Believe me I am being sincere**, this garment is very nice on you" (Migdadi, 2003); "**Good morning, buddy. I am sorry for bothering you**, but I would like to tell you that you were perfect during your presentation and I intend to join your group the next time we have another presentation." (Farenkia, 2012a). Furthermore, some bound semantic formulas in Migdadi's categories (e.g., "compliment with FTA") can function as a FTA itself that is being mitigated by the main compliment strategy (e.g., "[These are] nice shirts, **but aren't they almost old-fashioned?**").

The major limitation lies in the type of data employed in the studies: mostly DCT and ethnographic field notes. According to Beebe and Cummings (1996), DCTs have their advantages, among many, to create an initial classification of semantic formulas and strategies that will occur in natural speech, to study the stereotypical, perceived requirements for a socially appropriate response, to gain insight into social and

psychological factors that are likely to affect speech and performance, and to ascertain the canonical shape of speech acts in the minds of the speakers (p. 80). However, DCTs do not accurately reflect natural speech

> with respect to: (1) Actual wording used in real interaction; (2) The range of formulas and strategies used; (3) The length of response or the number of turns it takes to fulfill the function; (4) The depth of emotion that in turn qualitatively affects the tone, content, and form of linguistic performance; (5) The number of repetitions and elaborations that occur; and (6) The actual rate of occurrence of speech act. (p. 80)

A DCT questionnaire, be it written or orally administered, does not capture the interactional facets of a speech event. It cannot elicit multiple-turn, elaborated negotiations seen in everyday conversation. The ethnographic notebook method suffers from the same problem due to limitations in human memory. In discussing the weaknesses of field note data, Beebe (1994, p. 15) points out that "[i]f the utterance is long or there is an extended, negotiated sequence, the researcher cannot accurately remember what exact words were said in which order and how many turns there were...." Yuan's (2001) field work experience confirms Beebe's observation: some supportive moves such as elaboration and explanations failed to be recorded in field notes through the loss of turns. Consequently, combinations of the unbound and bound semantic formulas occur in one turn at one stretch, and such combinations rarely exceed three semantic formulas (Yuan, 2002). In addition, the illocutionary compliment force of the bound semantic formula is inferred from the unbound compliment. Due to the noninteractive nature, there is no coparticipant to validate if the bound semantic formula is indeed performing the act of complimenting. We cannot be certain, for example, if the "question strategy" following the compliment is intensifying the compliment force or asking a real information question, or if the speaker is actually giving advice when using

an "advice" strategy, or the "request (strategy)" is the speaker's true intention behind the compliment. The inference is largely drawn by the analyst, not the participants.

Discourse Structure

Discourse Form

Until recently, the study of complimenting behavior has been limited to analysis at utterance level. Pomerantz's (1978) conversational analysis of compliment responses extends the unit of analysis from a single part to an adjacency pair—a basic turn constructional unit for producing organized conversation (Schegloff & Sacks, 1973), "a basic building block of a sequence" (Wong & Waring, 2010, p. 57). The compliment, being the first pair part (FPP) of the adjacency pair, establishes a "next turn position" which is expected to be filled by an appropriate second pair part (SPP), the compliment response. Compliment and compliment response as a sequence is subject to "pair part" constraints: the second-speaker of an adjacency pair is expected to fit the utterance to the FPP (Sacks, Schegloff, & Jefferson, 1974). Although many compliment studies subsequent to Pomerantz's (1978) study have scrutinized compliment-response adjacency pairs, very few of them went beyond the single pair sequence.

The study of compliment exchanges conducted by Miles (1994) went beyond simple adjacency pairs. The 308 compliment exchanges recorded in her Santa Cruz data fall into three major categories (pp. 98–99):

(1) simple compliment/response (37.99%): an unelaborated adjacency pair in which the compliment and response illustrate a single type within their respective categories, e.g.,

A: Jake, you sang so well tonight!
B: You really think so?

(2) combination compliment and/or response (23.38%): a two-turn exchange in which either the compliment or the response or both include examples from more than one category, e.g.,

A: I like the hair. [appearance]
B: Thank you. [acceptance]
    I didn't think I would, [comment history], but I like it, too. [agreement]

(3) multiple-turn compliment/response (38.64%): an expanded exchange involving more than a two-turn interaction and typically including more than a single compliment and/or compliment response type. e.g.,

A: I wish I had long legs like yours. [appearance]
B: Your legs are nice. [return compliment]
A: No, they aren't. [disagreement]
    I could never wear pants like those (indicating B's) [return compliment]
B: Oh, brother! [self-praise avoidance]

It is clear that the majority of exchanges recorded consist of more than simple adjacency pairs (Combination plus Multiple Turn, 62.02%). It would be interesting to see the patterns of these multiple turns. However, Miles did not do any further analysis at the discourse level. The combination and multiple-turn exchanges were broken down into their component parts for other analysis.

Discourse Context

Sims' (1989) study is among the few which investigate the type of talk that precedes the compliment and/or is most directly related to the compliment topic (compliment elicitation). In the 150 compliment sequences that were tape-recorded in a quasi-natural setting (74 unacquainted strangers were paired and asked to try to establish

friendly rapport with each other by talking 15 minutes), two compliment elicitation types

were identified:

(1) Compliment setups: resulting from the compliment-giver asking a question

and rendering a compliment on the basis of the response to the question, e.g.,

> Judy: Do you have a good grade point average?
> Tony: Pretty good_____. Well.
> Judy: Over three point seven?
> Tony: Not over three point one_____no, three point five
> Judy: (C) Tha... That's really good.
> Tony: (CR) Oh yeah. (p. 181)

or resulting from the compliment-receiver-to-be "setting the stage," doing or saying

something which calls for a compliment to be issued, e.g.,

> Greg: Well, you wanna see a picture of my new boy?
> Vern: Sure.
> Greg: What the heck.
> Vern: You're a proud papa ugh?
> Greg: Oh, sure (of course).
> Vern: (C) Oh, he's very cute.
> Greg: (CR) They all look the same. (p. 182)

(2) Spontaneous compliment offer: resulting from the compliment-giver noticing

something in the disclosure of the compliment-receiver-to-be in the process of sharing

information, and positively evaluating it, e.g.,

> Gale: Is Tari your real name?
> Tari: Yes.
> Gale: It is? On your birth certificate and everything?
> Tari: [nods yes]
> Gale: (C) Oh, that's neat.
> Tari: (CR) I don't know where my mother came up with it but that's what she
>   came up with. (p. 181)

The results show that compliment givers used the elicitation strategy 53% of the

time. Probing questions were frequently used as a prelude to extending compliments.

Compliment only format (with no pre- or post-contextual information attached) was

employed 65% more often.

    Similar analysis was done by Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk (1989) in her Polish and

British data. Example of Compliment Setups by compliment-giver (Lewandowska-

Tomaszczyk's Question as Pre-compliments):

    S1: Tell me, where did you buy that dress?
    S2: At Barnes'. Why, do you like it?
    S1: Oh yes, it looks real nice. (p. 98, British data)

Examples of Compliment Setups by compliment-receiver:

    S1: Niebrzydkie buty, co?
       Those shoes aren't bad, are they?
    S2: Swietne!
       Great!

    S1: Dobry byem?
       Was I good?
    S2: Bezbledny!
       Stunning! (p. 86, Polish data)

Discourse Function

    Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk (1989) examined the discourse function (speaker's

intention/goal) of the compliment by looking at the sequences following the positive

assessment acts. Both her Polish and British data find compliments which are recognized

by the addressee not as sincerely performed acts of positive evaluation but as the

sequences functioning first of all as pre-acts to acts proper, most frequently requests and

questions (pre-requests, pre-questions). In such a case the addressee most often uses

"path facilitation," which is expressed as "discourse shortcuts," i.e., the addressee

responds not to propositional content of the utterance but to the illocutionary force, the

implicitly conveyed message concerning the goal of the speaker. Compliments function

then as act proper "substitutes." The following are some examples:

Compliment as a pre-question:

S1: Bardzo ladne buty.
  Very nice shoes.
S2: Od Kowalskiego.
  From Kowalski's. (p. 94, Polish data)

S1: Oh, that outfit is really great!
S2: (joking) I hired it from Moss Bros. (p. 97, British data)

Compliment as pre-request:

S1: Ale fajny wisior!
  I like this pendant.
S2: Jak chcesz to sobie wez.
  You can have it if you want it.
S1: Strasznie ci dziekuje. Bedzie mi pasowal do tej czarnej sukienki.
  Thank you very much! It will match this black dress of mine. (p. 95, Polish data)

S1: You look great in it!
S2: Oh, thank you!
S1: Eh, by the way could you lend me a fiver? I'm completely broke.
S2: Well here's a quid – but I'm not so well off myself. (p. 97, British data)

The following pre-act compliment patterns occur in Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk's data

(1989, p. 95):

(1) complete pattern (4 moves)
    (a) 4 turns, 4 moves
        S1: compliment – S2: response – S1: request – S2: response
        S1: compliment – S2: response – S1: question – S2: response
    (b) 2 turns, 4 moves (move order with both speakers – optional)
        S1: (compliment, request) – S2: (response to compliment, response to request)

(2) reduced pattern (3 moves)
    (a) 2 turns, 3 moves (move order with S1 – optional)
        S1: (compliment, request) – S2: response to request or (infrequent) response
            to compliment
    (b) S1: (compliment, question) – S2: response to question or (infrequent)
            response to compliment

(3) short-cut pattern
    (a) S1: compliment – S2: response to (implicit) request
    (b) S1: compliment – S2: response to (implicit) question

Discourse Distribution

Wolfson and Manes (1980) note that compliments may occur in almost any setting—at a dinner party, on a shopping trip, in an office—and at almost any point in the conversation. The compliment may be related to the subject of the conversation or completely independent of the utterances that immediately precede it, and it may substitute for or be a part of greetings or thanks (Ruhi & Doğan, 2001; Wolfson, 1983). Knapp et al. (1984) agree with this finding although they found that the beginning (46%) and middle (41%) of conversations seemed to be much more likely to engender compliments than the final part of the encounter. Cordella et al.'s (1995) study shows a clear tendency towards the use of compliments at the beginning of the conversation; their usage in middle position was determined by the complimenter's and the complimentee's age. Johnson (1992) reports that review writers in her study exhibited a remarkable regularity in opening and closing their letters with compliments. This finding is consistent with the observations that compliments tend to occur at the openings of speech events (Holmes, 1986; Holmes & Brown, 1987; Wolfson, 1989b). In her data Holmes (1988) also found some evidence to suggest that compliments occur most often around transition points in a speech situation such as at greetings and farewells. When compliments occur in the middle of the conversation, the discourse may be marked by a phrase which justifies the apparent shift in topic, such as, "By the way..." or "I just realized...." Cordella et al. (1995) observe that some compliments used in mid-

conversation appeared to be uttered "purely to maintain the flow of conversation, thus avoiding long pauses, for instance praising food at a dinner table" (pp. 247–248).   Ruhi and Doğan (2001) also find some compliments occurred during lapses in conversation and as pre- or post-sequences to criticism. Although she did not present data to support her view, Holmes says that the distribution of compliments in discourse is possibly related to the topic of the compliment. Compliments on appearance often occur within greetings (or after the greetings, see Ruhi & Doğan, 2001); compliments on food often occur during or at the end of a meal. This relationship was actually studied by Knapp et al. who also found that appearance compliments were most likely to occur at the beginning, but performance compliments were equally likely to occur at either the beginning or the middle of the conversation, which Ruhi and Doğan found as well. Until recently, descriptions of when compliments are expected, appropriate, and taboo have been largely anecdotal and impressionistic.

As can be seen, the early discourse studies of complimenting are a step forward from the other two approaches by examining sequences involving two parties. The determination of the speaker intention or the function of an utterance is not entirely the analyst's call, but may be confirmed by the compliment response. However, due to choice of data collection methods (e.g., role plays, participant observation, elicitation tests, interviews, introspection, even written sources), the data may not reflect actual language use, and the sequences are short. As a result, there isn't enough context in the sequence to resolve the possible ambiguity. For example, Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk (1989, p. 97) codes the compliment in the following adjacency pair as a pre-question:

S1: **Oh, that outfit is really great!**
S2: (joking) I hired it from Moss Bros.

It is coded this way because the respondent didn't give a relevant compliment response but took the "discourse shortcut" and attended to Speaker 1's implied information-seeking intent. However, without more context, Speaker 2's reply could also be heard as a "deflect" strategy of "comment history" (Herbert, 1986) commonly used as a compliment response strategy. Longer sequences with more turns, more displayed "confirmations" from the coparticipants, such as the third turn and the fourth turn in Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk's other examples, would help resolve the ambiguity.

Social Interaction

Sequential Organization

Similar to Pomerantz's (1978) work on compliment responses in American English, Golato (2005) adopts a sequential account of complimenting behavior. However, while Pomerantz focuses only on compliment responses, Golato is the first one who studies the entire complimenting sequence—complimenting and compliment response turns together within the larger interactional context. Using conversation analysis (CA) as the methodological framework, Golato analyzes complimenting utterances as actions that are positioned and realized within specific sequential contexts (Schegloff, 1988, 1995). The primary units of analysis are sequences defined as "courses of actions implemented through talk" (Schegloff, 1995, p. 3), and turns within such sequences, as ". . . no empirically occurring utterance ever occurs outside, or external to, some specific sequence" (Heritage & Atkinson, 1984, p. 6). Different from ethnographic speech act research, context here is neither interaction-external social structure (e.g., social, demographic and situational variables) as an independent entity which influences

participants, nor is it internal in participants' subjective perceptions (e.g., actors'

subjective estimations of context variables). Rather, context is interaction-internal

(Kasper, 2006, p. 306), locally managed and co-produced in situ by the participants in the

interaction (Schegloff, 1992). In other words, context is "the sequential structure in

which a particular action is located, in particular the turns immediately preceding and

following an action" (Kasper, 2006, p. 306). This view of context rests on the idea that

turns-of-talk that are positioned next to each other have "some organization" between

them (Sacks 1987 [1973], p. 54, as cited in Golato, 2005, p. 3). Any turn-of-talk

produced by a speaker is a display of how he/she understood the action(s) in the prior

speaker's turn, while the prior speaker uses subsequent talk by the coparticipant to

determine how his or her talk was understood and to ratify or repair that understanding

accordingly (Schegloff, 1984). Thus, each turn at talk is shaped by the prior turn, and at

the same time shapes the subsequent turn. In other words, the action an utterance

performs or the illocutionary meaning of an utterance (e.g., complimenting) is not

determined by the speaker *a priori* or by the shape of the utterance (e.g., the semantic

structure) itself; "the illocutionary meaning is assigned to it through the response"

(Kasper, 2006, p. 296), through the coparticipants' acknowledging it (as displayed

through their actions) as the action it performs. The action is defined reflexively and

negotiated and accomplished jointly by all the participants in the interaction (hence

"social interaction"). This does not mean interaction-external context is excluded.

Whether the social, demographic and situational variables have an effect on the

participants' action cannot be a simple correlation, but must be demonstrated through

participants' displayed actions how they accomplish context in the interaction (Schegloff, 1991, as cited in Kasper, 2006).

Based on 36 hours of naturally occurring video-taped discourse and audio-taped telephone conversations between family and friends, Golato (2005) analyzes how the social action of complimenting is realized in natural settings, demonstrating the interconnectedness of (a) the linguistic form the utterance takes, (b) the sequential context in which it is placed, and (c) the action it is performing. She focuses on "those elements of the interaction upon which the participants in the interaction place relevance (as displayed through their actions), rather than what an analyst might deem a relevant category" (p. 3). Golato challenges Manes and Wolfson's claim of close connection between the compliment formula and the function of social solidarity. Although the formulaic character is also found in compliment turns in German compliments (see section on Linguistic Form), Golato argues that it is not the formulaic nature of compliments that makes a compliment unambiguously identifiable as a compliment or that provides the social solidarity building function of compliments. It is the placement of a potential compliment turn within the larger interactional sequence that determines its function as a compliment and social solidarity building function (p. 86). For example, the following turn has the semantic and syntactic characteristics of a typical compliment:

> (1) [Quartet Material, 4/12/94]
>   Marg: =that was gr(h)(h)eat= (Golato, 2005, p. 88)

This utterance looks just like a typical compliment in American English: NP/PRO is/looks (int) (ADJ). It begins with a pronoun, followed by a verb "to be," and ends with the most common assessment form, an adjective ("great"). However, Golato comments that when taken out of context, this turn by its design could be a compliment or any general

assessment. Provided with contextual information such as who, to whom, occasion, setting... (which the field workers in ethnographic data collection would note), one should be able to decide if this utterance is a compliment or not. In this case, the statement is uttered in the context of four people (Marge, Cheryl, Bob, and Mike), all professional or amateur musicians, who are playing music together. As one of the participants, Marge, makes this statement to another participant, Mike (she is looking at Mike), about his playing the violin, one may conclude that this utterance is indeed performing the action of complimenting, not of general assessment. However, putting this turn in the sequential context (a multi-party conversation, in which an utterance has an impact on all the participants), one will reach a different conclusion.

```
        (2) [Quartet Material, 4/12/94]
        1  Mike: okay, (0.6) (hit it)
        2        ((music 10.0[))]-----------
                                 [
        3  Bob:  [(That's the place),
               -------------]
        4                      ]
        5  Bob:  (Mike)/(now),] thats beautiful sound
        6  Bob:  but, (·) try not to retard.=
        7  Marg: =he didn't.
        8        (0.2)
        9  Bob:  °he didn't?°=
   => 10 Marg:  =that was gr(h)(h)eat=
        11 Bob:  =oh I'm sorry
        12       (0.5)
        13 Marg: .hhh hh[hh you're like a condu(h)ctor who
                        [
        14 Bob:         [I (should)/(should'n)/(should've)
        15 Marg: =[ h(h)as somth(h)in'=in his mind. Heh heh
              [
        16 Bob:  =[( )got it in my head. okay,
        17 Bob:  [sorry
              [
        18 Sher: [heh [heh huh
              [
        19 Marg: [huh huh
        20 Sher: [huh
              [
   => 21 Marg: [huh huh huh .hhh that [was great=
                                      [
        22 Bob:                       [(okay)=( )=
        23 Sher: =Doncha love it when- (0.5) when they
```

```
24 Sher: have to say it just because they think
25 Sher: [they have to say it eh heh hah=
           [
26 Marg: [°oh god° the- that was the one thing
26 Marg: about orchestra playing] that I just
                                 ]
28 Sher: = huh huh             ]
29 Marg: = couldn't sta:nd,= <because you know
30       that they've been ((sniff)) thinking
31       about it?, for like (·) two weeks going
32       .hhh ((sniff)) you know the English horn
33       is gonna be too *loud there* hhh huh
34       er huh s(h)ome[thing [an then they say it
                       [      [
35 Bob:                [(  ) [
                             [
36 Sher:                     [but that's thuh
37       thing that started to drive me crazy
38       about ((last name). becuz:: (0.5)
```

(Marge and Sheryl continue to complain about the prototypical conductor. The remaining turns are omitted.)

(Golato, 2005, pp. 89–90)

In the sequential context, there is no doubt that Marge's turn (line 10) just examined in isolation is a compliment to Mike on his play. However, it is also (and primarily) a criticism of Bob. Golato emphasizes that this is not just analyst's interpretation but the participants' as well. The "evidence" comes from (1) prior utterances: since Bob had been criticizing Mike (line 6, "but, (·) try not to retard.="), Marge's compliment contradicts Bob's statement; (2) post response: Bob's immediate reaction—apologizing while gazing at Marge, an indication that he has realized that he has been wrong (line 11), and his repeated attempts to apologize later in the sequence (lines 14 and 16); (3) Marge's gesture: pointing her bow accusingly at Bob; and (4) Marge's comparing Bob to a complaining conductor (lines 13 and 15), and ensuing story-telling from Marge and Sheryl describing a prototypical conductor who always has something to complain about. Furthermore, there is no response to Marge's compliment from Mike, an indication that Mike may perceive it as a criticism to Bob.

In the sequence, there is another compliment given by Bob to Mike in line 5 ("that's beautiful sound"). It also has the semantic and syntactic characteristics of a typical compliment. However, from the sequential context—the word "but" right after the compliment signaling that the talk to follow will be in contradiction to the compliment; Bob's criticism of Mike placed right after "but" ("but, (·) try not to retard.=") (line 6) proves it is indeed a contradiction to the compliment—one can see that Bob's compliment is not used primarily as a compliment to Mike, but functions primarily to soften and mitigate his face-threatening act of criticizing. Golato points out that Bob's compliment to Mike is placed in a disaffiliatory environment (an environment in which a dispreferred action is being performed): criticizing Mike's performance. Compliments used in such situations delay the dispreferred actions and thus have social solidarity building functions (p. 105).

Golato concludes that it is not the formulaic nature, the syntactic and semantic formula of compliments alone, that gives compliments their function, but rather their placement within a sequence. And "a compliment does not categorically have a function tied to establishing or maintaining social solidarity" (p. 93). They can serve as face-threatening acts. It is the placement of a positive statement in an otherwise potentially disaffiliatory (or affiliatory) environment that gives compliments the face-saving or social solidarity building function. Only by analyzing the details of the sequential environment of a turn, can we determine whether or not something built semantically and syntactically like a typical compliment "is a compliment, is primarily a compliment, is a positive politeness compliment, or a compliment that has a disaffiliatory function" (p.

94). (See Golato, 2005, for a detailed analysis of the "preference organization" of compliments.)

Second Compliment

An important part of Golato's (2005) study is the analysis of the compliments given in multi-party interactions. Golato describes in detail the design and placement of the "second compliments," i.e., compliments given by a third party other than the original compliment giver or recipient. A total of 17 second compliments are observed in the 62 compliment sequences. Golato found that these second compliments seem to be "minimal," usually consisting of only one short turn. They generally take the form of agreements, realized with three types of agreement tokens: (1) an appreciatory sound, specifically, a gustatory *mmmh*; (2) confirmation markers (e.g., *ja* "yes," *mm hm* "uhum," or a head-nod); (3) a response pursuit marker *ne?* "right?" Only in two instances, is the second compliment more than a minimal agreement token; they contain a second assessment in the form of an adjective. Golato found that the sequential environment in which these second assessments were placed is different from others. In both instances, some form of elicitation was involved, such as a self-deprecation which elicited a compliment and its subsequent agreement from a third party (p. 205).

Sequentially, the second compliment in Golato's data always occurs after the first compliment but before the complimentee's response to it, which is made possible by its minimal form: it can be uttered quickly and does not steal the turn. Golato points out:

> the minimal nature of these agreeing turns renders them as non-intrusive; that is, they do not indicate a shift from listenership (or in this instance, "bystandership") to speakership of a longer turn in progress. Instead, these turns simply express an alignment and affiliation with the compliment speaker. (p. 205)

(Cf. the support strategies given by the third parties in my data in the later chapters.)

It is interesting to note that the second compliments in Golato's study always occurred in preferred environments. The compliments that the second party agrees with mostly performed the action of thanking or of noticing [something credit-worthy]. They never occurred in the environments in which the compliment was part of a dispreferred action (e.g., a request, a rejection, a criticism). This shows that participants are keenly aware of the functions compliments are performing in the interaction.

However, not all first compliments given in preferred environments in multi-party talk are followed by a second compliment. Analysis shows that when a second compliment is "missing," it is usually not relevantly "missing." The "missing" could be attributed to the participation framework: the third party either did not have access to the assessable (e.g., not in the kitchen where the delicious food is being cooked, or the beautiful roses are not in sight), or the third party was also a recipient of the compliment rather than its giver. When second compliments were markedly "missing," participants were shown to orient to this (e.g., pressing a response).

Golato is the first one to study compliments in multi-party interactions. Her insightful and convincing analyses contribute significantly to our understanding of how people compliment and respond to compliments in actual speech, not intuition. The simple "formulaic" nature of compliments is not at all simple as the literature prevalently depicts.

Summary

In this chapter, I have reviewed four major analytic approaches adopted in the empirical studies of complimenting, focusing on how each approach accounts for the structure and function of the compliment acts: *linguistic form*, *semantic/functional structure*, *discourse structure*, and *social interaction*.

The *linguistic form* analytic approach bases its analysis on the single utterance level—the "core" compliments. It defines the compliment acts by their linguistic structure, mainly syntactic and lexical forms. Different demographic, social, cultural and situational context variables are examined to account for the variations of form and function of the compliments. The *semantic/functional* analytic approach extends the unit of analysis from one speech act to "a speech act set" by a single speaker. It characterizes compliments as semantic formulas or pragmatic strategies used, which are classified as unbound semantic formulas or head acts (the "core" compliments), and optional bound semantic formulas or external modifications (the "supportive moves"). The unbound semantic formulas/head acts can stand alone as compliments, while bound semantic formulas/external modifications cannot, but must be attached to or co-occur with an unbound semantic formula/a head act to be interpreted as a compliment strategy. This analytic approach takes on the politeness perspective. The abundant pre-compliments and other external modifications used serve various politeness or relational functions such as intensifying or mitigating the illocutionary force of the unbound semantic formulas/head acts. The early studies adopting *discourse* analytic approach extends the unit of analysis to adjacency pairs or short sequences involving two parties. Researchers examine the pre-acts that lead to the compliment (compliment elicitation), analyzing the

post-acts to account for the speakers' illocutionary intent, and the distribution of compliments in the larger discourse context. A large number of studies investigating the compliments and compliment responses have emerged. However, the majority of the studies end up examining the two acts separately. Very few describe the interaction between the compliments and compliment responses. The *social interaction* or *discursive* analytic approach studies the interaction between the compliments and compliment responses. It accounts for the complimenting action by placing it in the larger sequential context. The illocutionary compliment force is reflexively confirmed by the coparticipants; the compliment actions are negotiated and co-constructed by all the participants in the interaction.

The review of the compliment studies reveals that context is crucial to account for what action an utterance performs, to determine the illocutionary force of a speech act. Interaction-external context such as demographic, social, cultural and situational variables, have been widely examined. However, interaction-internal sequential context, which is crucial for the interpretation and construction of a speech action, has not received equal attention in the compliment research. The reason for lack of attention partly lies in the nature of the data required for this analysis—only audio- or video-recorded naturally occurring conversation data can provide adequate context. However, the overwhelming majority of the compliment studies to date still use data collected by elicitation methods such as DCT questionnaires, structured interviews, role plays, and ethnographic field notes to study actual language use. As discussed in the Introduction and this chapter, these data collection methods target either metapragmatic knowledge, or contain inaccurate data due to limitations in human memory. They cannot elicit multiple

turn interactions seen in everyday conversation. They restrict the type of utterance that

can be recorded to the short, the simple, the unambiguous, and the memorable. As a

result, there isn't enough interaction-internal context to determine if an explicit

compliment utterance performs the function of a compliment, to account for an implicit

compliment, or to resolve ambiguity of meaning a bound semantic formula or a short

sequence presents. Analysis is still predominantly focused on single compliment or

single response utterances.

Research Question

The present study describes the realization of Chinese complimenting behavior by

native speakers in China. It studies actual language use, the spontaneous, naturally

occurring conversations audio-taped in natural settings. The general focus of the study is

on how compliment acts are co-constructed by multiple speakers in the discourse context.

It answers the following question:

> What is the pragmatic-discursive structure of Chinese compliments in naturally
>
> occurring conversation?

In Chapter III, I will specify the methodology and specific procedures used to collect and

analyze the data for this study.

Chapter III

METHOD

This chapter presents the method used to collect and analyze the data for the present study. The study is an empirical study of speech behavior of Chinese complimenting. Different from the majority of the compliment studies, the present study describes actual language use—what people actually say, rather than intuition or metapragmatic knowledge (as observed in questionnaires or structured interviews), or "reduced" language use (as observed in the field notes). It thus bases its analysis on a large quantity of naturally occurring conversations audio-recorded in natural settings. It takes a data-driven approach to analysis; that is, the compliment acts are not coded with categories which are established *a priori*. Rather, the categories "emerge" from the data. They are observations of what the speakers do. Different from most compliment studies, the present study goes beyond the single utterance analytic approach by examining the structure of complimenting in conversation sequences over multiple turns involving two or more parties. In discussing the dilemma facing the researcher analyzing speech acts over multiple turns by using traditional pragmatic analytic approach, Beebe (email, 2009, Sept. 24) points out that "...the difficulty here is that [traditional] pragmatics is not set up to analyze a whole connected text or to talk about sequencing." To resolve this dilemma, the present study adopts a combination of the pragmatic speech act analytic approach and the discursive pragmatic analytic approach (which applies Conversation Analysis methodology to speech act research) (Kasper, 2006) to account for the compliment action.

The study is pragmatic in that it describes the linguistic form of an utterance and the function it performs (illocutionary force) in context. It is discursive in that the function (illocutionary force) of an utterance is not based on inferences about the speaker's intention, or defined by the linguistic form alone or by a simple correlation with the sequence-external context. The action an utterance performs is realized in the sequential context, by its position in relation to other utterances in the discourse/sequence, that is, how the coparticipants orient to/interpret the action as the action it performs, and negotiate and co-construct the compliment acts. Although the present study focuses mainly on compliments due to its limitations in scope, and it thus cannot be a full description of interaction, the compliment responses are not abandoned. On the contrary, observation of interaction among participants is essential in accounting for whether a particular utterance (or a particular strategy) is performing the compliment action, and how compliments are constructed in the multi-party interaction.

In this chapter, I first provide background information about the research site, the language to be investigated, and the participants. I will then present the data collection procedures. After that, I will describe the specific data analysis procedures. A discussion of the limitations of the study will follow. And I conclude with an overview of the analysis chapters to come.

Research Site

The present study was conducted primarily in the city of Shanghai in Mainland China. Around 85% of the data were collected in Shanghai. The remaining 15% were collected while taking exchange tours in the big northern cities of Beijing and Tianjin, the

central and southwestern cities of Xian and Chengdu, and the smaller southern and eastern cities of Guilin and Suzhou. Shanghai was chosen as the primary research site for three reasons. First, to carry out intensive study of naturally occurring speech behavior, it is necessary that the researcher be the insider of the speech community in order to "observe personally and intimately" (Fei, 1939/1946, p. 7). Second, being a native of Shanghai speaking the native dialect enables me to fully utilize my personal networks to secure the best possible cooperation from the participants without arousing "suspicion" and without spending time on preliminary "warming-up" work. Third, Shanghai being the representative of the cities in China undergoing rapid "globalization" both domestically and internationally makes its study more meaningful. The result of the study will not only inform the pragmatic and sociolinguistic research about the speech behavior in a rapidly changing speech community in modern day China, but also help migrants of all kinds, domestic and foreign, understand the rules of language use in their process of assimilation into Shanghai and similar cities in China.

Demographic Background

Shanghai is China's biggest metropolitan city located on the central eastern coast of Mainland China at the mouth of the Yangtze River. Due to its favorable port location and as one of the cities opened to foreign trade by the 1842 Treaty of Nanking, Shanghai grew from a small fishing and textiles town to a center of commerce between East and West in the 19th century, and a multinational hub of finance and business by the 1930s. After the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, Shanghai became an industrial center and has remained the largest contributor of Gross Domestic Product, industrial output, export and government revenue. The economic reform started in 1991

brought intense infrastructure and capital development and reclaimed Shanghai's leading role in finance, business, and trade. With a highly educated and modernized workforce, Shanghai has recorded a double-digit growth almost every year since 1992.[1] By the end of 2010 (the year the Sixth National Population Census was conducted), foreign investment totaled 153 billion US dollars (589.43 billion in 2015), and employment by non-public-owned and overseas-funded enterprises grew to 77.16% (81.34% in 2011) of the total work force. Today, Shanghai is not only a major destination for corporate headquarters, but also a cosmopolitan center of culture. Shanghai was the host of the World Exposition 2010, the first time ever for a developing country. About 250 nations and international organizations and 73 million visitors from home and abroad participated. This grand international event for economic, scientific, technological and cultural exchange no doubt attracted further international attention to Shanghai, making this global metropolis even more global.

The 1990 census put the population of Shanghai Municipality at 13.34 million. Shanghai's economic progress continues to draw a constant inflow of people from other parts of China. By the end of 2010, the city's long-term residents had reached 23.02 million; among them 8.97 million were long-term migrants from other provinces. In addition, there were a total of 65,100 long-term migrants from Hong Kong, Macao, and Taiwan in Shanghai for business and job opportunities. And the city's foreign residents reached 162,480 according to the 2010 census. These figures did not account for those who were living in or visiting Shanghai for shorter terms and 8.5 million foreign tourists

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[1] Statistics cited in this section have been retrieved from the official website for the Shanghai Municipal People's Government, http://www.shanghai.gov.cn/shanghai/node27118/index.html, Shanghai Statistical Yearbook 2011 http://www.stats-sh.gov.cn/tjnj/zgsh/nj2011.html

passing through Shanghai Customs in 2010. The massive migration of population into Shanghai has exerted a significant impact on Shanghai's language change.

Language Background

The vernacular language in Shanghai is Shanghainese (上海话 or 沪语 [ɦùɲý]), a sub-branch of Wu Dialect spoken in the city of Shanghai and the surrounding regions. Wu is part of the Sino-Tibetan family of languages (Thurgood & LaPolla, 2003). According to Yuan's (1960/1983) classification, Wu is one of the seven major subgroups of the Chinese language.[2] There are at least 77 million speakers of Wu. The traditional prestige (sub-) dialect of Wu is the Suzhou dialect. Since the 1850s, owing to the growth of Shanghai's economy and population boom due to massive migration caused by the war (the Taiping Rebellion at the end of the Qing dynasty), Shanghainese became one of the fastest-developing dialects of Wu, quickly replacing Suzhou dialect as the de facto prestige dialect of the region. With over 14 million speakers today, Shanghainese once served as the regional lingua franca of the entire Yangtze River Delta region.

After the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, the government introduced Standard Mandarin as the national language of all China. Shanghainese, like most other dialects, was gradually replaced by Mandarin in public media and schools. Public organizations were also required to use Mandarin. Since China's economic reforms, Shanghai has become home to a great number of non-Shanghainese-speaking migrants from all over the country. Learning Shanghainese however is no longer necessary for migrants due to the national prominence of Standard Mandarin, and due to

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[2] There have been different ways to classify the Chinese language. Yuan, Jiahua (1960/1983) in his standard handbook *Hanyu fangyan gaiyao* [An outline of Chinese dialects] classifies the numerous Chinese dialects into seven groups: Mandarin, Wu, Xiang, Gan, Kejia or Hakka, Yue and Min. This classification has been adopted by many scholars in their Chinese dialectological research.

the fact that those educated after the 1950s are generally fluent in Mandarin as a result of

Mandarin promotion. Mandarin has been used more and more as a lingua franca between

local Shanghainese speakers and migrants of different dialect backgrounds. In addition,

Shanghai's new status as a cosmopolitan global city further consolidated the status of

Mandarin as the standard language in which to conduct business and services (Zhu, 2005,

October 24).

By the standard of mutual intelligibility,[3] spoken Wu is a separate language from

Mandarin. However, like most other branches of Chinese, Wu descends from Middle

Chinese (中古汉语). Although Wu represents the earliest split from the rest of these

branches and thus keeps many ancient characteristics, it was influenced by northern

Chinese (Mandarin) throughout its development, owing to its geographical closeness to

North China and also to the high rate of education in this region. As a result, there is a

great but not complete degree of mutual intelligibility between written Wu and Mandarin

within the People's Republic of China as both are written in the current Vernacular

Chinese, which uses Simplified Chinese characters as well as grammar and vocabulary

centered on Standard Mandarin with some allowances for regional variation.

Shanghainese, being one of the representative dialects of Northern Wu, contains

vocabulary and expressions from the entire Northern Wu area. Although Shanghainese is

different from Mandarin in pronunciation (e.g., Shanghainese still has voiced initials

[consonants] while Mandarin does not; Shanghainese has only a two-way phonemic tone

contrast—falling vs rising, while Mandarin is a contour tonal language with four tones...),

its syntactic and lexical structures are similar to Mandarin (e.g., both use SVO word order

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[3]See the Index of Mutual Intelligibility between Wu and other Chinese Languages, *Glossika's index of mutual intelligibility*. Retrieved from http://www.glossika.com/en/dict/research/mutint/wu.php.

and both use vocabulary centered on Standard Mandarin). Modern Shanghainese has been significantly influenced by modern Mandarin. This makes the Shanghainese spoken by young people in the city different (sometimes significantly) from that spoken by the older population. It also makes inserting Mandarin into Shanghainese sentences during everyday conversation a common phenomenon.

In sum, the influx of a migrant non-Shanghainese-speaking population and the strong Mandarin promotion measures as well as Shanghai's increasing global status have eclipsed the status of Shanghainese and greatly influenced its development. Consequently, three types of spoken language co-exist in Shanghai: the local dialect Shanghainese, the official Standard Mandarin, and a dialect of Mandarin or dialect "infected/tinted" Mandarin (i.e., Mandarin spoken with different dialect "accents"— phonological, syntactic, and lexical influences).

Participants

Unlike most compliment studies which use university students either as the target population or as data collectors within the student community, the present study targets a broad population outside the university campus. The participant selection adopted an approach called "network" or "snowball" sampling (Wiersma & Jurs, 2009, p. 345), a variation of purposeful sampling. Purposeful sampling is a non-probability sampling procedure, that is, participants are not randomly selected but are selected to "meet the purpose of the research" (Wiersma & Jurs, 2009, p. 342). It is commonly used in qualitative research (e.g., ethnographic research) which involves "intense descriptions of the phenomenon under investigation" (Polkinghorne, 1991, p. 11). It is also used when

logistically, "a researcher simply does not have access to an entire group," for example, it would be impossible to select a random sample from all people in Shanghai. Although this study did not set out to systematically correlate characteristics of speech behavior with social characteristics of the speakers, every effort was made to select a sample of speakers with diverse backgrounds and various characteristics. Specifically, network or snowball sampling is a process by which individuals initially selected suggest the names of others who might be appropriate for the sample. The rationale for using this data collection approach for the present study rests in the understanding that Chinese society is essentially a relation-based society (Liang 1963). The fluid person-centered social networks rather than fixed social institutions define the structure of social relations (Fei, 1947; Yan, 1996) (see Introduction for discussion on this topic). In spite of criticisms and arguments against its negative connotations, the social practice of "networking," deeply ingrained in the Chinese cultural essence of mutual dependence, persists in every realm of life and proves to be a practical and often efficient way to reach people and perform tasks.

As the first step, I contacted the "nucleus" of my network—nine close friends (three of them working in the fields of TESOL, Linguistics and Education), informing them of my research project, consulting their network strategies, and enlisting their help to collect data and recruit participants. Then through phone calls, visits, dinner parties, and reunions I reached out to all the people in my network—friends, high school and college classmates, "farm-time comrades,"[4] former colleagues, family members, relatives,

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[4] During China's Cultural Revolution from 1966-76, students were sent to the factories and farms to receive so-called "re-education" from the working class in the society. The special bonds established through difficult and tumultuous years lasted a lifetime for many. The researcher and the three data collectors worked together on the same farm for about five years. Today we still remain loyal close friends.

and acquaintances..., soliciting their support and participation. Subsequently, I reached out to their networks and even their networks' networks. I made friends with people and obtained their consent to participate.

Background of Data Collectors

In order to overcome the bias of a single female researcher and to permit the collection of a large corpus of data from a more comprehensive array of contexts, three friends working in different fields were contacted to help collect data. In selecting these three data collectors, special consideration was given to the representation of gender (male and female), occupation (business, education, government), social status (position, level of education), region (Southern and Northern), and vernacular dialect/language speaking (Shanghainese, Mandarin). Two other friends (one Mandarin speaker from the Northern part of China) working in administration and service had considerable difficulty operating audio-recording and as a result collected a large quantity of observational notebook data which, regrettably, fall out of the data scope for this study. All these data collectors provided valuable insights about the new social, cultural, economic changes and their influence on language use in present day China. Table 3.1 summarizes the background information for the three data collectors.[5] (See Table 3.1 on the next page.)

Background of Participants

A total of over 300 speakers were audio-recorded, 200 of them are included in the present study. The 200 speakers were selected by the method of judgment sampling, a

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[5] To protect participants' anonymity, pseudonyms (names or surnames) or participant roles in interaction are used throughout the study. Using surname alone to address a person is not the Chinese practice. However, it is so used in this study to relieve the burden of creating names for 200 participants. Other details (e.g., company names) that could identify participants have also been changed or omitted.

Table 3.1 Background of Data Collectors

Name	Gender	Age	Position	Resident City	Dialect/Language Speaking
Collector 1	F	42	Auditor, District Bureau of Taxation	Shanghai	Shanghainese, Mandarin
Collector 2	M	48	General Manager, Medical Equipment Company	Shanghai	Shanghainese, Mandarin
Collector 3	M	47	Assistant Dean, Educational Administration Traditional Chinese Medical College	Tianjin	Tianjin dialect, Mandarin

common nonprobability method. In using judgment sampling, "the researcher identifies

in advance the *types* [emphasis in original] of speakers to be studied and then seeks out a

quota of speakers who fit the specified categories" (Milroy, 1987, p. 26). In selecting the

200 speakers, speaker characteristics such as dialect/language, region, gender, age,

occupation, status and power have been represented as much as possible.

Among the 200 participants, 80% were residents of Shanghai while 20% reside in

the major cities of Beijing, Tianjin, Xian, Chengdu, Guilin and Suzhou. Over 70% of the

participants speak Shanghainese as their vernacular dialect/language (nearly all of them

can also speak Mandarin), 30% speak either Standard Mandarin or a dialect of Mandarin

as their vernacular language. Although the majority of the participants are Shanghainese

speakers, Mandarin-only speakers are not excluded from the present study. This mixed

language/dialect composition of participants is an ever-more-common representation of

the demography in Chinese cities, especially since the economic reforms which ignited

the massive population mobility. In other words, a city in which local dialects and

Standard Mandarin as an official language co-exist and code switch has become the norm

rather than the exception. Although the difference between Shanghainese and Mandarin

is foreseeable, no attempt will be made to compare the speech behavior between these two groups, for the majority of China's dialects share one standard written language which serves as a unifying force conjoining much of the speech behavior. Furthermore, the major focus of the present study is to examine the macro pragmatic and discursive structure of Chinese complimenting behavior rather than micro comparison of linguistic features used by different groups of speakers. To this end, the diversity of participants is desirable rather than problematic.

The participants for the present study came from all walks of life. They were/are working for government agencies, business corporations, financial institutions, educational institutions, health facilities, service business, tour agencies, community centers, neighborhood factories, and so on. Some are farmers working the land. Male participants and female participants each make up 50% of the total. Participants' age ranges from 20 to 78, with 65.5% in the mid-range between 40–59. It has to be pointed out, however, that the equal proportion of male and female participants selected does not mean gender variables are equally represented in the data corpus. In fact, female participants were recorded more frequently and in longer stretches of time than male participants. The actual high proportion of female representation (in terms of recording frequency and time) and high proportion of participants in the 40–49 age range (42.5%) in this data pool may reflect a bias resulting from the researcher and three other data collectors' own personal profiles and social circles. Table 3.2 summarizes the background information of the 200 participants.

Table 3.2 Background of Participants

Age	N	%	Gender	N	%	Resident City	N	%	Vernacular Lang./Dialect	N	%
20-39	40	20.0	Female	100	50.0	Shanghai	159	79.5	Shanghainese	141	70.5
40-49	85	42.5	Male	100	50.0	Other Cities	41	20.5	Mandarin	59	29.5
50-59	46	23.0									
60-78	29	14.5									

Occupation, Job Position	N	%
Government official (district, municipal, provincial)	7	3.5
Educational administrator (dean, associate dean, office director, program director, department chairperson, party secretary...)	12	6.0
Teaching professional (college professor, k-12 teacher)	20	10.0
Medical professional (doctor) (patient[a], patient's family member[a])	7 16	3.5 8.0
Other professional (musician, composer, TV cameraman, painter, playwright, editor...)	11	5.5
Corporate administrator (board chairman, company chairman and vice chairman, business manager, assistant manager, director, assistant director, union leader...)	33	16.5
Financial, business professional (banker, engineer, computer technician, electrician, auditor, accountant, insurance agent, contractor, real estate agent...)	35	17.5
Travel business agent (travel agent, tour guide, tour bus driver)	17	8.5
Service worker (store owner, salesperson, hair-dresser, waitress, cook, taxi-driver, telephone operator, domestic worker...)	18	9.0
Office, factory, farm worker (office assistant, secretary, factory worker, farmer)	19	9.5
Retired worker, house wife	5	2.5
Total	200	100

NOTE: [a]Participants' profession or job positions are unknown. They are identified by their role in the setting.

Data Collection Procedures

The data collection involved the following procedures: hands-on training of data collectors, audio-recording the data, and taking field notes of contextual information.

Hands-on Training of Data Collectors

Recognizing that the data collectors have no background linguistics and little exposure to research outside of China, an informal training session was run by the researcher at my Shanghai home prior to the field work. The training included: (1) introduction of the purpose of the study, (2) discussion of the skills and procedures involved in collecting naturally occurring speech data using audio-recording and field notes, (3) clarification of the participant consent form and background information sheet, and (4) hands-on practice of audio-recording and field note writing. The collector's "sensitivity" and the data's "authenticity" were emphasized throughout the training. For easy reference, written directions for data collection were also prepared and distributed (see Appendix A for Directions for Data Collection in English and its Chinese translation). Since this was also a reunion for a group of very close friends after long absence from each other, compliments were exchanged naturally. This added authenticity and substance to the hands-on experience, giving the participants a better idea of what to collect and how to collect. A follow-up session was held two weeks later after the data collectors tried some audio-recording. Field experiences were exchanged, problems discussed, techniques refined, and collectors' confidence was built.

Audio-recording the Data

The data collectors contacted the participants to set up visiting time. The participants also contacted the data collectors when there were special events and activities. At the participants' invitations, I not only visited people and participated in the events and activities in my familiar network, but also visited workplaces, attended business socialization dinners, and participated in various other private and public events and functions that I ordinarily would have had no access to. Carrying a recorder, I also audio-recorded conversations anonymously (Labov, 1966, 1984) in public places such as stores, markets, tea-houses/cafes, hairdressers', tour buses, hotel lobbies, hospital waiting areas, neighborhood recreation centers, etc. The three other data collectors collected data primarily within their work circles. Collector 1 had access to companies, institutions and government agencies of various types due to the nature of her job. Collector 2 collected data mainly in business circles, while Collector 3 found his data in educational institutions and the affiliated hospitals.

The data were audio-recorded entirely in natural settings with ordinarily scheduled activities without any intervention by the data collectors. These settings included visits to families and friends, class reunions, family dinners, social gatherings, business meetings, daily working premises, hospital visits, service encounters, daily life encounters, as well as encounters throughout the two trips to six cities. Data were also audio-recorded while exchanging gifts, taking group photos, viewing artwork, trying on clothing, singing Karaoke, making a toast, calling a friend, etc. Since food plays an important part in Chinese culture, and much of the celebration, socialization, relationship work, negotiation, and business are conducted at the dinner table—where food is not an

end but a means for personal bonding and business transactions, fulfilling expressive as well as instrumental functions[6] (e.g., Li, 2006; Yang, 1994; Zhang, 2006)—a large portion of the data corpus consist of conversations at dinner parties.

The event was audio-recorded in its entirety in situations that involved more than a brief encounter. On the occasion of a big reunion, two or more recorders were used to catch more conversations. The audio-tape was indexed after each recording, noting down the year, date (sometimes also time), tape number and side, index number marking the beginning and the ending of the recording session (e.g., 99 Aug. 8, Tape 8B, index 210-630). If the recording session took up the whole tape, no index number was necessary.

In criticisms of recordings of naturally occurring speech data, the observer's paradox (Labov, 1972, 1984) is often cited: the participants may be influenced by the presence of the researcher and the recording equipment and thus producing speech that is not representative of their typical, normal speech. However, researchers (e.g. Duranti, 1997) who have extended experience with audio- or video-recordings show that the presence of the researcher and the recording equipment become less obtrusive over time. This usually requires "prolonged engagement in the field" (Kasper, 2000, p. 320). My own experience (see Excerpt 1.1 in Introduction) and five years' audio-recording experiences in the field support Kasper's observation. Self-consciousness in speech was observed at the beginning of the recording session, especially for first-time participants. Conscious increment of focal acts in an eagerness to cooperate was also observed (the "Hawthorne effect"—"performance increments prompted by mere inclusion in an

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[6] There is a large body of literature on the topic, see for example, Li (2006), 中国式饭局：吃饭事小出局事大 *Zhongguo shi fanju: Chifan shi xiao chuju shi da* [Chinese-style banquet: To eat is of little importance, to show up is of great importance]; Yang (1994), *Gifts, favors, and banquets: The art of social relationships in China*; Zhang (2006), 中国式饭局 *Zhongguo shi fanju* [Chinese-style banquet].

experiment" (Tuckman, 1978, p. 103)), the participants did get used to the recording as time went on. In fact, in most circumstances, participants were so involved in their conversations and activities that they barely paid attention to the recording. This was evidenced in one recording event, in which four friends were trying on a skirt. About twenty minutes into the recording, they were teasing and joking about each other's waistline and size of the belly and "prosperous" stomach (e.g., "侬哪能介发福啦只肚皮啊现在！ how come you've gotten so 'prosperous' [a euphemism for 'fat,' used jokingly], that stomach of yours!"), showing no sign of awareness that the recorder was on until one participant noted the recorder again. Such examples are prevalent in the data corpus.

Nevertheless, the following measures were taken to maximize the spontaneity of interaction and minimize the possible intrusion of the recorder and the researcher: (1) The smaller size micro cassette recorder was used, and was placed in inconspicuous places during recording, e.g., on the bookshelf, in the purse, or under the cover of a handkerchief. (2) When introducing the research focus to the participants, the focal acts were made inconspicuous to avoid any conscious under- or over-producing of the desired speech behavior. Instead of singling out compliment and compliment response as the focal acts, they were "buried" in a list of other acts such as greeting, introduction, congratulation, encouragement, gratitude, approval, etc. (3) Under all possible circumstances, the data collector assumed the role as an "active participant" (Wolcott, 1988, p. 194) rather than an observer. In fact, in almost all recording situations, the data collector was an "in-network" member having a real life role in the interaction—a true friend, an old classmate, a "farm comrade," a colleague, a boss, a cousin, a neighbor, a fellow passenger, a friend's friend, etc. The "in-network" status and authentic

relationship enabled the data collector to act and to be treated as a true participant, an integral part of the "scene," thus dissipating any possible unnaturalness caused by the research agenda.

Furthermore, consent was sought from the participants for long-term recording. Consent forms were distributed and signed by the participants individually before they were recorded the first time. Participants were told that no announcement of recording would be made at the beginning of each session to avoid interruption of the normal activity. They were also informed that (1) the focus of the study was on language use, not the content of their discussion, and no sensitive or private information would be disclosed without permission; (2) names of individuals and organizations would remain anonymous; (3) participants were free to withdraw consent and to discontinue participation at any point in the study; (4) participants could request a copy of the research report when it was finished. (See Appendix C for the consent form in English and its Chinese translation.)

Contextual Data

Along with audio-recording the actual speech data, the data collectors also took notes of the relevant background and contextual information to inform the analysis. The data collectors wrote down (1) the setting: time and place of the event, situation details, formality of the situation; (2) the participant's demographic profile: name, age, gender, vernacular language and/or dialect, city of residence; (3) the participant's social status: level of education, occupation, job position, income[7] (eliminated later, see footnote); (4)

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[7] The category of income was eliminated later because at the time the data was collected, the enterprise ownership structure was in transformation. There were not yet significant income differentiations between people. Therefore, education, occupation and job position were better indicators of social status.

the participant's role in the conversation and the relationship and social distance between the interlocutors; and (5) any other related situational, social and cultural information. To facilitate the field notes taking, a Background Information Sheet was prepared (see Appendix B for details). The Background Information Sheet along with the Directions for Data Collection (see Hands-on Training section) were first written in English and then translated into equivalent Chinese. The background and contextual information was written down right after the audio-recording session or at the end of the day. In cases of anonymous recording in public places, approximate information about the speakers was noted based on the researcher's observation and cultural insights.

The field work was carried out during a five-year period. A total of 89 hours 25 minutes of naturally occurring conversations were audio-recorded. The bulk of the data corpus (68 hours 25 minutes, 76.5%) was audio-recorded by the researcher during five summers in Shanghai and two school exchange trips (one student group and one teacher group) to the cities of Beijing, Xian, Chengdu, Guilin, Shanghai and Suzhou. The rest of the data corpus (21 hours, 23.5%) was audio-recorded by the other three data collectors in the cities of Shanghai and Tianjin. The 23.5% was smaller than planned but was maximally represented in the final sample corpus.

Data Analysis Procedures

The data analysis involved several procedures: transcription, translation, coding, final reduction of the data corpus, the outside review of the data transcripts and data coding, and definitions of key analytic terms.

Transcription

The transcription was done entirely by the researcher. Ochs (1979) points out that the process of transcription is "a selective process reflecting theoretical goals and definitions" (p. 44). To me, it is also a process of discovery. In identifying the boundaries of the compliment-response sequence in the flow of naturally occurring conversations, the existing definitions and popular conceptions of compliments and compliment responses as single utterances, as syntactic and lexical formulae... were challenged again and again. The selective process forced me to view complimenting speech behavior beyond the explicit, the direct, and the simple adjacency pairs.

The 89 hours 25 minutes of naturally occurring conversation data were first listened to session by session repeatedly identifying compliment acts. I found that most compliment acts are not single acts or single adjacency pairs; they often appear as "clusters" (sequences) stretching many turns, just like the examples in Chapter I. Some utterances in the "cluster" have positive semantic carriers and can be easily identified as compliments; many not, but still seem to carry compliment force. I reviewed the definitions of *adjacency pair* and *sequence* in the literature: An *adjacency pair* is "a sequence of two turns produced by different speakers and ordered as first pair-part (FPP) and second pair-part (SPP), where a particular type of FPP requires a particular type of SPP" (Wong & Waring, 2010, p. 57). An adjacency pair is a basic turn constructional unit for producing organized conversation (Schegloff & Sacks, 1973), "a basic building block of a sequence" (Wong & Waring, 2010, p. 57).   A *sequence* is a course of action implemented through talk (Schegloff, 2007, p. 9). Based on the preceding definitions and my observations from data, I delineated a preliminary operational definition for the

compliment-response sequence: the compliment-response sequence in this study consists of two or more utterances/acts over two or more turns enacting the speech action of making and responding to compliments. It begins (in most cases) with the first recognizable compliment utterance, *explicit* or *implicit*, *direct* or *indirect* (see definitions of these terms later on in this section), on a specific topic (e.g., food); it is followed by either one compliment response utterance/act in the next turn or more compliment and compliment response utterances/acts over multiple turns on the same topic (e.g., food) or related topics (e.g., food preparation, hospitality...); it ends with the utterance or turn in which a new topic other than a compliment is initiated. To understand the discourse/sequential context of the complimenting speech behavior, that is, what kind of prior talk leads to the producing of the compliment act(s), the transcription of each compliment-response sequence is preceded by a summary of the situation and at least one turn of prior talk, and followed by at least one turn of subsequent talk and/or a summary comment on subsequent talk. Short digressions from the focal act(s) in the sequence were transcribed, but a summary comment substituted for a long digression. More than 800 compliment-response adjacency pairs and multi-turn sequences were identified and extracted from the data corpus (a total of 558 pages, 58–66 lines each page, in Chinese characters).

Since Shanghai dialect and Mandarin share one written form (see the Language Background section), data in Shanghainese and Mandarin were both transcribed in Standard Mandarin characters with Shanghainese variations. 《汉英吴方言词典》[A Chinese-English Dictionary of the Wu Dialect] (Creamer, 1991) was used as a reference for transliteration of original/exclusive Shanghainese words and expressions. Because

the data are not analyzed using the conversation analytic (CA) approach, only some of the transcription conventions developed by Jefferson (see Atkinson & Heritage, 1984) were used, some with modifications, by the researcher. Interruptions, overlaps, back-channels, prominent stress, and laughter were noted, but no effort was made to time pauses or other temporal cues (see Appendix D for transcription symbols used for this study). When transcribing data collected by other three data collectors, notes were taken on any part of the audio-tapes which needed clarification. The transcripts were then checked by the three data collectors for accuracy of meaning, content and context.

Translation

Only sample excerpts presented in this study were translated into English. The translation was helped and checked by a bilingual Chinese-American college professor[8] who is fluent in both Standard Mandarin and Shanghai dialect with extensive translation experience. Sample excerpts were first translated into natural idiomatic English retaining/reflecting the original meaning and pragmatic force of the participants' speech. Adjustments with word-for-word literal translation were made at times to demonstrate structural mapping, sequential order, or linguistic features of the original Chinese speech. As a result, the adjusted English translation may lack a sense of fluency or naturalness. The analysis of data was done, however, directly from the Chinese, never through the English translation.

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[8] Dr. Peter Wan is a Harvard graduate, who majored in English Language, Literature and American Studies. His translation accomplishments include translating many American films into Chinese.

Coding

  First stage analysis. Data coding started when empirical study of compliments and compliment responses employing audio-recorded naturally occurring conversation data was almost non-existent. The prevailing analytic framework used for compliments at the time was syntactic and lexical analysis, and for compliment responses, semantic and functional analysis. Lacking an established coding system for reference, I followed the same analytic approach first. Problems emerged immediately.

  First, in most compliment research, compliments or compliment responses were studied as single utterance act, while in my audio-recorded naturally occurring conversation data, compliments and compliment responses interact in multi-turn sequences as discourse events: out of the (preliminary) 800 compliment-response sequences identified in my data, only 22 (3%) are single adjacency pairs; 105 (13%) are elaborated two-turn sequences in which either the compliment or the response or both include more than one utterances; 673 (84%) are multi-turn sequences.

  When breaking down the sequences to utterance level and performing the syntactic and lexical analyses on the compliments in my data, over 40% of the 6,000 or so compliment utterances[9] either have no distinctive syntactic patterns or simply cannot be analyzed lexically for the following two reasons: (1) The syntactic or lexical analysis for most compliment studies was based on single, isolated, stand-alone compliment utterances, each of which has a compliment topic. However, compliments in my data are multi-turn sequences, each of which consists of multiple utterances centering on one overall topic or several related topics. Some utterances in the sequence can stand alone

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[9] The result reported in this section is based on the preliminary analysis of 800 sequences. The number of sequences is reduced to 300 for final analysis. See "second stage analysis" section for data reduction rationale.

as compliments, but many cannot, depending on other utterances in the sequence for interpretation as compliments. (2) The syntactic or lexical analysis for most compliment studies was based on *explicit compliments*, each of which has a positive semantic carrier (an explicit compliment [strategy] is one in which at least one linguistically identifiable positive semantic carrier is present). The form of the positive semantic carrier (e.g., an adjective, a verb) defines the type of syntactic structure it is situated in (e.g., NP is/looks (int) ADJ, I (really) like/love NP) (Wolfson & Manes, 1980). However, many compliment utterances in the compliment sequences in my data are *implicit compliments* with no positive semantic carriers (an implicit compliment [strategy] is one in which the linguistically identifiable positive semantic carrier is absent; or a compliment realized in the form of a different speech act. An implicit compliment strategy can only be interpreted as a compliment by context within and beyond the compliment-response sequence.). The compliment force of each utterance is again inferred from other utterances within the sequence or from cultural, contextual cues beyond the sequence. In short, the non-standalone and implicit compliment utterances have no positive semantic carriers for lexical analysis and can have numerous variations in syntactic structure. Take Excerpt 1.2 for example:

Excerpt 1.2 [82] "It's right up his alley."

Situation: Prof. Chen (F) takes her friend to Dr. Zhang (M) for acupuncture treatment. Dr. Zhang's friend Prof. Zhu (M) is leaving the room. Prof. Chen knows Prof. Zhu. An intern is present, observing Dr. Zhang treating the patients.

01		陈教授：朱先生，侬哪能今朝来	Prof.Chen: Prof.Zhu, what brought you
02		这里？打针灸啊？	here today? Did you come
03			for acupuncture treatment?
04		朱教授：没有，来看看张医生。	Prof.Zhu:　No, I came to see
05			Dr.Zhang.
06		陈教授：你认识张医生啊？	Prof.Chen: You know Dr.Zhang?

07		朱教授：我跟张医生么是老朋友	Prof.Zhu: Me and Dr.Zhang, we go way
08		了。怎么了？	back. What's wrong?
09		陈教授：我朋友，脚不好，请张	Prof.Chen: My friend here is having
10		医生看看。	trouble with her leg.
11			She's here to see
12			Dr.Zhang.
13	→	朱教授：噢，那好，1.他这个，	Prof.Zhu: Oh, no problem. 1.It's
14		最有办法！	right up his alley.
15			(*This, he has the best*
16			*expertise!*)
17	→	陈教授：2.对。	Prof.Chen: 2.Exactly. (*Yes.*)
18	→	朱教授：3.他有，4.出国来的。	Prof.Zhu: 3.He has [the expertise],
19			4.he's been overseas.
20	→	陈教授：5.所以就寻他来了。	Prof.Chen: 5.That's why we're here to
21			see him.
22	→	朱教授：6.嗳，对，对，对。	Prof.Zhu: 6.Yeah, right, right,
23	→	7.他有办法。（对张医	right. 7.It's right up
24		生说）再见啊！	his alley. (*He has the*
25			*expertise.*) (to Dr.Zhang)
26			See you later.
27		张医生：(treating the	Dr.Zhang: (treating the patient,
28		patient, hearing the	hearing the talk, didn't
29		talk, didn't say a	say a word.)
30		word.)	

There are seven compliment utterances in the sequence, four of them (utterances 2, 4, 5, and 6) have no explicit positive semantic carriers. Utterance 4 ("出国来的。he's been overseas.") is an implicit compliment depending on the social cultural information to be interpreted as a compliment (only an outstanding doctor would be invited or sent overseas to lecture or treat patients), and the following coparticipant's utterance ("所以就寻他来了。That's why we are here to see him.") to be interpreted as a compliment (the coparticipant does not take it as information, but orients to the utterance as Dr. Zhang's "expertise," the reason she has taken her friend to see Dr. Zhang). Utterance 5 ("所以就寻他来了。That's why we are here to see him.") is a non-standalone compliment depending on the preceding utterances in the sequence ("他这个，最有办法！This, he

has the best expertise!" and "出国来的。he's been overseas.") to be interpreted as a compliment (the reason for the patient to see Dr. Zhang is that he is an expert). Compliment utterance 2 ("对。Exactly.") and utterance 6 ("嗳，对，对，对。Yeah, right, right, right.") are of the same case, relying on the preceding utterances for interpretation. Although utterances 1, 3, and 7 can be categorized as having the same syntactic pattern: "Subject + (Intensifier) + Verb 'have' + (NP), 他（最）有（办法）！He has (the best) (expertise)!," utterances 3 and 7 are actually repetitions of utterance 1. In sum, lexically, four utterances have no positive semantic carriers; syntactically, there are five different patterns bearing little or no resemblance to each other. In other words, the compliment force of each of these utterances does not seem to be determined syntactically or lexically within the utterance.

Second, even if the 60% of the 6,000 or so utterances could be coded syntactically and lexically into basic patterns,[10] they do not seem to define the structure of Chinese compliments. Take the first half of Excerpt 1.1 for example:

Excerpt 1.1 [4] "Jin hasn't changed a bit."

Situation: Rong's cousin Jin, his wife Zhen and their son are visiting Rong's mother. Rong has not seen Jin for over ten years. She is truly struck by his young look.

01	→	融:	1.锦倒一点也勿变噢	Rong:	1.Jin hasn't changed	1. S Int V[11]
02			我看侬。		a bit.	
03		锦:	也老了呀，哪能勿	Jin:	[I'm] Also getting	
04			变！总归老额呀，		old, how could there	
05			勿可能勿老额。		be no change! I'm	
06					[unavoidably] getting	
07					old, it's not possible	
08					not old.	

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[10] Still with many variations, not at all as formulaic as the patterns described in most compliment studies.
[11] Note: In syntactic analysis throughout the dissertation, S = subject, Int = intensifier, V = verb, SV = stative verb, which is equivalent to an adjective in English, but which functions as a verb in Chinese describing a state of being rather an action.

09	→	融：	2.勿变，3.一点勿	Rong:	2.No change (Has not	2.(S)(Int) V
10	→		变，噢？（看着母		changed), 3.no change	3.(S) Int V
11			亲）		(has not changed) at	
12					all, don't you think?	
13					(looking at mom)	
14		珍：	伊老额。	Zhen:	He is old.	
15		锦：	真额老，也老额，哪	Jin:	Really old, also old,	
16			能会得勿老呢。		how could it be not	
17					old.	
18	→	融：	4.勿老，5.勿老。	Rong:	4.Not old, 5.not old.	4.(S)(Int) SV
19		锦：	老额咾。	Jin:	I'm old.	5.(S)(Int) SV
20	→	融母：	6.勿老。	Rong's Mom:	6.Not old.	6.(S)(Int) SV
21	→	融：	7.一点勿老。	Rong:	7.Not a bit old.	7.(S) Int SV
22		锦：	老伐啦？	Jin:	[Am I] old?	
23	→	融母：	8.勿老，9.一眼也勿	Mom :	8.Not old, 9.not at all	8.(S)(Int) SV
24			老。		old.	9.(S) Int SV
25		锦：	〔阿拉自家看看也	Jin:	[I [couldn't] look at	
26			老！		myself so old!	
27	→	融：	〔10.一点勿老，	Rong:	[10.Not at all old,	10.(S) Int SV
28	→		11.是勿老		11.truly not old	11.(S) Int SV
29			（笑）。		(laughs).	
30		锦：	到底是国外辛苦呀，	Jin:	After all, life is much	
31			对伐，迭个呒没办法		harder overseas, right?	
32			额，因为，因为各方		You have no choice,	
33			面额，消费全勿一		because... because	
34			样。		everything, living	
35					expenses are all	
36					different [from here].	
37		融：	生活节奏快眼。	Rong:	The pace of life is	
38					much faster.	
39		锦：	嗳。	Jin:	Yes.	

There are 11 compliment utterances in the sequence. Syntactically, utterances 1–3 have the same pattern: "(Subject) + (Intensifier) + Verb, (锦) (倒一点也) 勿变噢。(Jin) hasn't (a bit) changed."; utterances 4–11 share the same pattern: "(Subject) + (Intensifier) + Stative Verb, (锦) (一点) 勿老。(Jin) is not (at all) old." Only two lexical items are used: "勿变 has not changed" and "勿老 not old." And only two intensifiers appear before some of the lexical items: "一点(也)" or its variation "一眼(也)"—"(not) a bit, (not) at all," or "是, truly is." Could we claim that Chinese compliments are also syntactic and

lexical formulae? The syntactic and lexical regularity would be amazing/significant if the 11 utterances are 11 separate compliments, and if the regularity extends beyond the limit of this particular sequence to the majority of the sequences. The fact that the 11 utterances in the sequence are all centering on one topic—Jin's young look, and 9 utterances are actually *repetitions* of utterance 1 and utterance 4, and the fact that 40% of 6,000 or so compliment utterances do not fit into syntactic and lexical regularity, beg alternative explanations.

The analysis of compliment responses encountered the same problem. Instead of syntactic and lexical analysis, most compliment response studies at the time adopted semantic and functional analytic framework initiated by Pomerantz (1978), and characterized compliment responses as *semantic formulae* or *pragmatic strategies*, that is, characterization of compliment responses in terms of "the primary content of an utterance" (Hartford & Bardovi-Harlig, 1992, p. 34) or by "pragmatic-functional criteria" (Coulmas, 1979, p. 240),[12] for example, "appreciation," "downgrade," "return," "comment history," "disagreement," "rejection," etc. (e.g., Herbert, 1986; Holmes, 1988). Nevertheless, these studies also based their analysis on single, isolated utterances (or "second pair part" of the adjacency pair), each of which stands alone as a response to the compliment. The compliment responses in my data, however, consist of multiple utterances over multiple turns; some cannot stand alone and have to rely on other utterances in the sequence to be interpreted as compliment responses. And even if many

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[12] The original definition from Hartford & Bardovi-Harlig (1992) is: "Semantic formulas represent the means by which a particular speech act is accomplished in terms of the primary content of an utterance, such as a reason, an explanation, or an alternative" (p. 34). Coulmas (1979) used *routine formulae* to describe "a set of expressions which is delimited by pragmatic-functional criteria" (p. 240).

response utterances can stand alone, they do not seem to describe the structure of Chinese compliment responses.

Take the compliment responses in Excerpt 1.1 for example. Looking in isolation, the three utterances in lines 30–36 ("到底是国外辛苦呀，对伐，迭个呒没办法额，因为，因为各方面额，消费全勿一样。After all, life is much harder overseas, right? You have no choice, because... because everything, living expenses are all different [from here]") cannot be characterized as compliment responses. Their characterization as compliment responses depends on Jin's prior utterance (line 22) in the sequence "老伐啦？Am I old?" According to Ye's (1995) taxonomy, this response utterance is a "confirmation"—an "acceptance with amendment" strategy (Ye, 1995), or a "deflect" strategy (Holmes, 1988), or a "mitigated" acceptance strategy (Wieland, 1995) to avoid direct acceptance of the compliment (Pomerantz, 1978). Given this categorization, the three utterances in lines 30–36 can be considered as the continuation of the "*deflect*" or "*mitigated*" *acceptance* strategy of lowering oneself and raising the other—the reason Jin has not aged much is because his life in China is not as hard as Rong's life overseas. Except for these utterances, there are 10 (71%) other response utterances in the excerpt (lines 3–8, 14–17, 19 and 25) that can be characterized as stand-alone "*rejections*." To conclude that Chinese tend to reject compliments, however, is misleading. The "71%" would be significant if these 10 response utterances are rejecting 10 different compliments and if the rejection tendency extends beyond this particular sequence to the majority of the sequences. The fact that neither is true demands alternative explanations for the structure of compliment responses as well.

Examining the sequence of Excerpt 1.1 again *as a whole*, I was struck not by the syntactic or lexical regularity of the compliment utterances or by the specific semantic/functional characterization of the response utterances, but rather by the persistent illocutionary force on both sides in giving and rejecting the compliment. This persistent illocutionary force is achieved not so much by the internal syntactic or lexical constitution of the compliment utterance per se, or the individual semantic/functional characterization of the response utterance per se, but (1) by what each syntactically and lexically structured compliment utterance does in the sequence, and what individual semantically/functionally characterized response utterance does in the sequence; (2) by what all the compliment utterances concertedly do in the sequence, and what all the response utterances concertedly do in the sequence; and (3) by what all the utterances, compliments and compliment responses, interactively do in the sequence. In other words, the illocutionary force is achieved by the *pragmatic-discursive function* the utterance— compliment or compliment response—plays in the sequence, or to use a different term, by the *pragmatic strategy* (henceforth) the speaker employs in the sequence. The different pragmatic strategies employed in the sequence do not stand in isolation on equal footing, but work closely together in a *core* and *support* relationship, that is, the complimenter or the complimentee issues a topical compliment or compliment response strategy, and uses a series of *support* strategies to elaborate and reinforce the *core* strategy. In addition, the compliment strategies and the compliment response strategies do not work separately but rather interact with each other in different ways to "co-construct" the compliment event.

Let us take a look at the compliments in Excerpt 1.1 again:

01 02	→	融:	1.锦倒一点也勿变 噢我看侬。	Rong: 1.Jin hasn't changed a bit.	1.core young look
03 04 05 06 07 08		锦:	也老了呀，哪能勿 变！总归老额呀， 勿可能勿老额。	Jin: [I'm] Also getting old, how could there be no change! I'm [unavoidably] getting old, it's not possible not old.	
09 10 11 12 13	→ →	融:	2.勿变，3.一点勿 变，噢？（看着母 亲）	Rong: 2.No change (Has not changed), 3.no change (has not changed) at all, don't you think? (looking at mom)	2.repetition 3.intensifi- cation
14		珍:	伊老额。	Zhen: He is old.	
15 16 17		锦:	真额老，也老额，哪 能会得勿老呢。	Jin: Really old, also old, how could it be not old.	
18	→	融:	4.勿老，5.勿老。	Rong: 4.Not old, 5.not old.	4.repetition
19		锦:	老额咾。	Jin: I'm old.	5.repetition
20	→	融母:	6.勿老。	Rong's Mom: 6.Not old.	6.agreement
21 22	→	融:	7.一点勿老。	Rong: 7.Not a bit old.	7.intensifi- cation
22		锦:	老伐啦？	Jin: [Am I] old?	
23 24	→	融母:	8.勿老，9.一眼也勿 老。	Mom : 8.Not old, 9.not at all old.	8.repetition 9.intensifi-
25 26		锦:	〔阿拉自家看看也 老！	Jin: [I [couldn't] look at myself so old!	cation
27 28 29	→ →	融:	〔10.一点勿老， 11.是勿老 （笑）。	Rong: [10.Not at all old, 11.truly not old (laughs).	10.repetition 11.intensifi- cation
30 31 32 33 34 35 36		锦:	到底是国外辛苦呀， 对伐，迭个呒没办法 额，因为，因为各方 面额，消费全勿一 样。	Jin: After all, life is much harder overseas, right? You have no choice, because... because everything, living expenses are all different [from here].	
37 38		融:	生活节奏快眼。	Rong: The pace of life is much faster.	
39		锦:	嗳。	Jin: Yes.	

In utterance 1 Rong introduces the compliment topic "Jin hasn't changed a bit." Rong is

so impressed by her cousin's young look after ten years of not seeing him, she

subsequently uses the pragmatic strategies of *repetition* (utterances 2, 4, 5, 10, with exact

words "勿变 has not changed" or its variation "勿老 not old") and *intensification*

(utterances 3, 7, 11, with the intensifier "一点勿 not a bit," "一眼也勿 not at all" or "是

truly is") seven times in the sequence to reinforce the *core* topic strategy. To make her

compliment even more convincing, Rong invites the third party, her mom, to join in the

compliment action (utterance 3 "no change at all, don't you think? (looking at mom)"),

who in turn uses the pragmatic strategies of *agreement* (utterance 6), *repetition* (utterance

7), and *intensification* (utterance 9) to support Rong's *core* compliment strategy. As can

been seen, the 11 compliment utterances in Excerpt 1.1 are not 11 isolated syntactic or

lexical formulae, but 11 *pragmatic strategies* working together in a *core* and *support*

relationship on one compliment topic in the sequence.

Now, to look at compliment responses in Excerpt 1.1, they present the same

picture:

01		融:	锦倒一点也勿变噢	Rong: Jin hasn't changed a	
02			我看侬。	bit.	
03	→	锦:	1.也老了呀，2.哪能	Jin: 1.[I'm] Also getting	1.core
04	→		勿变！3.总归老额	old, 2.how could there	rejection
05	→		呀，4.勿可能勿老	be no change! 3.I'm	2.intensifi-
06			额。	[unavoidably] getting	cation
07				old, 4.it's not	3.intensifi-
08				possible not old.	cation
09		融:	勿变，一点勿变，	Rong: No change (Has not	4.intensifi-
10			噢？（看着母亲）	changed), no change	cation
11				(has not changed) at	
12				all, don't you think?	
13				(looking at mom)	
14	→	珍:	5.伊老额。	Zhen: 5.He is old.	5.agreement
15	→	锦:	6.真额老，7.也老	Jin: 6.Really old, 7.also	6.intensifi-
16	→		额，8.哪能会得勿老	old, 8.how could it be	cation
17			呢。	not old.	7.repetition
18		融:	勿老，勿老。	Rong: Not old, not old.	8.intensifi-
19	→	锦:	9.老额咾。	Jin: 9.I'm old.	cation
20		融母:	勿老。	Rong's Mom: Not old.	9.repetition
21		融:	一点勿老。	Rong: Not a bit old.	
22	→	锦:	10.老伐啦？	Jin: 10.[Am I] old?	10.core

23		融母：勿老，一眼也勿老。	Mom : Not old, not at all old.	deflect confirmation
24				
25	→	锦： 〔11. 阿拉自家看看	Jin: [11.I [couldn't] look	11.intensifi-
26		也老！	at myself so old!	cation
27		融： 〔一点勿老，是勿老	Rong: [Not at all old, truly	
28		（笑）。	not old (laughs).	
29	→	锦： 12. 到底是国外辛苦	Jin: 12.After all, life is	12.comparison
30	→	呀，对伐，13. 迭个	much harder overseas,	other
31	→	呒没办法额，14. 因	right? 13.You have no	13.comment
32		为，因为各方面额，	choice, 14.because...	14.comment
33		消费全勿一样。	because everything,	
34			living expenses are all	
35			different [from here].	
36		融： 生活节奏快眼。	Rong: The pace of life is	
37			much faster.	
38		锦： 嗳。	Jin: Yes.	

There are 14 compliment response utterances in the sequence. Like the compliments, these 14 utterances are not 14 separate responses on equal footing, but two *core* response strategies and 12 *support* strategies. The first *core* response strategy is "*rejection*": "也老了呀，I'm also getting old." (utterance 1). Jin felt so strongly that he has aged a lot, he uses the support strategies of *intensification* (utterances 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 11) and *repetition* (utterances 7, 9) eight times to reinforce his *core rejection*. The third party—his wife also joins in with an *agreement* strategy (utterance 5) in support of Jin's *rejection*. The second *core* response strategy is a "*deflect*" or "*mitigated*" *acceptance* in the form of a "confirmation" (utterance 10, "老伐啦？Am I old?"). The *deflect* strategy is supported by a *comparison* strategy (utterance 12) which lowers self and raises the other (the reason that Jin has not aged much is because his life in China is not as hard as Rong's life overseas) and two *comments* (utterances 13, 14) giving detailed accounts (the reason life in China is not as hard as overseas is because the living expenses and pace of life are different).

The picture is not complete without examining the dynamic *interaction* between the compliment and compliment response strategies. In Excerpt 1.1, the intensive use of compliment *support* strategies seems to be caused by and at the same time trigger off the intensive use of response strategies. After Rong issues the first *core* compliment strategy, her cousin Jin responds with a *core rejection* strategy followed by three *intensification* strategies. Jin's strong *rejection* strategies in turn cause Rong to use *repetition*, *intensification* strategies and even to enlist the third party, mom, to help reinforce the compliment. At this point, the third party from complimentee's side, Jin's wife, joins in and together they produce four more strong *rejection* strategies. This round of rigorous *rejection* strategies meet with four more rigorous compliment reinforcement strategies from both Rong and her mom before Jin backs down with a *deflect/mitigated acceptance* strategy in the form of a "confirmation" to avoid direct acceptance of the compliment. Jin's turn from strong *rejection* to *deflect/mitigated acceptance* is a gradual one, for he continues with one more *rejection*, and not until after four more strong confirmations of the compliment from Rong and her mom, Jin supports his *core deflect/mitigated acceptance* strategy with a *comparison* and two *comment* strategies, giving accounts for why he has not aged much. Seeing that Jin has indirectly accepted the compliment, Rong finally rests the compliments and turns the topic to "the rhythm of life overseas." This long, dynamic and rigorous interaction between the compliments and compliment responses is like a "*tug-of-war.*"

The compliments in Excerpt 1.2 present the same *core* and *support* structure as in Excerpt 1.1. In utterance 1, Prof. Zhu initiates the *core* compliment ("他这个，最有办法！This, he has the best expertise!"). It is supported by an *agreement* strategy from

Prof. Chen ("对。Exactly.") (utterance 2); a *repetition* from Prof. Zhu ("他有，He has

[the expertise]") (utterances 3); two *comments* from Prof. Zhu and Prof. Chen ("出国来

的。he's been overseas.") and ("所以就寻他来了。That's why we are here to see him.")

(utterances 4, 5) giving accounts for Dr. Zhang's expertise. Prof. Chen's *comment*

(utterance 5) is further *agreed* to by Prof. Zhu "嗳，对，对，对。Yeah, right, right,

right." (utterance 6). And a second *repetition* of the core compliment ("他有办法。He

has the expertise.") from Prof. Zhu concludes the compliment sequence. As can be seen,

the seven compliment strategies in the sequence are all centering on one topic—Dr.

Zhang's acupuncture expertise, with six strategies elaborating and emphasizing the *core*

strategy. However, the compliment-response *interaction* in Excerpt 1.2 presents a

different pattern from Excerpt 1.1. Instead of interacting with the complimentee Dr.

Zhang, the complimenter Prof. Zhu interacts with the third party Prof. Chen in an

elaborated back-and-forth compliment sequence with no response from the complimentee

present in the room.

No matter how different the interactional patterns are—the tug-of-war pattern of

interaction between the complimenter and the complimentee in Excerpt 1.1, or the back-

and-forth elaborated compliment sequence jointly built by the complimenter and the third

party with the complimentee silent in Excerpt 1.2 (silence is an response), we can see that

the compliment strategies and the compliment response strategies in each sequence do

not work separately but interact with each other to "co-construct" the compliment event.

Second stage analysis. Before starting the re-coding, 800 sequences in the data

corpus were reduced to 300 to make the analysis manageable. The reduction of the data

went hand in hand with the reduction of participants. In selecting the 300 sequences, data

from the other three data collectors were given priority. Speaker characteristics (e.g., gender, age, occupation, social status), different compliment topics and settings were represented as much as possible. Efforts were also made to balance the recording frequency and time for each participant. Selection process went through several rounds until the criteria were satisfied.

Based on the preliminary first stage analysis, the following steps were taken to analyze and code the data again:

(1) The transcripts with the 300 identified sequences were revisited. Sequence boundaries and other adjustments were made.

(2) The adjusted sequences were then examined to identify the *core* compliment strategies: the utterances which initiate a compliment topic—the content of the compliment (e.g., appearance, ability, skill, achievement, personal trait, possession, etc.)—in the sequence. For example, in Excerpt 1.2, Prof. Zhu's utterance in lines 13–14 ("他这个，最有办法！It's right up his alley. / *This, he has the best expertise!*") initiates a compliment topic: Dr. Zhang's acupuncture expertise. A sequence may contain several compliment topics (usually related in content) and thus several core strategies. For example, in Excerpt 2, Rong first initiated a compliment on Jin's young-looking appearance ("锦倒一点也勿变噢我看侬。 Jin hasn't changed a bit.") (line 1), and then in line 52 Rong complimented her cousin on his healthy habit and not smoking and drinking ("嗳，好呀！ That's so great!"), the second compliment topic.

To be a core "compliment" strategy, it normally has an explicit positive assessment in the utterance (e.g., "最有办法！ *has the best expertise*"). When the

explicit positive assessment was missing, the context within and beyond the sequence was examined to see if the utterance can be interpreted as an implicit compliment.

The core strategies were then examined for their turn structure, how the topic and positive assessment are realized linguistically.

(3) Following the identification of the core compliment strategies, the analysis proceeded to extract the support compliment strategies, that is, what the utterance does in the sequence to support the core (or another) strategy, and in what way it supports the strategy. For example, the utterance is *agreeing* with the core strategy (e.g., "他这个，最有办法！ *This, he has the best expertise!*" "对。**Exactly**.") to *align* with Prof. Zhu's position. The utterance is *adding a detailed comment* to *elaborate* another strategy ("他有 [办法]，**出国来的**。 He has [the expertise], **he's been overseas**."). The utterance is *repeating* another strategy ("勿老，**勿老**。 Not old, **not old**."), or *intensifying* another strategy ("勿老，**一眼也**勿老。 Not old, not **at all** old.") to achieve *emphasis*. Or the utterance is *comparing* the complimentee with another person, or *quoting* a speaker's words, to *elaborate* or *emphasize* a strategy, etc.

(4) To determine if an utterance is performing the action of a compliment strategy is by no means simple, especially for the support compliment strategies, since a large portion of them contain no explicit positive assessment. Their interpretation as a compliment strategy is context dependent, both within the sequence (the utterances before and after) and beyond the sequence (e.g., social, cultural information). For example, in Excerpt 1.2, Prof. Zhu's utterance ("出国来的。he's been overseas.") encodes sociocultural knowledge (at the time, only an outstanding doctor would be invited or sent overseas to lecture or treat patients). However, the utterance by itself can

also be viewed as giving information. It's attachment to an explicit compliment before it ("他有 [办法]，He has [the expertise],") gives some clue, but still cannot dissolve the ambiguity. The coparticipant Prof. Chen's utterance immediately following it ("所以就寻他来了。 That's why we are here to see him.") provides crucial "evidence" that the overseas experience is oriented to by Prof. Chen as desirable, relevant to Dr. Zhang's "expertise": It is the reason Prof. Chen has taken her friend to see Dr. Zhang.

As an important step of analysis, sequential context in which the strategies occur were analyzed in order to uncover the compliment action they perform. This step is especially important for utterances that do not have an explicit positive assessment.

(5) The bulk of the analysis was then devoted to detailing what substrategies and linguistic resources/devices were used to realize each support strategy. For example, agreement strategies can be realized by using different kinds of agreement tokens. A repetition strategy can restate another strategy in exact words, non-exact words, or in paraphrase. Comparison strategies can be realized by using comparatives and superlatives, or metaphors and similes. Intensification strategies can be realized by using intensifiers, modal particles, rhetorical questions, etc. Linguistic resources can be syntactic (e.g., negation, question), lexical (e.g., intensifiers, modal particles, interjections), rhetorical/stylistic (e.g., idioms, figures of speech), semantic (e.g., an explanation/account), etc. A certain linguistic category can be further realized by sub-categories, e.g., intensifiers are further realized by degree adverbs (used to increase the degree of positiveness) or modal adverbs (used to increase the degree of certainty), etc.

The data were repeatedly examined looking for recursive features, forms, structures, and patterning. Every time a new category appeared, or an existing category

was revised, I went back to the beginning re-examining the data and adjusting the coding, until all the categories were exhausted. The steps of analysis certainly were not linear. It was recursive and "messy," involving constant back and forth. It was a process of observing, discovering, checking, defining, redefining, modifying, adjusting, refining, etc.

Key Analytic Categories and Definitions

The following are some key analytic categories and definitions used in the data analysis:

(1) **Explicit compliment**: An *explicit compliment* [strategy] is one in which at least one linguistically identifiable positive semantic carrier is present (Ye, 1995). For example, "delicious" in "delicious cookies."

(2) **Implicit compliment**: An *implicit compliment* [strategy] is one in which the linguistically identifiable positive semantic carrier is absent, or a compliment realized in the form of a different speech act (e.g., a request or a question), but the positive meaning can be inferred from the context within and/or beyond the sequence (Herbert, 1997; Kerbrat-Orecchioni, 1998; Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk, 1989). For example, when a speaker says after eating the delicious cookies, "Can I have the recipe?," the question is considered an implicit compliment in the context as it implies that the speaker likes the cookies since people only ask for the recipe if they think the cookie is good.

(3) **Adjacency pair**: An *adjacency pair* is "a sequence of two turns produced by different speakers and ordered as first pair-part (FPP) and second pair-part (SPP), where a particular type of FPP requires a particular type of SPP" (Wong & Waring, 2010, p. 57). An adjacency pair is a basic turn constructional unit for producing organized conversation (Schegloff & Sacks, 1973), "a basic building block of a sequence" (Wong &

Waring, 2010, p. 57). For example, a compliment and a compliment response form an adjacency pair.

(4) **Sequence**: A *sequence* is a course of action implemented through talk (Schegloff, 2007, p. 9).

(5) In this dissertation, I use the following terms to distinguish between two types of sequences:

A compliment-response sequence is a sequence which consists of all the compliment strategies and the compliment response strategies within a stretch of conversation. It is equivalent to an *excerpt* in this dissertation. A *compliment-response sequence* begins with the first recognizable compliment utterance and ends before the utterance which starts a new topic other than the compliment. To better understand the sequential context of the compliment action, any pre-sequence—one or more utterances preceding the *compliment-response sequence* proper serving as a trigger or lead to the first compliment utterance—is included.

A core sequence consists of one core strategy and all the supporting strategies elaborating or emphasizing this core strategy. It can be a *core compliment sequence* or a *core response sequence*. A *compliment-response sequence* may contain only one core compliment (or response) strategy and hence only one *core compliment (or response) sequence;* it may also contain multiple core compliment (or response) strategies and hence multiple *core compliment (or response) sequences*. This distinction is important when analyzing *compliment-response sequences* with multiple core strategies.

(6) **Pragmatic-discursive strategy** or **pragmatic strategy** (used interchangeably in this study): Broadly defined, "strategy" is a plan of action designed and used to

achieve a goal. *Pragmatic-discursive strategy* here is the use of different linguistic resources to perform a specific compliment function/action in the context. Linguistic resources can be syntactic (e.g., negation, question), lexical (e.g., intensifiers, modal particles), rhetorical/stylistic (e.g., idioms, figures of speech), semantic (e.g., an explanation/account), etc. Context can be sequence external (e.g., social, cultural, situational variables; for example, the sociocultural knowledge that before China opened its doors to the outside world, only an outstanding doctor would be invited or sent overseas to lecture or treat patients), or sequence internal (e.g., utterances before and utterances after). The strategy is a discursive strategy in that it performs the function in relation to other strategies in the discourse/sequence (e.g., repeat the core strategy to emphasize it; give specific details to elaborate an agreement strategy). The function the strategy performs (i.e., whether a strategy is performing the function of a compliment) is also defined by other strategies in the discourse/sequence (i.e., whether the coparticipant(s) interpret it as a compliment strategy). For example, Prof. Zhu's comment strategy "he [Dr. Zhang]'s been overseas" is not interpreted as giving information, but recognized as a compliment strategy because of Prof. Zhu's explicit compliment strategy before it ("他有 [办法]，He has [the expertise],"), and Prof. Chen's comment right after it ("That's why we're here to see him.")—patients want to see a doctor with expertise; overseas experience is therefore oriented to by Prof. Chen as desirable, relevant to Dr. Zhang's "expertise." "Strategy" is very often associated with speaker intentionality, conscious deliberation. I want to emphasize here that the "strategy" used in this study does not imply speaker intentionality, but describes the unconscious, routine nature of the speaker's action.

Outside Review of Data Analysis

To verify my initial analysis, I asked a native speaker of Shanghai dialect (residing in Shanghai), who was a college professor trained in linguistic analysis, to independently analyze 25% of my data, that is, 75 sample sequences. The independent reviewer was first informed about my study and the focus of the analysis. Then the major coding categories were discussed. Given the complexity of the analysis and the variations of the linguistic form involved, we analyzed some sequences together, until she was clear about the task. She was then asked to identify in each sample sequence: (1) the core compliment strategy, (2) the support compliment strategies: the type and the function of each strategy, (3) the linguistic composition of each strategy. For the linguistic composition, only the main categories were coded, the ones which answer the question: "why do you categorize a strategy into a certain type (e.g., intensification strategy)"; the linguistic composition of the strategy came up automatically in the answer (e.g., the utterance has an intensifier). She was not asked to further classify the intensifier (e.g., degree adverb, modal adverb...). Comparing our analysis showed agreement in most cases. Where there were discrepancies, the samples were discussed more thoroughly until both of us came to an agreement. Together we tackled the nuances of the coding. It was enormously helpful to get an outsider's perspective.

<div align="center">

Limitations of the Study

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The compliment action cannot be fully accounted for without taking into consideration its counterpart, the compliment response action. Not being able to include compliment responses is the major limitation of the current study. Similar to the studies

of compliment behavior, single act single adjacency pair analysis based on elicited data have dominated the research of compliment responses. The compliment responses in naturally occurring conversations in my data, however, have exhibited elaborate strategies and core and support relationship similar to the compliment structure.

Preliminary observations also show that analysis of interaction among participants is essential in accounting for whether a particular action/strategy (e.g., questioning) is performing the compliment action. Some compliment strategies (e.g., negation) have also been found to be contingent upon compliment response strategies. The prevalent tug-of-war interaction between the complimenter and complimentee, and the elaborate back-and-forth interaction between the complimenter and the third party observed in the data reveal that compliment strategies and compliment response strategies do not work separately; they are inter-contingent. The Chinese compliment event is negotiated and co-constructed by all the participants in the interaction. To fully understand how a Chinese compliment event is realized in interaction, detailed analysis of compliment responses alongside the compliment acts in naturally occurring conversations is paramount. This will be an important part of my future study.

Overview of the Analysis Chapters

In this chapter I have presented the methodology used for the current study. The next five chapters will detail the analysis. Chapter IV provides an overview of Chinese compliment structure. It presents a general picture of pragmatic-discursive strategy use. Chapter V focuses on the *core* compliment strategy, how the compliment topic is initiated and constructed in the compliment sequence. The following three

chapters examine the seven *support* compliment strategies, detailing the linguistic form, discourse and functional characteristics of each strategy. Chapter VI describes the support strategies for alignment, and elaboration: the *agreement*, *comment*, and *example* strategies. Chapter VII examines the support strategies for emphasis: the *repetition* and *intensification* strategies. Chapter VIII analyzes the multi-functional support strategies of *quote* and *comparison*. A discussion of the major findings of the study, their theoretical implications, and suggestions for future research in Chapter IX concludes this dissertation.

Chapter IV

OVERVIEW OF CHINESE COMPLIMENT STRUCTURE

This chapter presents an overview of the pragmatic-discursive structure of Chinese compliments in naturally occurring conversations.

The examination of 300 compliment-response sequences in my audio-recorded naturally occurring conversation data reveals that Chinese compliments and compliment responses are not single utterance acts or simple adjacency pairs, but multi-turn discursive speech events. Altogether there are 4,909 turns (excluding discursions) in the 300 compliment-response sequences, averaging 16.36 turns per sequence. The shortest sequence has two turns while the longest has 264 turns (visiting a new apartment). Each turn contains one or more compliment or compliment response strategies. A total of 6,015 compliment and compliment response strategies have been identified, with an average of 1.23 compliment or compliment response strategies per turn, and 20.05 per compliment-response sequence.

The examination of compliments in the 300 compliment-response sequences in the audio-recorded naturally occurring conversation data ascertains that Chinese compliments operate as pragmatic strategies working concertedly over the discourse in a core and support relationship. The core and support structure of Chinese compliments is surprisingly similar to the paragraph structure in American formal academic writing, which consists of a topic sentence introducing an overall idea to be discussed, supporting sentences explaining the idea expressed in the topic sentence, and (depending on the

length of the paragraph) a concluding sentence at the end summarizing the information

that has been presented. Like the paragraph structure in American formal academic

writing, the Chinese compliment structure consists of one (or more) core compliment

strategy (or strategies) introducing the compliment topic and various support compliment

strategies elaborating or emphasizing the core compliment strategy. It usually does not

have a concluding statement; the compliment sequence ends when the conversation shifts

to a new topic. It must be pointed out, however, the analogy only depicts the general

skeleton shape at most. The fundamental difference between a paragraph and a

compliment sequence is that a paragraph is equivalent to a monologue, the development

of which is planned/controlled by one speaker, whereas a compliment sequence is a

dynamic interactive process between two or more speakers where the use of a particular

compliment strategy may depend on the response or other compliment strategies or

contextual/situational factors within and beyond the sequence at the moment of

interaction.

A total of 3,835 compliment strategies are identified from the 300 compliment-

response sequences, averaging 12.78 per sequence. Among the 3,835 compliment

strategies, 525 are core compliment strategies and 3,310 are support compliment

strategies. The *core* compliment strategy initiates a compliment topic—the content of the

compliment, or the object or attribute being complimented (e.g., appearance, ability, skill,

achievement, personal trait, possession, etc.). It is similar to the topic sentence of a

paragraph in American formal academic writing. The topic sentence in American formal

academic writing is usually the first, most general statement introducing an overall idea

to be supported later in the paragraph. Like the topic sentence, the *core* compliment

strategy is found to have the following characteristics: It is usually (1) the first (2) general summative statement (3) introducing the compliment topic in the *core compliment sequence*, (4) normally, but not necessarily followed by support compliment strategies. (5) It can be explicit or implicit, addressed directly to the complimentee or indirectly to the 3rd party, using the speaker's perspective or enlisting another person's perspective.

The *support* compliment strategy is defined by the pragmatic function of the utterance in relation to the core compliment strategy or other utterances **in the sequence**, that is, characterization of compliments in terms of "pragmatic-functional criteria" (Coulmas, 1979, p. 240) **in discourse** [addition by the researcher], for example, to agree to the core or another support compliment strategy, to give a specific comment or example about the core or another support compliment strategy, to repeat or intensify the core or another support compliment strategy. Some support strategies (with positive semantic carriers/assessment) can stand alone as compliments, some (without positive semantic carriers/assessment) cannot, depending on other strategies within the sequence or cultural and contextual cues beyond the sequence to be interpreted as compliments. Coding of the 3,310 support compliment strategies finds seven different categories: *agreement*, *comment*, *example*, *repetition*, *intensification*, *quote*, and *comparison*. These seven support compliment strategies ultimately fulfill three major pragmatic-discursive functions: (1) to align with the same position expressed in the core or another support compliment strategy, (2) to elaborate the core or another support compliment strategy, or (3) to emphasize the core or another support compliment strategy. Table 4.1 summarizes the pragmatic-discursive functions of the seven support compliment strategies.

Table 4.1

Pragmatic-Discursive Functions of Support Compliment Strategies

Support Strategy	Pragmatic Discursive Function
Agreement	agrees to a strategy initiated by *a different speaker*
Comment	presents a specific detail or account to elaborate a strategy
Example	presents a particular instance to elaborate a strategy
Repetition	restates a strategy initiated by *the same speaker* for emphasis
Intensification	upgrades a strategy to higher intensity for emphasis
Quote	enlists other's words or perspective to elaborate or emphasize a strategy
Comparison	compares to self or other to elaborate or emphasize a strategy

Figure 4.1 summarizes the distribution of different support compliment strategies identified in the data corpus.
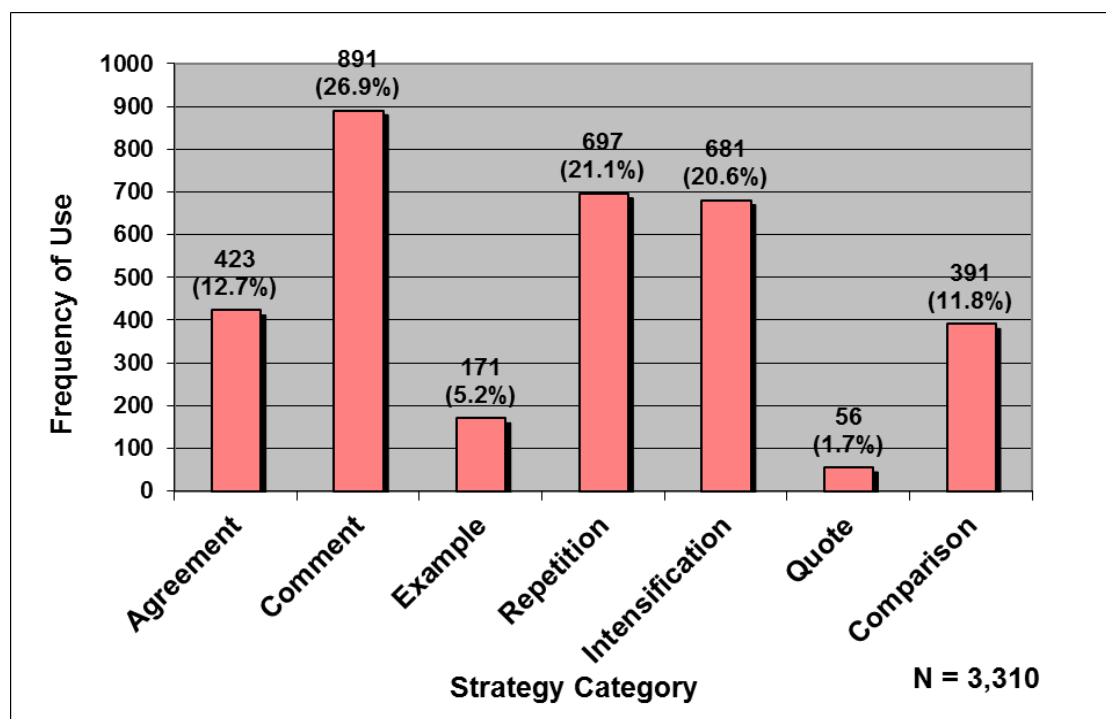
Figure 4.1 Distribution of Support Compliment Strategies

The elaboration strategy of *comment* is the most frequently used among all the support

strategies, followed by the two emphasis strategies of *repetition* and *intensification*. The

agreement and *comparison* strategies come next. It must be pointed out here that the

multi-functional support strategies of *quote* and *comparison* overlap with other strategies.

Figure 4.1 only indicates the mutually exclusive *quote* and *comparison* strategies (see

Chapter VIII for details).

Figure 4.2 illustrates the pragmatic-discursive relationship between the

compliment strategies.

```
                              ┌──────┐
                              │ Core │
                              └──────┘
           ┌──────────┐    ┌────────────┐    ┌──────────┐
           │ Support  │    │  Support   │    │ Support  │
           │ Alignment│    │ Elaboration│    │ Emphasis │
           └──────────┘    └────────────┘    └──────────┘

  ┌──────────┐┌─────────┐┌─────────┐┌────────────┐┌───────┐┌───────────┐┌───────────────┐
  │ Agreement││ Comment ││ Example ││ Comparison ││ Quote ││ Repetition││ Intensification│
  └──────────┘└─────────┘└─────────┘└────────────┘└───────┘└───────────┘└───────────────┘
```
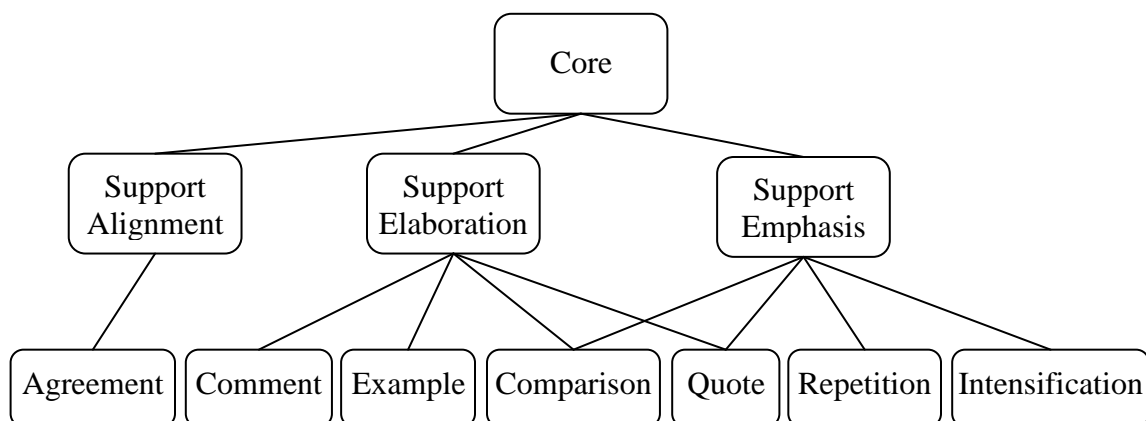
Figure 4.2 Pragmatic-Discursive Structure of Chinese Compliments

As is shown in Figure 4.2, the *core* compliment strategy occupies the highest, most

important position in the hierarchical structure. Every other strategy subordinates itself

in relation to the core compliment strategy. The pragmatic strategies of *comment* and

example function mainly to elaborate/add details, *repetition* and *intensification* are

employed to achieve emphasis, and *comparison* and *quote* play multiple functions in the

compliment sequence. It must be pointed out however, the diagram in Figure 4.2

simplifies the relationship between the strategies to some extent in that it only describes

the functions of support strategies in relation to the core strategy; it does not specify the relationships among the support strategies. In fact, each support strategy can be used not only to align with, elaborate or emphasize the core strategy, but also another support strategy. For example, the repetition strategy is used to repeat a comment, a comparison, or an intensification strategy; a comment can be used to support an agreement strategy; an example can be used to elaborate a comment, etc. But whatever the relationship between the support strategies is and however far a support strategy is away from the core strategy in the hierarchical structure, ultimately all the support strategies support the core compliment strategy, just like the intricate tributaries of a river system ultimately flowing into and adding force to the main river.

This chapter presents an overview of the pragmatic-discursive structure of Chinese compliments. With this "panorama view" of pragmatic strategy use in mind, I will now turn to the analysis of each strategy. Chapter V focuses on the *core* compliment strategy, how compliment topic is initiated and constructed in the compliment sequence. Chapters VI to VIII examine the seven support compliment strategies.

Chapter V

CORE COMPLIMENT STRATEGY

This chapter examines the *core compliment strategy*, its linguistic form and discourse, functional characteristics. Here, I will first present an overall view of the characteristics of the *core* compliment strategy. I will then discuss each feature in detail: the position of the *core* compliment strategy in the compliment-response sequence, the topic composition, topic breadth, and topic relationships in multiple core compliment strategies.

A total of 525 *core* compliment strategies are identified from the 300 compliment-response sequences. As has been stated in Chapter IV (Overview of Chinese Compliment Structure), the *core* compliment strategy initiates a compliment topic—the content of the compliment, or the object or attribute being complimented (e.g., appearance, ability, skill, achievement, personal trait, possession, etc.). It is similar to the topic sentence of a paragraph in American formal academic writing. The topic sentence in American formal academic writing is usually the first, most general statement introducing an overall idea to be supported later in the paragraph. Like the topic sentence, the *core* compliment strategy is found to have the following characteristics: It is usually (1) the first (2) general summative statement (3) introducing the compliment topic in the *core compliment sequence*, (4) normally, but not necessarily followed by support compliment strategies. (5) It can be explicit or implicit, addressed directly to the complimentee or indirectly to the 3rd party, using the speaker's perspective or enlisting

another person's perspective. Although the analysis of the implicit and indirect

compliments is beyond the scope of this dissertation, and the implicit and indirect

compliments are thus excluded as much as possible from the data corpus, some of them

still appear in the data because they are an integral part of a compliment sequence.

However, no in depth analysis of the implicit and indirect compliments will be attempted

beyond the presentation of some examples for illustrative purposes. Figure 5.1

summarizes the salient characteristics of the core compliment strategy.
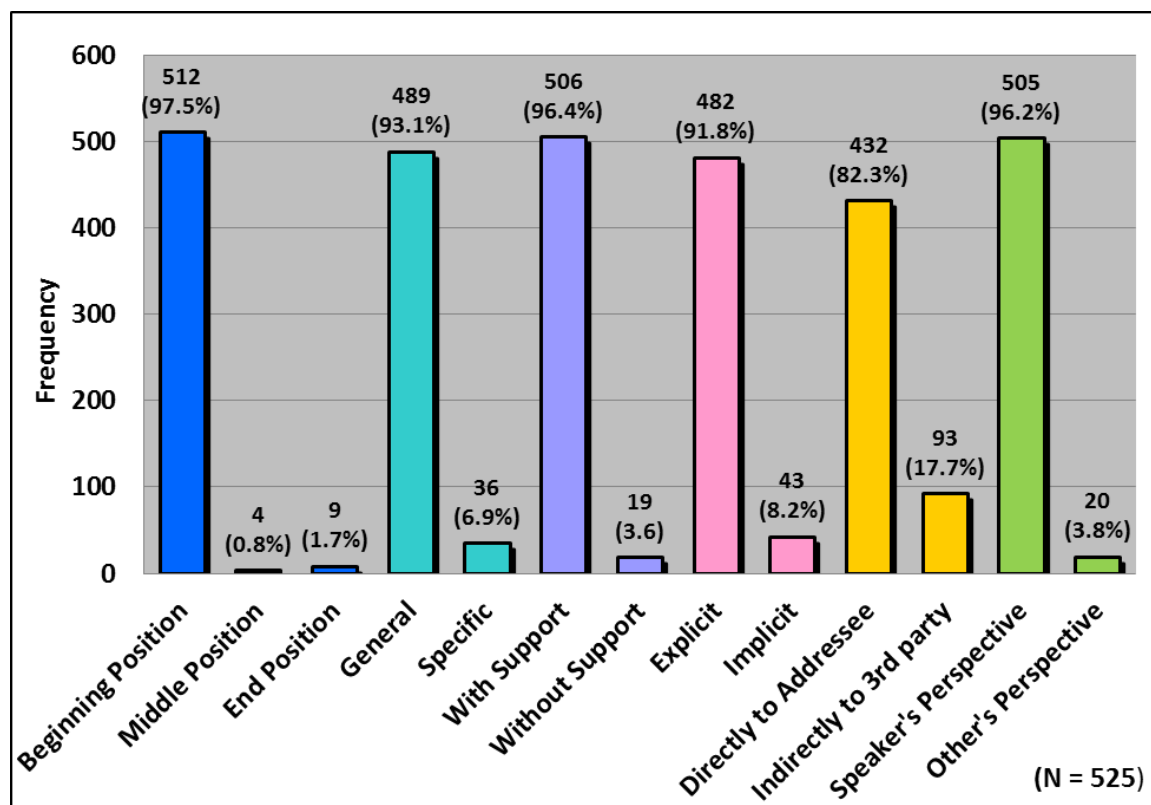
Figure 5.1 Characteristics of the Core Compliment Strategy

Figure 5.1 shows that the overwhelming majority of the 525 *core* compliment strategies

are positioned at the beginning of the *core compliment sequence* (512, 97.5%), and are

general (489, 93.1%), explicit (482, 91.8%) compliments with support strategies (506,

96.4%) addressing the complimentees directly (432, 82.3%) in the speaker's perspective (505, 96.2%). In the following sections, I will discuss the characteristics in detail with examples.

<div align="center">**Position**</div>

Figure 5.1 shows that there are three positions for the core compliment strategy in the core compliment sequence: *beginning* (or *the first turn*), *middle*, or *end* (or *the closing turn*) position, with the *beginning* position the overwhelming majority (512, 97.5%). (To recapitulate, a core compliment sequence consists of one core strategy and all the supporting strategies aligning with, elaborating or emphasizing this core strategy.)

Beginning Position

Excerpt 5.1 gives a typical example of the *beginning* position of the core compliment strategy in the core compliment sequence. (Please note, when a compliment-response sequence has only one core compliment strategy, it is the same as a core compliment sequence.)

Excerpt 5.1 [157] "This is salmon! The best!"

Situation: At a high school class reunion. He [M, 44] has ordered many high class dishes to honor the reunion. Xu [M], Wu [M], Zhang [F], Jiang [F], Ma [F], and Chang [F] are all around 45 years old.

01		徐：这是生鱼片啊？我好像	Xu:	This is raw fish	
02		吃不大惯。		fillet. I'm afraid I'm	
03				not used to eating	
04				this kind of thing.	
05	→	张：1. 这三纹鱼啊！最好	Zhang:	1.This is salmon! The	1.core best
06		的啦！		best!	salmon dish
07		徐：像这样生吃不习惯，	Xu:	But to eat it raw?	
08		噢？		That's kind of exotic.	
09		江：嗳。	Jiang:	Yeah.	

10	徐：味，味道蛮怪的好像	Xu: It... it tastes pretty	
11	（笑）。	weird. (laughs)	
12	江：嗳。	Jiang: Yeah.	
13	张：格三纹鱼对伐，勿是，	Zhang: This is salmon, isn't	
14	2.何剑青，侬三纹鱼属	it. 2.He Jianqing,	2.repetition
15	于老好额！	salmon is an excellent	
16		kind of fish!	
17	马：3.嗳，4.老好吃额！	Ma: 3.Yeah, 4.great taste!	3.agreement
18	张：5.今朝只鱼片属于老好	Zhang: 5.This salmon fillet	4.comment
19	额！	today is wonderful!	5.repetition
20	常：6.嗳，格只鱼是老好	Chang: 6.Yeah, this fish is	6.agreement
21	额！7.鲜得勿得了噢？	great. 7.Exceptionally	7.comment
22		delicious!	
23	马：8.嗳。	Ma: 8.Yeah.	8.agreement
24	张：9.嗯。三纹鱼属于，一	Zhang: 9.Yeah. Salmon is...	9.comparison
25	般性，一般阿拉有常全	Usually, usually we	self
26	鲈鱼老啥，是伐？	only have perch as	
27		a fish on the	
28		[banquet] table, don't	
29		we?	
30	马：10.格只鱼上来，挡子	Ma: 10.Now that we have	10.intensifi-
31	上来了。	this [salmon] fish, we	cation
32		have class.	
33	张：11.格只格只鱼，结棍	Zhang: 11.This fish... this	11.intensifi-
34	噢！	fish is really	cation
35		something!	
36	吴：12.三纹鱼蛮贵［ju］	Wu: 12.Salmon is quite	12.comment
37	额。	expensive.	
38	马：13.嗳。	Ma: 13.Yeah.	13.agreement
39	吴：14.来加拿大格种鱼老	Wu: 14.In Canada, this	14.comparison
40	贵额。	kind of fish is very	Other
41		expensive.	
42	(Wu talks about his	(Wu talks about his visit to	
43	visit to Washington DC	Washington DC and American	
44	and American food.)	food.)	

As we can see in Excerpt 5.1, the core compliment strategy "这三纹鱼啊！最好的啦！ This is salmon! The best!" (compliment utterance 1—henceforth C1) appears at the *beginning* of the core compliment sequence. It is followed by 13 support strategies of agreement, comment, repetition, intensification, comparison to self and comparison to other, aligning with, elaborating or emphasizing the core compliment strategy.

Excerpt 5.1 has only one core compliment strategy in the whole compliment-response sequence. In cases in which there is more than one core compliment strategy in a compliment-response sequence, the second (or any subsequent) core compliment strategy still usually appears at the *beginning* of the respective core compliment sequence. Excerpt 5.2 gives an example of the *beginning* position of the core compliment strategy in a multi-core compliment-response sequence. (Please note, when a compliment-response sequence has more than one core compliment strategy, it has more than one core compliment sequence.)

Excerpt 5.2 [88] "Xu's proposal for charity education will give him everlasting fame."

Situation: Mr. Wan [M, 52] and Mrs. Wan [F, 44] are among China's new entrepreneurs. They need help to get their daughter into a good college. Their friend Miss Hu [F, 43], who holds a government job, connects them to her friend Mr. Xu [M, 48], a professor in a college. Fan [F, 46] is Miss Hu's friend.

01		胡：好我，我来帮大家介绍	Hu: Let me... let me	
02		一下噢。	introduce everyone	
03		范：（笑）	Fan: (smiles)	
04		胡：先介绍，伊个，许老	Hu: First, let me introduce	
05		师。伊是两工大，两工	Prof. Xu. He's from the	
06		大额许老师。	Second Polytechnic	
07			University. Prof. Xu,	
08			from the Second	
09			Polytechnic University.	
10		范：噢。	Fan: Oh.	
11	→	胡：许国良。1.许老师老来	Hu: Xu Guoliang. 1.Prof. Xu	1.core 1
12		三额。	is outstanding	outstanding
13			(*exceedingly capable*).	
14		许：（笑）	Xu: (laughs)	
15		胡：2.现在来拉搞啥个慈善	Hu: 2.He's vigorously	2.comment
16		教育对伐？（对范）慈	promoting charity	
17		善教育侬晓得伐？侬大	education now. (to Fan)	
18		概勿晓得。	Do you know what charity	
19			education is? Probably	
20			not.	
21		范：（笑）勿晓得。	Fan: (laughs) No, I don't.	
22		胡：格位是国外来额朋友，	Hu: She's back from abroad.	
23		所以对国内情况全勿晓	So she doesn't know a	

24		得（笑）。	thing about things here. (chuckles)	
25				
26		胡：（对范）慈善教育，	Hu: (to Fan) Charity education. 3.Next time you should take more interest in it. Your newspapers over there are talking about it too. 4.It has made a big name!/It's all the rage.	
27		3.下趟侬多关心关心，		3.intensifi-cation
28		俫伊面报纸上也有额，		
29		4.名气瞎响！		4.intensifi-cation
30				
31				
32				
33				
34		范：叫啥伊个？现在叫啥？	Fan: What do you call... What do you call it?	
35				
36		许：慈善教育……	Xu: Charity education...	
37		(Xu explains what charity education is)	(Xu explains what charity education is)	
38				
39		胡：国内现在勿是伊个叫啥交关困难家庭嘛——	Hu: In China now there are a lot of what we call hardship families...	
40				
41				
42		许：我们主要是搞培训，搞助学，……（？）的问题。	Xu: We mainly run training programs, raise scholarships...(?)	
43				
44				
45		范：噢。	Fan: Oh.	
46		万：噢。	Mr.Wan: Oh.	
47		(Xu explains what kinds of students they enroll...)	(Xu explains what kinds of students they enroll...)	
48				
49				
50		胡：5.所以，许老师额伊格只慈善教育提案对伐，下趟好流芳百世额噢！	Hu: 5.So, Prof. Xu's proposal for charity education will give him everlasting fame. (will leave an everlasting name in history!)	5.intensifi-cation
51				
52				
53				
54				
55				
56		许：机会格是。	Xu: I just happened to have an opportunity.	
57				
58		万妻：6.肯定会额呀！	Mrs.Wan: 6.No doubt about it!	6.intensifi-cation
59		胡：〔7.格两日报纸上日日有额！	Hu: [7.It's been in the media every day recently.	7.intensifi-cation
60				
61				
62		许：〔我觉着自己也做了眼事体。	Xu: [I feel that I've done a bit of something.	
63				
64		范：对额。	Fan: Definitely.	
65		许：老巴东（？）多做眼事体。	Xu: An old dog/bumpkin tries to do more things.	
66				
67		（大家笑）	(all laugh)	
68	→	胡：8.全是义务做噢！	Hu: 8.It's all voluntary (uncompensated)!	8.core 2 dedication
69				

70	万妻：9.嗳。	Mrs.Wan: 9.Yeah.	9.agreement
71	范：10.义务做啊？！	Fan: 10.All voluntary?!	10.intensifi-
72	胡：11.伊拉真额老勿容	Hu: 11.They're really	cation
73	易，12.义务做噢，	extraordinary (*not*	11.intensifi-
74	〔13.经费全……按人	*easy*)! 12.All voluntary!	cation
75	头付额（？）	[13.Funding is... per	12.repetition
76		capita, depending on	13.comment
77		the number of people...	
78	范：〔14.格现在好像格种	Fan: [14.That's still quite	14.comparison
79	还蛮少额对伐？（笑）	uncommon nowadays, isn't	other
80		it? (laughs)	
81	许：啥啊？	Xu: What's that?	
82	范：15.（笑）义务做事体	Fan: 15.(laughs) To do	15.repetition
83	蛮少额（笑）。	voluntary work is still	
84		quite uncommon. (laughs)	
85	万妻：16.嗳，现在是。	Mrs.Wan: 16.Yeah, it's	16.agreement
86		uncommon now.	
87	万：17.嗳！	Mr.Wan: 17.Yeah.	17.agreement
88	胡：18.所以格只慈善教育	Hu: 18.That's why the	18.repetition
89	名气老大噢！19.国内	charity education	19.intensifi-
90	外全捐款噢！	project is so famous.	cation
91		19.Contributions come	
92		from across the country	
93		and across the world.	
94	范：嗳。	Fan: Oh.	
95	胡：20.海内外全捐款噢，	Hu: 20.Donations come from	20.repetition
96		both domestic and	
97		international.	
98	万：……（？）啊？	Mr.Wan: ...Oh.	
99	胡：嗳。	Hu: Yeah.	
100	万：格蛮忙噢？	Mr.Wan: You must be very	
101		busy.	
102	许：嗳，是蛮忙额，培训	Xu: Yeah, busy enough. All	
103	嘛。	that training to do.	
104	(talking about	(talking about continuing	
105	continuing education)	education)	

As we can see, there are two core compliment strategies in Excerpt 5.2: compliment

utterance 1 (C1) "许老师老来三额。Prof. Xu is outstanding (*exceedingly capable*)." and

compliment utterance 8 (C8) "全是义务做噢！It's all voluntary (uncompensated)!"

Core compliment strategy 1 leads the first core compliment sequence from line 1 to line

67 and line 88 to the end on the topic of Prof Xu's outstanding work on promoting

charity education. It is followed by nine support compliment strategies: one comment,

two repetitions and six intensifications to elaborate and emphasize the core compliment

strategy 1. Core compliment strategy 2 leads the second core compliment sequence from

line 68 to line 87 on the topic of Prof Xu's selfless dedication—not asking for any

compensation for all the work he does. It is also followed by nine support compliment

strategies: three agreements, one comment, one comparison, two repetitions, and two

intensifications to align with, elaborate and emphasize the core compliment strategy 2.

End Position

Although 97.5% of the core compliment strategies are positioned at the beginning

of the core compliment sequence, there are nine cases (1.7% of the 525) in which the core

compliment strategy appears at the end of the core compliment sequence as a summary

statement of the preceding specific descriptions. Excerpt 5.3 serves an example.

Excerpt 5.3 [59] "This mother-in-law is wonderful!"

Situation: Some friends, all college professors, are at the cafeteria having dinner together.
In the following part of the conversation, Huang [F, 54], Ding [F, 55], and Liang [F, 52]
are talking about Huang's son's fiancée, and how Huang goes out of her way to entertain
her daughter-in-law to be.

01	丁：……1.馄饨么吃吃对	Ding: ...1.Eat dumplings...	1.example
02	伐，		
03	梁：2.嗳，介热额天伊做	Liang: 2.What? She makes them	2.Intensifi-
04	啊？	in such hot weather?	cation
05	黄：冷面做做，	Huang: Make cold noodles...	
06	丁：3.嗳！冷面么做做！	Ding: 3.Listen, makes cold	3.example
07	4.嗳，嗳，做馄饨噢！	noodles! 4.Hey, hey...	4.repetition
08	5.心相好伐噢？	[she] makes dumplings!	5.Intensifi-
09		5.Such enthusiasm!	cation
10	王：（笑）	Wang: (laughs)	
11	梁：〔6.自家吃么随便乱吃	Liang: [6.When she eats alone	6.comparison
12	吃噢！7.啥物事还要吃	she eats whatever she	self

13	啥物事呕！	can grab. 7.Anything ... whatever she can grab.	7.repetition
14			
15			
16	丁：〔五个，嗳几个人啊？	Ding: [For five people... Hey, how many people?	
17			
18	黄：四个人。	Huang: Four people.	
19	丁：噢，四个人四个人，阿是四个人？ 8.还要做馄饨伊讲……	Ding: Oh, four people, four people... For four people, right? 8.She even makes dumplings ...	8.repetition
20			
21			
22			
23			
24	梁：阿姐来了！	Liang: [Your] sister's here?	
25	黄：嗳，格么毛脚呀！	Huang: Uh, she's my future daughter-in-law, not just anyone.	
26			
27			
28 →	梁：9.格阿婆交关好！	Liang: 9.This mother-in-law is wonderful!	9.core kindness
29			
30	丁：嗳，嗳，嗳，我……	Ding: Hey, hey, hey... I...	
31	(They talk about the daughter-in-law to be.)	(They talk about the daughter-in-law to be.)	
32			

Instead of a core compliment strategy, the core compliment sequence in Excerpt 5.3 starts with the specific descriptions of what Huang cooks for her future daughter-in-law: dumplings ("馄饨么吃吃对伐，") and cold noodles ("嗳！冷面么做做！") (C1, C3), both taking much trouble to make especially in the heat of summer in Shanghai ("嗳，介热额天伊做啊？ What? She makes them in such hot weather?" "心相好伐噢？ Such enthusiasm!") (C2, C5). Then in contrast to what Huang cooks for her future daughter-in-law, Liang comments on what Huang eats when she eats alone—whatever she can grab ("自家吃么随便乱吃吃噢！" "啥物事还要吃啥物事呕！") (C6, C7). Ding then tries to find out how many people Huang cooks for and emphasizes that Huang takes the trouble to make dumplings for so many people. All this specific description and emphasis could be interpreted differently (e.g., making too much fuss) without the last core compliment statement "格阿婆交关好！ This mother-in-law is wonderful!" (C9).

The last core compliment statement summarizes the preceding specific descriptions as Huang's kindness to her future daughter-in-law, and the preceding specific descriptions serve as support evidence to the claim "This mother-in-law is wonderful!"

Middle Position

Only four core compliment strategies (less than 1%) take the position in the *middle* of the core compliment sequence. The *middle* position is similar to the end position in that the core compliment sequence starts with specific comments/descriptions, follows with the core compliment strategy summarizing the comments that have been presented. The difference between the *middle* position and the end position is that the core compliment strategy at the end position has no support strategy following it, whereas the core compliment strategy in the *middle* position is followed by more support strategies further aligning with, elaborating and/or emphasizing the core compliment strategy.

<div align="center">

Composition

</div>

As has been stated in the introductory remarks of this chapter, the core compliment strategy introduces the compliment topic—the content of the compliment, or the object or attribute being complimented (e.g., appearance, ability, skill, achievement, personal trait, possession, etc.)—in the core compliment sequence. How is the content realized? An examination of the 525 core compliment strategies reveals that the content is brought out by two component parts of the core compliment strategy: an *assessable* and a *positive assessment*, largely due to the topic-comment structure of Chinese

sentences.[1] The "*assessable*" is what is being assessed, or what the compliment is about; the "*positive assessment*" is what is being said positively about the *assessable*, or a positive evaluation of the *assessable*. The *assessable* and the *positive assessment* together form the *topic* of the core compliment sequence, which is aligned with, elaborated and emphasized by the support compliment strategies. For example, in the core compliment strategy of Excerpt 5.1 "这三纹鱼啊！最好的啦！ This is salmon! The best! ," "三纹鱼, salmon" is the *assessable* of the core compliment strategy (what the compliment is about: the salmon dish), and "最好的啦, the best" is the *positive assessment* (what is being said positively about the *assessable* "the salmon dish": it is the best). Together, "the best salmon dish" forms the *topic* of the core compliment sequence, to be aligned with, elaborated and emphasized by 13 different support compliment strategies in the core compliment sequence.

Assessable

When examining the 525 core compliment strategies with regard to how the *assessable* is realized, a variety of lexical and syntactic forms are found to be used: noun phrases, pronouns, demonstratives, verb phrases, clauses, etc. The *assessable* realized by these forms (1) can be *reference-specific* (393, 75%), i.e., it specifies what the *assessable* is (e.g., in the core compliment strategy "这三纹鱼啊！最好的啦！ This is salmon! The best!," the *assessable* "三纹鱼, salmon" refers to a specific food "the salmon dish"); (2) can be *reference-nonspecific* (33, 6%), i.e., it does not specify what the *assessable* is (e.g.,

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[1] In linguistics, the **topic**, or **theme**, of a sentence is what is being talked about, and the **comment** (**rheme** or **focus**) is what is being said about the topic. The difference between "topic" and grammatical subject is that topic is used to describe the information structure, or pragmatic structure of a clause and how it coheres with other clauses, whereas the subject is a purely grammatical category. Retrieved from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Topic–comment.

in the core compliment strategy "外婆格能，邪气好， That's great, Granny.," "格能,
that" does not specify the *assessable*, and we do not know what "格能, that" refers to); or
(3) can have *no overt reference* (99, 19%), i.e., there is no reference to the *assessable* in
the core compliment strategy (e.g., in the core compliment strategy "喔唷！ 老灵额！
Wow! So cool!," we do not know who or what is being positively evaluated as "cool").
In the latter two cases, sequential context or situational context has to be examined to
locate the referenced or not overtly referenced *assessable*.

   Reference-specific. Out of the 525 core compliment strategies, 393 (75%) have a
reference-specific assessable, i.e., it specifies what the *assessable* is. The *reference-specific assessables* consist mostly of the following lexical and syntactic forms:

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(1) Reference-specific assessables
 Noun phrases that refer to people:
  names: e.g., 丁涵菱 (Ding Hanling), 老孙 (Lao [old] Sun), 俪露露 (your Lulu),
   etc.
  kinship terms: e.g., 伊拉囡五 (their daughter), 俪姆妈 (your mom), 格阿婆
   (This mother-in-law), 侬两个小人 (all your children), etc.
  titles: e.g., 赵处长 (Dean Zhao), 严主任 (Director Yan), 你们这位科长 (This
   director of yours), 我们的地陪 (our guide), etc.
 Personal pronouns that refer to people:
  first person pronoun: e.g., 我 (I, me), 阿拉 (I, we, us)
  second person pronoun: e.g., 你, 侬 ("you" singular), 您 ("you" singular, polite
   form), 你们, 俪 ("you" plural)
  third person pronoun: e.g., 他 (he), 她 (she), 伊 (he or she), 他们, 伊拉 (they)
 Personal pronoun (1st, 2nd or 3rd person) + Noun phrase (name, kinship term, title...):
  e.g., 阿拉中国人 (we Chinese), 你姚老师 (you Prof. Yao), 俪格批人 (you guys),
  谭立韦……伊 (Tan Liwei... he), etc.

> Noun phrases that refer to objects, attributes, etc.:
>
> > e.g., 侬格件衣裳 (this blouse of yours), 俫姆妈皮肤 (your mom's skin), 上趟伊个菜包子 (the vegetable buns you bought last time), 格只调料 (this sauce), 延安中学 (Yan'an High School), 你的语音 (your pronunciation), 老孙歌喉 (Lao Sun's voice), 侬迭搭额地段 (the area you live in here), 伊格套家具 (this set of furniture), 墙的颜色 (the color of the wall), 侬职业 (your career), etc.
>
> Verb phrases that mainly refer to action/performance:
>
> > e.g., 教书 (teaching), 保持苗条额身材 (to keep slim), 当时能参军 (to be able to join the army back then), 格能介隔开 (to partition the room like this), 有个倪子 (to have a son), etc.
>
> Clauses that mainly refer to action/performance:
>
> > e.g., 侬烧只菜饭 (you cook vegetable rice), 卫娟娟读书 (Wei Juanjuan studied at school), 元元开车子 (Yuan Yuan drives the car), 张医生搓麻将 (Dr. Zhang plays mahjong), 侬格能介烟酒勿沾 (you don't smoke or drink), etc.

Examples[2] 5.1 to 5.16 illustrate how the *reference-specific assessables* that refer to people are realized. Please note, the number of support compliment strategies listed in the right column is the total number of support compliment strategies employed in each compliment-response sequence.

Example Number	Core Strategy	Core Strategy English Translation	Number of Support Strategies
Noun phrases that refer to people (name, title, kinship term)			
(5.1)	（对大家说）阿拉小史勿要看伊年纪轻，老法师噢！	(speaking to other participants) Don't be deceived by **our Xiao Shi**'s youthful looks. She's master of the law.	8
(5.2)	（对莉莉说）**莉莉**已经来拉平常世界已经算走远了。	(speaking to Lili) **Lili**'s already… already gone far beyond the average guy.	8
(5.3)	（对大家说）**李偲民**嗳，**伊拉爸爸**。翻译家。	(speaking to other participants) **Li Liangmin**, **his dad**. Master translator.	16

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[2] All the examples here and throughout the dissertation are extracted from the compliment-response sequences from the data corpus.

(5.4)	（对医生说）**格个女婿**勿要太好噢！	(speaking to the complimentee, the doctor) **This son-in-law** is amazing!	3
(5.5)	（对别的病人病属说）**徐医生**真好，	(speaking to other patients and patient family members) **Dr. Xu** is so kind.	5
(5.6)	（对张股长说）听说**张股长**在股里威信很高，	(speaking to Chief Zhang) I heard **Chief Zhang** is highly respected in the bureau.	5
Personal pronouns (1st, 2nd, or 3rd person)			
(5.7)	自家看看格我讲我觉着**我**蛮好看额么！ （笑）	Looking at myself I think **I** look pretty good. (laughs)	5
(5.8)	**你**过去十几年为学校做了很多有益的工作，	**You** did a lot of useful things for the university in the past decade and more.	6
(5.9)	今朝**俫**是，外交大臣！	Today... **you**'re the foreign ministers.	2
(5.10)	（对客人杨说）**伊**（邻居周）是阿拉帮困对象！	(speaking to the guest Yang) **He**'s (neighbor Zhou) our go-to guy.	9
(5.11)	（对卢审计说）像**伊拉**人生经历丰富来，	(speaking to auditor Lu) **They**'re (Lu and other auditors) rich in life experiences.	16
Personal pronoun (1st, 2nd or 3rd person) + Noun phrase (name, title, kinship term...)			
(5.12)	格个看起来好像**阿拉中国人**还有点优点（笑）， （皮肤细）	It seems **we Chinese** have our strengths (laughs). (referring to skin)	3
(5.13)	……我所以讲呢，**俫子妹**倒全是读书人！	...That's why I say... **you siblings** (you and your brothers) are all scholarly people.	4
(5.14)	**俫**，**俫老三界额人**出人才额人勿要太多噢！	So many people of talent have emerged from **you**... **you graduates of 1966, 67, and 68**.	16
(5.15)	**你姚老师**也是追求自然的，	**You Prof. Yao** like a natural look.	7
(5.16)	格阿拉，**阿拉许老师**呢，**伊**，剧作大将，	This is our... **our Teacher Xu**... **he**'s... the great master playwright.	2

As can be seen from Examples 5.1 to 5.16, the *reference-specific assessables* that refer to people (i.e., assessables which specify who is being assessed, or who the compliment is about) are realized by using noun phrases (names, kinship terms, or job/position titles),

personal pronouns, or a combination of the two. They are used to refer to the

complimentee (e.g., "徐医生 Dr. Xu" in Example 5.5; "你 you" in Example 5.8) or a

person closely related to the complimentee (e.g., "李很民嗳，伊拉爸爸 Li Liangmin,

his dad" in Example 5.3). It is interesting to observe that (1) noun phrases of names,

titles and kinship terms are not only frequently used to identify/reference the

complimentee when directing the compliment to other participants in a multi-party

conversation (understandable), they are also frequently used (instead of an unmarked

second person pronoun) when directing the compliment to the complimentee **with or**

without the third party present. For instance, in Example 5.1 the complimenter uses

the complimentee's name "阿拉小史 our Xiao Shi" when speaking to other participants

at the dinner party, while in Example 5.2 the complimenter uses the complimentee's

name "莉莉 Lili" when complimenting "莉莉 Lili" without the third party present. A

second person pronoun is normally used in similar situations in most compliment studies.

(2) Similar usage is observed with third person pronouns. (The marked) third person

pronouns are frequently used in a multi-party conversation to reference the complimentee

when directing the compliment to the third party, or when directing the compliment to the

complimentee **but always with the third party present**. The sequential context (e.g.,

mentioning the name in the prior turn) or situational context (e.g., looking at the

complimentee, or the conversation only has three participants) usually makes it clear who

the third person pronoun is referring to. For instance, in Example 5.10 the complimenter

uses the third person pronoun "伊 he" to refer to the complimentee "周 Zhou" (the

neighbor) when speaking to the third party "杨 Yang" (the guest). Since "杨 Yang" is

the only third party present, there is no confusion as to whom "伊 he" is referring to. In

Example 5.11 the complimenter uses the third person pronoun "伊拉 they" to refer to the complimentee, the auditors, when complimenting/speaking to the auditors, with the third party (other accountants) present. Unlike the noun phrases, third person pronoun is never observed to be used when complimenting the complimentee directly in a two party conversation. (3) First person pronouns are usually used to refer to the complimentee— the complimenter's self—when engaging in self-complimenting. For instance, in Example 5.7, the complimenter uses "我 I" to refer to the complimentee—herself. (4) The use of the combination of a personal pronoun and a noun phrase to specify the assessable is also interesting. It is observed that in most such cases, the noun phrase is used to further define/specify the personal pronoun in the assessable. For instance, "中国人 Chinese" in Example 5.12 further specifies "阿拉 we"; in Examples 5.13 and 5.14, "子妹 siblings" and "老三界额人, graduates of 1966, 67, and 68" further specify "侬 you" in each example. The further specification ensures no confusion about which "membership group" is being positively assessed. In Example 5.16, several playwrights are being introduced to Bureau Chief Wu, which justifies the use of the name and title "阿拉许老师 our Teacher Xu" before the third person pronoun "伊 he" to emphasize who is being introduced.

Examples 5.17 to 5.21 illustrate how noun phrases that refer to objects or attributes are used to realize the *reference-specific assessable*.

Example Number	Core Strategy	Core Strategy English Translation	Number of Support Strategies
Noun phrases that refer to objects, attributes, etc.			
(5.17)	郭老师，您的**方戒**真漂亮，让我看看好吗？	Prof. Guo, your **ring**'s really beautiful, could I have a look?	8

(5.18)	头发么像个淑女一样……	Your **hair** is like a girl's...	8
(5.19)	绵绵**馄饨**老好吃额今朝！	Mian Mian, your **wontons** are delicious… today!	39
(5.20)	侬编额**教材**到现在，到现在无人超越啊！	The **textbooks** you compiled... they've never been surpassed.	15
(5.21)	毛毛的**生活能力**老强额！	*Mao Mao's **life ability** very strong.* Mao Mao has strong **survival skills**.	29

Instead of specifying who the compliment is about, the *reference-specific assessables* in Examples 5.17 to 5.21 specify what is being positively assessed, or what the compliment is about. They are realized by using noun phrases that refer to a specific object or attribute, such as an item of possession ("您的方戒, your ring"), a physical feature ("头发, your hair"), a specific food ("馄饨, your wontons"), an achievement ("侬编额教材, the textbooks you compiled"), or a skill/ability ("生活能力, *life ability*/survival skills").

Examples 5.22 to 5.31 illustrate how *reference-specific assessables* that refer to action/practice/performance are realized by using verb phrases and clauses.

Example Number	Core Strategy	Core Strategy English Translation	Number of Support Strategies
Verb phrases that mainly refer to action/practice/performance				
(5.22)	听力格物事，**编格物事**，也要交关辰光花起来额！	*Listening material... **compile the material**... need a lot of time spend.* Listening material... **compiling the material**... it would take a lot of time.	17
(5.23)	**当时能参军**是不错的！	*Back then could join the army pretty good.* [You] were lucky **to join the army back then** [when we were all working on the farm].	11
(5.24)	噢，**打电脑**蛮好额！	*Oh, **work computer** great!* Oh, it's great **to have a computer job**.	9

(5.25)	上海有格样子房子勿错了。	***Shanghai [to] have such apartment*** *pretty amazing.* It's pretty amazing [for a non-Shanghai resident] **to have such an apartment in Shanghai**.	38
(5.26)	蹲国外么格种就算，**保持苗条额身材**是算好额来！	Living abroad, this would be... **to keep slim** is desirable.	14
Clauses that mainly refer to action/practice/performance			
(5.27)	**侬格只厕所间弄了格只〔电风扇〕**，老高级额么。	***You this bathroom installed this [electric fan]***, *so high class/super.* It's super that you installed an electric fan in the bathroom.	6
(5.28)	侬迭个，侬，**侬格搭供得了格种本事**真额是，	*You... you...* ***you here are able to retain such kind skill*** *really is something...* You... you... How... how can you retain such a highly skilled chef?	10
(5.29)	格么**侬蹲了伊面教中文**是有特色额呀！	*But* ***you over there teach Chinese*** *is unique.* But it's unique that you teach Chinese over there.	7
(5.30)	……嗳顾仁芳**侬牺牲自家**寻勿着额噢！	*...Oh Gu Renfang* ***you sacrifice everything*** *can't be found!* ...Oh Gu Renfang, you sacrifice everything [for your parents]... you can't find people like that.	8
(5.31)	不过钱老师，象**侬格能介烟酒勿沾**对伐，是蛮少额，	*But Prof. Qian, like* ***you cigarette alcohol not touch***, *are very few.* But Prof. Qian, there's very few people like you who don't smoke or drink.	7

The *reference-specific assessables* in Examples 5.22 to 5.31 specify mainly what action/practice/performance is being positively assessed. They are realized by using verb phrases or clauses that refer to a specific action/practice/performance that the complimentee performs as a skill (e.g., "编格物事, compiling the [listening] material"; "侬格只厕所间弄了格只〔电风扇〕, you installed an electric fan in the bathroom"), ability (e.g., "当时能参军, to be able to join the army back then [when others were all

working on the farm]"; "俚格搭供得了格种本事, you here [restaurant] are able to retain such a highly skilled chef"), career (e.g., "打电脑, to have a computer job"; "侬蹲了伊面教中文, you teach Chinese over there [abroad]"), achievement (e.g., "上海有格样子房子, [for a non-Shanghai resident] to have such an apartment in Shanghai"), or personal trait/character ("保持苗条额身材, to keep slim"; "侬牺牲自家, you sacrifice everything [for your parents]"; "侬格能介烟酒勿沾, you don't smoke or drink"), etc.

Reference-nonspecific. Out of 525 core compliment strategies, 33 (6%) have a *reference-nonspecific assessable*, i.e., it does not specify what the assessable is. The *reference-nonspecific assessables* consist mainly of the following lexical and syntactic forms:

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(2) Reference-nonspecific assessables

Demonstrative pronouns:

e.g., 这, 格, 这个, 格额, 迭额, 格能, 那 (this, that), etc.

Generic terms:

Using a general category (a class or group of people or things) to refer to a specific person, object, attribute, action, etc.

e.g., 真额，我回来呶，看到**上海人**全勿变额！ (Honest. I return to Shanghai and see [you] **people in Shanghai** haven't changed at all!)

Both demonstrative pronouns and generic terms are *reference-nonspecific*; they do not specify what is being positively assessed. Their reference is context-dependent. A demonstrative pronoun can index a specific thing or situation in discourse. A generic term refers to all members of a class, group, or kind. When a *reference-nonspecific* demonstrative pronoun or generic term is used to realize the assessable, the sequential context (e.g., the prior turn(s)) or situational context has to be examined to locate the referenced assessable.

Examples 5.32 to 5.35 illustrate how *reference-nonspecific* demonstrative

pronouns (in boldface) are used to index the referenced assessable (underlined utterances).

Example Number	Core Strategy	Core Strategy English Translation	Referenced Assessable
Reference-nonspecific assessable: demonstrative pronouns			
(5.32)	陈教授：我朋友，<u>脚不好</u>，请张医生看看。 朱教授：噢，那好，他**这个**，最有办法！	Prof. Chen: My friend here is <u>having trouble with her leg</u>. She's here to see Dr. Zhang. Prof. Zhu : Oh, no problem. **It**'s right up his alley. (***This***, *he has the best solution/expertise*.)	treat the leg problem
(5.33)	沈：心脏勿好。 云：嗳，心脏勿好。 沈：我别样没啥。 云：嗳。 沈：但是<u>我有得事体出来勿摆了心上额，我老丢得开额，随便啥事体想也勿去想伊，</u>啥个⋯⋯ 云：嗳，是额，外婆**格能**，邪气好⋯⋯	Shen: Heart trouble. Yun: Yeah, heart trouble. Shen: I don't have anything else wrong with me. Yun: No. Shen: But <u>I don't let things get to me. No matter what happens, I can always put it out of my mind. Never think about it.</u> Things like... Yun: **That**'s great, granny.	attitude: take everything philosophi-cally
(5.34)	万：迭额，呴，调上来了，<u>房子么，应该讲有一套，一只厅</u>。 许：<u>格单位买额</u>? 万：<u>嗳</u>。 许：**格**真额老好来！	Mr. Wan: You see, if they (staff) were recruited, they should <u>have a suite... with one family room</u>. Prof. Xu: So your <u>company buys it for them</u>? Mr. Wan: <u>Yeah</u>. Prof. Xu: **That**'s really amazing!	company buys apartments for staff
(5.35)	薛：<u>反正勿大呢善于讲，但是呢，做起来蛮老鬼额。</u> （大家笑） 张：<u>看行动，看行动额！</u>（笑） 连：**那**也是成功的因素之一。 张：对对对对，对额。所以呢，伲假使想做老板呢	Xue: I'm <u>not much good at talking, but I'm tops when it comes to doing it.</u> (Everyone laughs) Zhang: <u>Action... Doing is what counts!</u> (laughs) Lian: **That**'s one of the reasons why he's so successful. Zhang: Yeah, yeah... That's right. If you want to own	not good at words but deeds

	就，先，琢磨琢磨他，	a business, you should first do a case study of him.	

The assessables in the core compliment strategies in Examples 5.32 to 5.35 consist of

different forms of demonstrative pronouns: "这个," "格能," "格," and "那" ("this,"

"that"). Although these demonstrative pronouns are *reference-nonspecific*, i.e., they do

not specify what the assessable is, the coparticipants know what is being positively

assessed since all the referenced assessables in these examples are in the sequential

context. They are in the complimenter's, the third party's, or the complimentee's prior

turn(s), or in the interaction between the complimenter, the third party and the

complimentee. For instance, in Example 5.32, the demonstrative pronoun "这个, *this*"

used in Prof. Zhu's core compliment strategy refers to treating leg problems ("脚不好")

stated in the third party Prof. Chen's prior turn. The demonstrative pronoun "格能, that"

in Example 5.33 refers to the positive attitude—taking everything philosophically—

expressed in the complimentee Granny Shen's entire prior turn. The assessable (Mr.

Wan's company buying apartments for the staff) indexed by the demonstrative pronoun

"格, this" in Example 5.34, and the assessable (Xue not good at words but tops when it

comes to deeds) indexed by the demonstrative pronoun "那, that" in Example 5.35 are in

the interactive turns between the complimentee Mr. Wan and the complimenter Prof. Xu,

and between the complimentee Xue and the third party Zhang, respectively (see

underlined utterances).

Examples 5.36 and 5.37 illustrate how *reference-nonspecific* generic terms (in

boldface) are used to index the referenced assessable (underlined utterances).

Example Number	Core Strategy	Core Strategy English Translation	Referenced Assessable
Reference-nonspecific assessable: generic terms			
(5.36)	胡：　许老师人呒没架子额！ 万妻：嗳。 许：　架子啥用场架子！？ 范：　（笑）**有真才实学的人**呒没架子额。 （笑）	Hu: <u>Prof. Xu</u> doesn't put on airs! Mrs. Wan: Yeah. Prof. Xu: What's the use of putting on airs!? Airs. Fan: (laughs) **People who have real talent and learning/ really know something** never put on airs. (laughs)	Professor Xu
(5.37)	童：<u>姚清清</u>侬是好写写书老啥，格也是搞副业呀，对伐？写写书老啥。 姚：啊？ 童：……<u>侬</u>现在是，反正侬格，**有了眼名额人**全来拉写书。	Tong: <u>Yao Qingqing</u> you should write books. It's a [good, profitable] "sideline"... write books. Yao: What did you say? Tong: ...<u>You</u> now... <u>you</u>... **People who have made a name for themselves** are all writing books.	Yao, who has published successful textbooks

The assessables in the core compliment strategies in Examples 5.36 and 5.37 consist of generic terms: "有真才实学的人, people who have real talent and learning/really know something" and "有了眼名额人, people who have made a name for themselves," each of which denotes a general membership group. However, they are used to reference specific individuals: "许教授 Prof. Xu" and "姚清清 Yao Qingqing." How do we know these two generic terms reference two specific individuals? Similar to the use of demonstrative pronouns, the interpretation of generic reference is context-dependent. Sequential context or situational context has to be examined to locate the referenced assessable. Take Example 5.36 for instance. Regardless of the prior conversation in which Prof. Xu was introduced as a distinguished, talented professor with renowned accomplishments (see Excerpt 5.2, p. 117), in the prior turns of the compliment sequence in Example 5.36,

Prof. Xu is complimented by Hu and Mrs. Wan as a casual person who "doesn't put on airs" ("许老师人吭没架子额！"). Fan then attributes the quality of "never put on airs" ("全吭没架子额") to the class of people "who have real talent and learning" ("有真才实学的人"). By association, Fan implies that Prof. Xu is a person "who has real talent and learning" since he "doesn't put on airs." The same applies to Example 5.37. In Tong's prior turn, he urges Yao to write books. In Tong's unfinished utterance in the second turn, he uses second person pronoun "侬现在是, **you** now..." to refer to Yao. Immediately after that, he associates "people who have made a name for themselves" ("有了眼名额人") with writing books ("全来拉写书, are all writing books"). This implies that Yao is one of the people "who have made a name for themselves." In fact, in several prior compliment sequences, Yao is admired for being successful and famous: she has taught English in the Shanghai Broadcasting Station, and she has published very successful textbooks that are used everywhere in China. The sequential contexts show that the two generic terms in the two examples reference two specific individuals, not two general membership groups.

No overt reference. A considerable 19% (99) of 525 core compliment strategies have *no overt reference to the assessable*, only a positive assessment. By "*no overt*," it means there is still an assessable for the positive assessment but "buried" somewhere. It can be located either (a) in *the sequential context* (in the same turn where the core compliment is initiated; in the complimenter's, the third party's, or the complimentee's prior turn(s); or in the post turn(s)), or (b) in *the situational context* (the complimentee or other shows something, or the complimenter sees something).

Examples 5.38 to 5.44 illustrate how the *non-overtly referenced assessables*

(underlined words or utterances) are specified in *the sequential context*. (The utterances

in boldface are positive assessments.)

Example Number	Core Strategy	Core Strategy English Translation	Non-Overtly Referenced Assessable
Reference in sequential context: reference in complimenter's same turn			
(5.38)	项：认得伐？ 高：认得！侬是……<u>项家慧</u>！**高升了**，又升上去了！	Xiang: Recognize me? Gao: Of course! You are... <u>Xiang Jiahui</u>. **Promoted**. Promoted again!	Xiang Jiahui
(5.39)	主任：我总觉得<u>你</u>，嗯，跟<u>你</u>谈谈呢，不管什么事吧人家象个办事样子！**比较够朋友**！	Director: I keep having this feeling... uh... talking with <u>you</u>... anything <u>you</u> do, you're professional. [You] **act like a friend**.	you (company general manager)
Reference in sequential context: reference in prior complimenter's or third party's turn			
(5.40)	张：我发觉美国水土是好！我今朝发觉<u>侬</u>是老漂亮额好像！ 大家：（大笑） 林：（大笑） 李：嗳，**精神也好**。	Zhang: I now realize the environment (*air, water and land*) in America is truly great. I just realized today how beautiful <u>you</u> are! Everyone: (laughs out loud) Lin: (laughs out loud) Li: Yeah. **Fresh and spirited**, too.	you (Lin)
(5.41)	赵：〔<u>谭立韦</u>属于是少数成功人士啊！ 任：〔…… 谭：〔…… 赵：少数成功人士啊！ 韩：嗳。 赵：对伐？嗳！ 韩：就讲成功，**而且成功了辰光长**。	Zhao: [<u>Tan Liwei</u> is one of only a handful of success stories! Ren: [... Tan: [... Zhao: [A handful of success stories! Han: Yeah. Zhao: Isn't it so? Yeah. Han: [He's] not only successful, but [his] **success has lasted**.	Tan Liwei

Reference in sequential context: reference in prior complimentee's turn			
(5.42)	锦：呅阿拉平常蛮注意保养额，蛮注意保养额。是迭个，侬看天天，<u>我像我现在烟酒勿碰额</u>。 融：嗳，**好呀**！	Jin : Well, [actually] we pay a lot of attention to health care, pay a lot of attention to health care. Uh, you see every day, you know <u>now I do not touch cigarettes or alcohol</u>. Rong: [That's] **so great**!	do not smoke or drink alcohol
(5.43)	陶审计：……我吭没我没考大学，<u>我吭没考进大学我就进了税务局</u>。 经理：**天才**！做财经啊？	Auditor Tao: ...<u>I didn't go to college... I went straight to the taxation bureau</u>. Manager: **Genius**! Doing finance now?	no college degree but got taxation bureau job
Reference in sequential context: reference in post turn			
(5.44)	宋：**洋来**，现在！（笑） 叶：洋伐？ 杨：啥人？ 叶：伊讲<u>我</u>洋。洋派。 宋：（笑）洋伐，<u>伊</u>？蛮洋额噢？（笑） 杨：嗳，伊么当然！	Song: **Very modern and Western-looking** now. (laughs) Ye: Western-looking, right? Yang: Who are you talking about? Ye: She says <u>I</u>'ve gone Western. Western style. Song: (laughs) Gone Western… <u>she</u> has…hasn't she? (laughs) Yang: Yeah, she... of course!	Ye

The core compliment strategies in Examples 5.38 to 5.44 have *no overt reference to the assessable*, only the positive assessment. The *non-overtly referenced assessable* in each example is specified in *the sequential context*. In Examples 5.38 and 5.39, the assessables "项家慧, Xiang Jiahui" and "你, you" are in the utterances right before the core compliment strategies in the same turn. The assessables in Examples 5.40 to 5.41 "侬 [林], you [Lin]" and "谭立韦, Tan Liwei" are in the prior complimenters' (Zhang's and Zhao's) turns, whereas the assessables in Example 5.42 and 5.43 "我现在烟酒勿碰额。 I do not touch cigarettes or alcohol." and "我吭没考进大学我就进了税务局。 I

didn't go to college... I went straight to the taxation bureau." are stated in the complimentees' (Jin's and Auditor Tao's) prior turns. Example 5.44 shows an instance of the assessable in the post turn. Song's core compliment strategy "洋来，现在！ Very modern and Western-looking now." has *no overt reference to the assessable*. The coparticipants do not know who is being positively assessed, evidenced by Yang's question "啥人？ Who are you talking about?" Although Ye's response in the form of a confirmation question "洋伐？ Western-looking, right?" shows that she knows Song's compliment is directed at her, the response could also be heard/considered as an agreement strategy from a third party. However, the pronoun references in the responses from Ye ("伊讲**我**洋。 She says **I**'ve gone Western.") and Song ("洋伐，**伊**？ Gone Western... **she** has...hasn't she?") in the next two turns specify that Ye is the assessable of the positive assessment.

Excerpt 5.4 illustrates in a complete compliment-response sequence how the *non-overtly referenced assessables* are specified in *the sequential context*—in the prior complimentee's turns.

Excerpt 5.4 [127] "Wow! That's incredible!"

Situation: Kong [F] has invited her old high school friends Lian [M], Pan [F], and some others for a reunion at her new apartment. They are all around 47 years old. Since they haven't seen Lian for many years, Lian is updating them about his career achievement, how he returned to Shanghai from Anhui Province after the Cultural Revolution.

01	连：……调过去么调了滁县	Lian: I was transferred...	
02	地委，	transferred to Chu	
03		County Party Committee.	
04	孔：嗯。	Kong: Yeah.	
05	连：格辰光呢，先到保密委	Lian: At the time... first	
06	员会，后头来到地	assigned to the	
07	委……	Security Committee...	
08		then to the Party	

09			Committee...	
10	→	潘：1.结棍额，2.侬一直蹲	Pan: 1.That's something...	1.core 1
11		了政府机关里厢工作！	2.you were always	career
12		（笑）	working in the	achievement
13			government! (laughs)	2.comment
14		孔：3.嗳（笑）。	Kong: 3.Yeah (laughs).	3.agreement
15		连：伊辰光工作呢好像还是	Lian: The work seemed to be	
16		蛮好……（谈他具体做	quite good at the	
17		什么）	time... (talks about	
18			what he did)	
19		连：……格么，工作是老轻	Lian: ...yeah, the work was	
20		松额，但是呢，伊一直	light and easy... but	
21		想回上海，觉着上海瞎	she (Lian's wife) was	
22		嗲。	always wanting to come	
23			back to Shanghai...	
24			always had the feeling	
25			that Shanghai is the	
26			best.	
27		孔：嗳。	Kong: Yeah.	
28		连：我勿大想回上海，为啥	Lian: But I didn't want to	
29		呢，上海屋里厢房子老	come back to	
30		挤额，	Shanghai... my place	
31			was too crowded.	
32		潘：噢。	Pan: Yeah.	
33		孔：嗳嗳，对额对额。	Kong: Yeah, yeah. You're	
34			right.	
35		连：（谈住房问题）……	Lian: (talks about	
36		我伊辰光读函授，	housing)... I was	
37			taking a correspondence	
38			course.	
39		孔：嗯。	Kong: Yeah.	
40		连：正好毕业子以后	Lian: On graduation...	
41		呢，……正好上海县呢	coincidentally, the	
42		老需要，检察院老啥老	County of Shanghai was	
43		需要人额，	badly in need of... the	
44			District Attorney's	
45			Office was terribly in	
46			need of people	
47			(lawyers).	
48		孔：对额。	Kong: Yes.	
49		连：格麽我呢，回来之前我	Lian: So I... Before I came	
50		一个头到……（？不清	back I went by myself	
51		楚）我想通过律师……	to... (? not clear) I	
52			wanted to pass	
53			lawyers...	
54		孔：嗳嗳。	Kong: Yeah, yeah.	

55		连：参加全国律师大会考。	Lian: ...I wanted to participate in the national examinations for lawyers.	
56				
57				
58				
59	→	潘：4.喔唷！	Pan: 4.Wow!	4.core 2 academic achievement
60		孔：5.格蛮结棍噢！	Kong: 5.That's incredible!	
61		潘：6.嗳！	Pan: 6.Yeah!	
62		孔：阿是啊？7.律师老难考额！	Kong: That's for sure. 7.Bar Exams are terribly difficult.	5.agreement
63				6.agreement
64				7.comment
65		潘：8.外加伊，伊等于是自学！	Pan: 8.It was worse for him... since he was learning through a correspondence course (*it's like self-taught*).	8.comment
66				
67				
68				
69				
70				
71		孔：9.嗳！	Kong: 9.Yeah.	9.agreement
72		连：……单一额函授教育。	Lian: ...Only through a correspondence course	
73				
74		潘：嗳。	Pan: Yeah.	
75		连：好就好在，我正好，现炒现卖啦全是，	Lian: I had the advantage of taking the exams right after having studied the courses.	
76				
77				
78				
79		孔：嗳嗳。	Kong: Yeah, yeah.	
80		连：刚刚毕业子以后，	Lian: Right after I graduated...	
81				
82		孔：嗳嗳，马上就……	Kong: Yeah, yeah... Right after ...	
83				
84		连：就去考了，	Lian: I went to take the exam.	
85				
86		潘：嗯嗯。	Pan: Um hum.	
87		连：所以我，整额地区我考第一名。	Lian: So... huh... I scored No. 1 in the district.	
88				
89		孔：嗳嗳。	Kong: Yeah, yeah.	
90	→	潘：10.喔唷！	Pan: 10.Wow!	10.core 3 excellent academic performance
91		连：结果好了，一记头调令调好子以后跑到一只检察院复试，……结果拿我弄到检察院去了。	Lian: A transfer order came right away... after the second-round examinations, I was transferred to the Department of Prosecution.	
92				
93				
94				
95				
96				
97				
98	→	孔：嗯。11.蛮好，12.蛮好！	Kong: Hum... 11.great, 12.great!	11.core 4 career achievement
99				
100		(Lian continues to talk	(Lian continues to talk about	

101 102 103 104	about how he was promoted from County of Shanghai to the City of Shanghai.)	how he was promoted from County of Shanghai to the City of Shanghai.)	12.repetition

Four core compliment strategies are observed in Excerpt 5.4, three from Pan ("结棍额，That's something..."; "喔唷！ Wow!"; "喔唷！ Wow!") (C1, C4, C10) and one from Kong ("蛮好， great,") (C11). All four core compliments have *no overt reference to the assessable*—what the compliment is about; they only have a positive assessment. Pan's first core compliment strategy positively assesses Lian's career achievement/promotion: being transferred [from the farm work] first to the Chu County Security Committee and then to the Chu County Party Committee ("调过去么调了滁县地委，" "先到保密委员会，后头来到地委……") (lines 1–3, 5–9). Pan's second and third core compliment strategies positively assess Lian's academic achievement: Lian took the national examinations for lawyers and scored No. 1 in the district after taking only a correspondence course ("我伊辰光读函授，" "我想通过律师……参加全国律师大会考。" "整额地区我考第一名。") (lines 36–38, 51–53, 55–58, 87–88). The fourth core compliment strategy by Kong positively assesses Lian's career achievement: his further promotion to the Department of Prosecution ("一记头调令调好子以后……结果拿我弄到检察院去了。") (lines 91–97). All four *non-overtly referenced assessables* are in the complimentee Lian's turns prior to each core compliment strategy given by Pan or Kong.

Examples 5.45 to 5.48 illustrate how the *non-overtly referenced assessables* (underlined utterances) are specified in *the situational context*. (The utterances in boldface are positive assessments.)

Example Number	Core Strategy	Core Strategy English Translation	Non-Overtly Referenced Assessable
Reference in situational context: complimentee (or other) shows something			
(5.45)	玮琦：我带了两套，呶，我已经拨了……呶，格张拨侬。 文娟：谢谢！谢谢！**喔唷！老灵额！**	Weiqi: I brought two sets. I've already given... <u>Here, this sheet goes to you.</u> Wenjuan: Thank you, thank you! **Wow! So beautiful!**	shows gift of stamps
(5.46)	周：俹台子是圆额还是方啊？ 刘：我们是圆的。 周：噢，正好！太好了！<u>我妈妈说这块圆的给你们，一样的，</u>一模一样的（指铺在周桌子上的桌布）。 刘：真的啊？ 周：嗳。 刘：**哎哟，老灵的呕！**	Zhou: Do you have a round table or a square table? Liu: A round one. Zhou: Great. That's just great. <u>My mom says to give you this round [tablecloth].</u> It's the same... exactly the same (referring to the one Zhou has on her table). Liu: Really? Zhou: Yeah. Liu: **Wow... exquisite, isn't it!**	shows gift of table cloth
Reference in situational context: complimenter sees something			
(5.47)	（池教授来看他以前的同事张院长） 池：多少年了，**不老不老。**侬真额一点不老，一点不老。 张：你也不老，还比以前萧洒多了。人蛮神气。	(Prof. Chi is visiting his former colleague Dean Zhang.) Chi: It's been so many years. **Not old at all.** Really, not a bit older. Not a bit older. Zhang: You're not old either. More handsome than ever. And [you're] in great spirits.	Chi and Zhang see each other's appearance
(5.48)	客 2：格侬，侬，送个，自己买额房子多少大啊？ 客 1：也小来西额，也两室一厅， 客 2：噢， 客 1：加起来……（男主人和女主人端着虾进来）**喔唷——！老灵呕——！** 客 2：嗳！	Guest 2: You... you... eh... how big is the apartment you bought? Guest 1: Also very small... also two bedrooms one living room. Guest 2: Oh. Guest 1: Altogether... (the host and hostess bring in the shrimp) **Wow:::!** [Look] **so delicious:::!** Guest 2: Yeah!	Guest 1 sees the shrimp dish

The core compliment strategies in Examples 5.45 to 5.48 have *no overt reference to the assessable*, only the positive assessment. The *non-overtly referenced assessable* in each example is specified in *the situational context*. The situational context can be *the complimentee or other showing something*, often accompanied with the announcement of the showing or giving: Weiqi shows and gives Wenjuan the stamps in Example 5.45 ("呧，格张拨侬。 Here, this sheet goes to you."), or Zhou takes out the table cloth for Liu and points to the one of the same style Zhou has on her table in Example 5.46 ("我妈妈说这块圆的给你们，一样的，一模一样的。 My mom says to give you this round [tablecloth]. It's the same... exactly the same."). The situational context can also be *the complimenter seeing something*: Prof. Chi sees his former colleague Dean Zhang's young-looking appearance (Example 5.47), and Guest 1 sees the delicious looking shrimp dish brought in by the host and the hostess (Example 5.48).

Excerpt 5.5 illustrates in a complete compliment-response sequence how the *non-overtly referenced assessable* is specified in *the situational context*.

Excerpt 5.5 [158] "Wow! You're serving the very best of tonics."

Situation: At a high school class reunion. He [M, 44], the host, has ordered many high class dishes to honor the reunion. The waitress brings a delicacy—turtle, which is very expensive. Li [M], Xu [M], Zhang [M], Ma [F], Cao [F], Tang [F], Jiang [F], Qiu [F], and Chang [F] are all around 45 years old.

01		女服务员：……甲鱼。	Waitress: ...Turtle.	
02	→	马：1.喔唷!	Ma: 1.Wow!	1.core
03	→	曹：2.喔唷! 侬。	Cao: 2.Wow, you...	hospitality
04	→	唐：3.喔唷! 4.何剑青侬特	Tang: 3.Wow, 4.He Jianqing,	2.agreement
05		别弄……	you went to all the	3.agreement
06			trouble of...	4.comment
07	→	邱，江，张，常，徐：5-9.	Qiu,Jiang,Zhang,Chang,Xu:	5-9.agreement
08		喔唷!	5-9.Wow!	
09		唐：10.何剑青格是，真	Tang: 10.He Jianqing, you	10.intensifi-
10		是……!	really...	cation

11	何：还好，勿算啥。	He: It's okay. It's really	
12		not a big deal...	
13	李：11. 最高一当的补品全	Li: 11.You're serving the	11.comment
14	拿出来了！	very best of tonics.	
15	（大家笑）	(all laugh)	
16	徐：〔东方人讲补的迭	Xu: [Asians believe tonics	
17	个……（笑）	lift your spirits and	
18		energize your body...	
19		(laughs)	
20	张：〔让侬一次补个够！	Zhang: [Now you can have the	
21	（笑）	full range of tonic	
22		benefits at one meal.	
23	(They talk about	(They talk about turtle.)	
24	turtle.)		
25	曹：12. 何剑青今朝叫的菜全	Cao: 12.He Jianqing	12.comment
26	是，好菜！（笑）	ordered nothing but	
27		the best today.	
28		(laughs)	
29	张：13. 何剑青格眼菜全顶级	Zhang: 13.Everything He	13.intensifi-
30	了全！	Jianqing ordered is	cation
31		of superior class.	
32	马：14. 何剑青老客气的今	Ma: 14.He Jianqing is	14.intensifi-
33	朝！	being too generous	cation
34		today.	
35	何：勿客气，格搭好优惠的	He: Don't be so	
36	（笑），勿结棍	complimentary. They	
37	（笑），是好优惠。	have discounts here	
38		(laughs). It [the	
39		price] isn't bad	
40		(laughs). They give	
41		you a discount.	
42	常：优惠（笑），老顾客	Chang: Discounts (laughs)for	
43	（笑）。	regular customers.	
44	(They go on to talk	(They go on to talk about the	
45	about the banking	banking business.)	
46	business.)		

As we can see in Excerpt 5.5 the core compliment strategy initiated by Ma "喔唷！

Wow!" (C1) has *no overt reference to the assessable*. However, the complimenter and

the other coparticipants know what they are positively assessing or agreeing with. The

assessable is both situationally specified and linguistically defined in the prior third

party's turn: the waitress brings the turtle dish and announces the name of the dish "甲

鱼。 Turtle." The context also includes the extralinguistic/cultural element—members'

tacit consensus that the turtle dish is of superior class due to its nutritional and medical

value and is thus very expensive; it usually does not appear on the table of an ordinary

banquet. Therefore, the *non-overtly referenced assessable* is not just the turtle dish itself,

but the host's generous hospitality. This cultural context is evidenced by the high

intensity assessment form "喔唷！ Wow!" used by every participant in the group, and

the comment and intensification strategies later in the sequence.

So far in this section I have described one component part of the core compliment

strategy: the *assessable* (what is being assessed, or what the compliment is about), how it

is realized and how it brings out the content of the compliment. In the next section, I will

describe the other component part of the core compliment strategy: the *positive*

assessment, how it is realized and how it brings out the content of the compliment.

Positive Assessment

As has been stated in the previous section, a *positive assessment* is the other

component part of a core compliment strategy. It is "what is being said positively about

the assessable," or a positive evaluation of the assessable. When examining the 525 core

compliment strategies with regard to how the *positive assessment* is realized, again a

variety of lexical and syntactic forms are found to be used: adjectives/stative verbs,

adverbial phrases, noun phrases, verb phrases, clauses, interjections, idioms, idiomatic

expressions, etc., with no formulaicity and predictability in lexical or syntactic distribution.

However, when examining the *positive assessments* semantically in terms of

content/meaning, they are found to fall into two categories: (1) *content-specific* (289, 55%),

or (2) *content-nonspecific* (216, 41%). (There are also 20 or 4% implicit compliments which have no explicit positive assessments.) The *content-specific positive assessment* plays dual functions: in addition to positively evaluating the assessable, it further specifies the assessable. For example, in the core compliment strategy of Excerpt 5.2 "许老师老来三额。 Prof. Xu is outstanding/*exceedingly capable*.," the assessable is specified as "Prof. Xu." The positive assessment "老来三额, *exceedingly capable*" further specifies the assessable as Prof. Xu's "ability," not "physical feature" or any other attribute. However, the *content-nonspecific positive assessment* plays only one function: it positively evaluates the assessable, but does not further specify the assessable. For example, in the core compliment strategy of Excerpt 5.3 "格阿婆交关好！ This mother-in-law is wonderful!," the positive assessment "交关好 wonderful" positively evaluates the assessable, but does not further specify the assessable. Even if the assessable is reference-specific and specified as "格阿婆, this mother-in-law," we do not know in what way she is "wonderful" ("交关好"): whether it is her "kindness," "ability," "cooking skill," or some other attribute. In such a case, support strategies are used to elaborate the *content-nonspecific positive assessment* (see Excerpt 5.3).

Content-specific. Out of the 525 core compliment strategies, 289 (55%) have a *content-specific* positive assessment, i.e., it further specifies the assessable in addition to positively evaluating the assessable. Examples 5.49 to 5.74 illustrate some core compliment strategies that have *content-specific* positive assessments.

Example Number	Core Strategy	Core Strategy English Translation	Number of Support Strategies
Content-specific positive assessment			
Appearance			
(5.49)	袁老师还是介**年轻**。	Teacher Yuan looks as **young** as ever.	13
(5.50)	侬，侬尼日利亚寄得来额照片老，老**俊**的（笑）。	You, you look very... very **handsome** in the picture you sent from Nigeria. (laughs)	3
(5.51)	郭晶晶伊辰光老**高**老**高**额！	Back then, Guo Jing Jing was very, very **tall**.	2
(5.52)	是**健康的颜色**嘛！〔笑〕	Of course [it]'s **a healthy complexion** (tan)! (laughs)	2
(5.53)	肖处长今天真**萧洒**！	Dean Xiao looks really **chic** today!	3
Ability/Skill			
(5.54)	陈医生**有本事**呀，	Dr. Chen **has great expertise**.	2
(5.55)	那说明你们**有远见**！（笑）	That shows you guys **had vision** (foresight)! (laughs)	3
(5.56)	史老师属于**全才**，	Teacher Shi is **an all-round talent**.	10
(5.57)	格荠菜**有技术**额来烧额。	This ji-vegetable is **cooked with such skill**.	7
(5.58)	伊拉蛮**会得弄**额，	They really **know how to re-model and decorate** [the place].	38
(5.59)	老石很**能说**噢！**说得真好**！	Lao Shi is so **eloquent**, isn't he? He **made the perfect pitch**.	15
Achievement			
(5.60)	伊拉囡五上海**有得名气**啊！	Their daughter **has made a name** for herself in Shanghai.	74
(5.61)	侬编额教材到现在，到现在**无人超越**啊！	The textbooks you compiled... they've **never been surpassed**.	15
(5.62)	谭立韦属于是少数**成功人士**啊！	Tan Liwei is one of only a handful of **success** stories/*people*!	9
(5.63)	现在是**任老板**了！	Now he is **Ren the boss**!	5
(5.64)	噢——！那我知道了！嗳，（笑）是**前辈**！（笑）	Oh:::! That I know. Well... (laughs) [You're] **a respected veteran**. (laughs)	17

Personal trait			
(5.65)	祖风老**聪明**额！	Zufeng is so **smart**.	18
(5.66)	严主任很**上道**！	Director Yan is **a standup guy**!	5
(5.67)	……在我的接触当中啊，你，你你不知道怎么的给我一个印象就是——（笑）很**热情**！	...In our dealings with you... you... somehow you give me an impression that you're... (laughs) very **warm**.	3
(5.68)	丁涵菱总归人家的事情啦蛮**乐意帮忙**的。	Ding Hanling is always **ready to help others**.	12
(5.69)	联营厂党委也好，阿拉工业公司经理也好，阿拉达厂长……搭孙厂长两位，对阿拉两个企业额合作确实**花了勿少精力**！	Whether it's the party committee of Lianying Factory, or our Industrial Corporation CEO... Factory Manager Da and Factory Manager Sun... **have** both **dedicated tremendous energy** to the collaboration of our two enterprises.	5
Possession			
(5.70)	喔唷，蒋丽华俚屋里哪能介许多**无价之宝**啦？	Wow, Jiang Lihua, how come your house is so full of **priceless treasures**?	33
(5.71)	奶奶房间是**花园洋房**。	Her mother **lives in a Western-style garden house**.	10
(5.72)	俚介**现代化额**灶间！	What a **modern kitchen**!	3
(5.73)	侬格双鞋子交关**漂亮**么！	These shoes of yours are **cool** (*beautiful*)!	8
(5.74)	侬此地还**清爽**， 侬此地还**安静**来！	It's quite **clean** here where you live. Your place is **quiet**.	6

Almost all the core compliment strategies in Example 5.49 to 5.74 have reference-specific assessables. However, they also have *content-specific* positive assessments (see words in boldface). These *content-specific* positive assessments further specify the assessable—what is being positively assessed, for example, Teacher Yuan's "young appearance" ("年轻"; Example 5.49), Lao Shi's "tour guide skill" ("能说"; Example 5.59), Tan Liwei's "career success" ("成功人士"; Example 5.62), the complimentee

[director]'s "warm personality" ("热情"; Example 5.67), or Jiang Lihua's "material achievement" ("无价之宝"; Example 5.70). As can be seen the *content-specific* positive assessment helps bring out the compliment content in addition to its evaluative function. It is an important component of the compliment topic for the core compliment sequence.

Content-nonspecific. Out of the 525 core compliment strategies, 216 (41%) have a *content-nonspecific* positive assessment, i.e., apart from its evaluative function, it does not further specify the assessable—what is being positively assessed. The following are examples of the *content-nonspecific* positive assessments of the core compliment strategies observed from the data corpus:

Content-nonspecific positive assessments:

    e.g., 好, 赞, 棒, 灵, 嗲 (good, well, great, cool, wonderful, fabulous, admirable), 萧洒 (cool), 有劲 (interesting), 高 (high, top), 大 (significant, important), 强 (strong), 结棍 (something), 还可以, 不厉害, 不错 (not bad, quite good, pretty good, fine), 勿容易, 勿简单 (remarkable), 勿是像一般额 (extraordinary), 高级 (high class, superb, superior), 第一流 (first-class), *perfect* (完美), 哇, 噢唷 (wow), 喜欢 (like, love), 佩服 (admire), 眼热 (jealous, envious), 迷 (fascinated by, obsessed with), 学习, 探讨, 讨教, 请教 (learn from, consult, ask for advice), 比勿上额, 勿好比额 (no comparison, no match), 蛮少额 (very few, rare), 寻勿着额 (can't be found), 从来呒没看见过 (have never seen), 不会忘记的 (will never forget), etc.

Examples 5.75 to 5.84 illustrate some core compliment strategies that have *content-nonspecific* positive assessments. (See more examples in the next section on Content-Nonspecificity of the Positive Assessment.)

Example Number	Core Strategy	Core Strategy English Translation	Number of Support Strategies
Content-nonspecific positive assessment			
(5.75)	（笑）侬老**灵**嗳！	(laughs) You look so **cool** [in the photo]!	15

(5.76)	许老师老**勿容易**额！	Professor Xu is really **remarkable**!	4
(5.77)	倻姆妈皮肤老**好**额。	*Your mom's skin so **good**.* Your mom has great skin.	17
(5.78)	我还是**喜欢**你们的客厅！	I still **like** your living-room [the best].	3
(5.79)	阿拉老**眼热**呕，蒋丽华啊！	We are so **envious**, Jiang Lihua.	5
(5.80)	伊对伐我**记忆力最最清爽**了，	She... I **remember most clearly**...	7
(5.81)	侬看伊格个**高级**伐？	Just look at this, isn't it **superior**?	10
(5.82)	不过**还可以**啊！	But [you]'re doing **fine**.	8
(5.83)	**有劲**有劲！	Very **interesting**! Very interesting!	6
(5.84)	**喔唷**！	**Wow**!	13

The positive assessments in Examples 5.75 to 5.84 are *content-nonspecific* (see words in boldface). Apart from the evaluative function, they do not further specify the assessable. For example, "灵 cool," "好 good/great," "勿容易 remarkable," "高级 superior," "还可以 fine," "有劲 interesting," "喜欢 like," "眼热 envious," "记忆力清爽 remember clearly," and "喔唷 wow," can positively assess many different things. The reference-specific assessables referring to people (e.g., "侬 you," "伊 she," "许老师 Professor Xu," "蒋丽华 Jiang Lihua") or referring to objects or attributes (e.g., "倻姆妈皮肤 *your mom's skin*," "你们的客厅 your living-room") can specify who or what the compliment is about. However, they do not further specify in what way the assessable is "cool," "good," "remarkable," "interesting," "unforgettable," etc. When the assessable is reference-nonspecific (e.g., "格个 this/it") or has no overt reference (Examples 5.83 and 5.84), context has to be examined to locate the assessable, or support elaboration strategies are used to bring out the content of the core compliment strategy.

In this part of Chapter V, I have described how the core compliment strategy introduces the compliment topic, the content of the compliment, in the core compliment sequence. The topic is realized by two component parts of the core compliment strategy: an assessable (what the compliment is about) and a positive assessment (what is said positively about the assessable). The assessable can be reference-specific, reference-nonspecific, or with no overt reference. The positive assessment can be content-specific or content-nonspecific. The compliment topic/content is brought out by either the reference-specific assessable, or the content-specific positive assessment, or both. When the assessable and the positive assessment are both nonspecific, sequential context or situational context has to be examined to locate the assessable, or support elaboration strategies are used to specify the compliment topic.

Breadth

As has been stated in the introductory remarks of this chapter and shown in Figure 5.1, the core compliment strategy is a general summative statement (489, 93.1% of 525) covering a wide breadth, with the majority of the core strategies aligned with, elaborated and emphasized by support compliment strategies (506, 96.4% of 525). The core compliment strategy in Excerpt 5.1 in the previous section (see p. 115) serves as a typical example.

In Excerpt 5.1, the core compliment strategy "这三纹鱼啊！ 最好的啦！ This is salmon! The best!" (C1) introduces a general topic "the best fish dish." To specify this general topic, thirteen support strategies are used to elaborate and emphasize (1) how good the fish is: it has "great taste" ("老好吃额"), it is "wonderful" ("格只鱼是老好额"),

"exceptionally delicious" ("鲜得勿得了") (C4, C6–C8); and (2) the hospitality of the host serving this expensive, high class fish instead of an ordinary kind of fish to honor the reunion: it is "an excellent kind of fish" ("侬三纹鱼属于老好额"), "usually we only have perch as a fish" ("一般阿拉有常全鲈鱼老啥"), "we have class" ("格只鱼上来，挡子上来了"), it is "really something" ("格只鱼，结棍噢"), it is "quite expensive" normally, and specifically expensive in Canada ("三纹鱼蛮贵额"; "来加拿大格种鱼老贵额") (C2, C5, C9–C14).

What makes the topic introduced by the core compliment strategy "general" and "summative"? How is the "generalness" realized? An analysis of the 525 core compliment strategies reveals that the general summative nature of the topic is largely brought out by (1) the *content-nonspecificity* of the positive assessment, and (2) the *high semantic strength* of the positive assessment.

Content-Nonspecificity of the Positive Assessment

As has been discussed in the "Positive Assessment" section, a considerable 216 or 41% of the 525 core compliment strategies have a content-nonspecific positive assessment. The content-nonspecific positive assessment does not further specify the content of the compliment apart from its evaluative function. Even if the assessable is reference-specific and specifies what the compliment is about, it usually does not specify in what way the assessable is good, admirable, desirable, etc. For example, in the positive assessment "最好的啦, the best" (Excerpt 5.1), the word "好, good/well" does not specify what is being positively assessed. It could assess appearance, personal trait, skill, performance, achievement, possession, etc. Even if the assessable ("三纹

鱼, salmon") is reference-specific and specifies that a specific food dish is being

positively assessed, "好, good/well" still does not specify in what way it is good: whether

it is the quality, taste, price, cooking skill, or the hospitality. (Cf. the support compliment

strategies in Excerpt 5.1: the positive assessment in the support strategy "鲜得勿得了

噢？Exceptionally delicious!" specifies the content as the "taste" of the salmon; or the

positive assessment in the support strategy "蛮贵额, is quite expensive" specifies the

content as the "price" of the salmon.) The *content-nonspecificity* of the positive

assessment encompasses a broad range of potential content coverage, and thus

contributes to the general and summative nature of the topic introduced by the core

compliment strategy.

In the "Positive Assessment" section, I have given a list of content-nonspecific

positive assessments observed from the data corpus (see p. 149). I have also shown some

examples of the core compliment strategies that have a content-nonspecific positive

assessment. Examples 5.85 to 5.94 illustrate some more core compliment strategies that

have *content-nonspecific* positive assessments.

Example Number	Core Strategy	Core Strategy English Translation	Number of Support Strategies
Content-nonspecific positive assessment			
(5.85)	阿拉史老师**好**伐！	Our Teacher Shi is really **great** / a **good** person.	17
(5.86)	怎么样，我们的地陪**不错**吧？	What do you think? Our guide is **pretty good**, isn't he?	10
(5.87)	伊拉呢，也老**勿简单**额，	They too... are really **incredible**.	11
(5.88)	你看她家**嗲**吗？	Isn't her place **wonderful**?	15
(5.89)	格地方**结棍**来！	*This location is really **something**!* This is a really upscale location!	6

(5.90)	砚，这顿饭我**不会忘记的**！（笑）	Yan, I will **never forget** this dinner! (laughs)	14
(5.91)	像侬格能样子噢我勿是讲啥我蛮**佩服**额！	To live like you… to be honest… I really **admire** you.	11
(5.92)	嗳，格**最大**了，**最大**了！	That's most **important**... most **important**!	11
(5.93)	太**棒**了！	**Excellent**! / **Awesome**!	6
(5.94)	**勿好比**额！	There's **no comparison**/**no match**!	7

The positive assessments in Examples 5.85 to 5.94 are content-nonspecific (see words in boldface). Apart from the evaluative function, they do not further specify the assessable. For example, "好 great," "不错 pretty good," "勿简单 incredible," "嗲 wonderful," "棒 excellent/awesome," "结棍 something," "大 important," "佩服 admire," "不会忘记的 will never forget," and "勿好比额 no comparison/no match," can positively assess many different things. Even if many assessables are reference-specific and specify who or what the compliment is about (e.g., "阿拉史老师 our Teacher Shi," "我们的地陪 our guide," "伊拉 they," "她家 her place," "格地方 this location," "这顿饭 this dinner," or "像侬格能样子噢 to live like you"), they do not further specify in what way the assessable is "great," "pretty good," "incredible," "wonderful," "something," "unforgettable," or "admirable," etc. For example, "好 great" could positively assess Teacher Shi's personable and approachable personality, open and straight forward attitude, and/or her accounting expertise (Example 5.85); "嗲 wonderful" could positively assess the apartment's decoration, space utilization, lighting, and/or the quality of the furniture (Example 5.88); while the things that make the dinner "不会忘记的 unforgettable" could be the variety of food, the taste, the cooking skill, the presentation, and/or the hospitality of the host and hostess (Example 5.90). The *content-nonspecificity* of each positive

assessment encompasses a broad range of potential content coverage, and thus contributes to the general and summative nature of the topic introduced by the core compliment strategy. To specify the content-nonspecific "general" topic, a series of support compliment strategies usually follow as is indicated by the frequency number in the right column of each example.

High Semantic Strength of the Positive Assessment

An analysis of the 525 core compliment strategies reveals that the general and summative nature of the topic introduced by the core compliment strategy is also brought out by the *high semantic strength* of the positive assessment. *High semantic strength* of the positive assessment implies generalization from the large quantity/accumulation and high quality of the complimentee's "goodness." It thus contributes to the general and summative nature of the topic introduced by the core compliment strategy. A variety of lexical and syntactic forms (totaling 511) are used to realize the positive assessment of *high semantic strength*, mainly *lexical items of high intensity* (88), *intensifiers* (285), *sentence-initial interjections* (25 alone or combined), and *sentence-final* [*modal*] *particles* (113 alone or combined). These forms are used alone or combined to achieve the *high semantic strength* of the positive assessment. (*Lexical items of high intensity*, *intensifiers*, *sentence-initial interjections*, and *sentence-final* [*modal*] *particles* are also commonly used as intensification strategies. See Intensification Strategy in Chapter VII for a more detailed analysis.)

Using lexical items of high intensity. A *lexical item of high intensity* is a word or phrase that has the same or similar meaning as another but a higher degree of semantic intensity. For instance, in the core compliment strategy in Example 5.95 below, the noun

phrase "高师 great master teacher" implies mastery of more knowledge and expertise

than the word "老师 teacher," and therefore it has a higher degree of positive semantic

intensity than the word "老师 teacher."

Example Number	Core Strategy	Core Strategy English Translation	Number of Support Strategies
(5.95)	啊，谢谢**高师**啊！	Ah, thank you, our **great master teacher**!	7

The most commonly used *lexical items of high intensity* observed in the core compliment

strategies consist of nouns or noun phrases, idioms or idiomatic expressions, as well as

adjectives, stative verbs and verb phrases. The following are some examples.

Lexical items of high intensity: nouns or noun phrases

e.g., 淑女 (maiden/gentlewoman), 美女 (beauty), 高才生 (top student), 高师 (great master teacher), 高人 (sage), 老师 (teacher), 老领导 (old leader), 老前辈 (forerunner, respected veteran), 新师长大头目 (new big boss), 成功人士 (successful people), 成功的典范 (typical model of success), 专家 (expert), 翻译家 (master translator), 画家 (master artist), 技术权威 (tech authority), 老法师 (master of the law), 外交大臣 (foreign minister), 剧作大将 (great master playwright), 杰出的评论家 (outstanding critic), 优秀文化的中心 (excellent cultural center), 先进劳动者 (outstanding worker), 优秀人才 (outstanding talent), 全能, 全才 (all-round talent), 天才 (genius), 土地老爷 (lord of real estate), 社会的精华 (the cream of society), 黄金地段 (golden district), 无价之宝 (priceless treasure), 美餐 (scrumptious feast), etc.

Lexical items of high intensity: idioms or idiomatic expressions

e.g., 无人超越 (have never been surpassed),
真才实学 (have real talent and knowledge / really know something),
文武双全 (master of all trades),
能上能下 (competent to work at any post, high or low),
井井有条 (arranged in perfect order / shipshape),
医德高尚 (have high/noble standards of medical ethics),
敬业爱业 (highly dedicated and professional),
诚心诚意 (really sincere / with heart and soul),
精神可嘉 (have wonderful spirit),

见多识广 (experienced and well-informed / has seen it all),
足迹是遍及中国了 ([your] footprints are all over China),
桃李满天下 (has peaches and plums [students] all over the world),
坚守岗位战高温 (stand fast at [your] post despite the heat), etc.

Lexical items of high intensity: adjectives, stative verbs, verb phrases, etc.

e.g., 有得名气, 出名 (famous, have made a name for oneself), 是特殊的, 勿是像一般额 (extraordinary), 高级 (high/top-class, superior), 第一流 (first-class), *perfect* (完美), 迷 (fall for, obsessed with), 立大功 (perform an outstanding service), 高升了 (promoted/risen higher), 荣升 (have the honor of being promoted), 掌舵 (to be [our] helmsman, to steer [our] ship), 比勿上额, 不好比的, 勿好比额 (no comparison, no match), 蛮少额 (very few, rare), 寻勿着额 (can't be found), 从来呒没看见过 (have never seen), 不会忘记的 (will never forget), 我记忆力最最清爽了 (I remember most clearly), etc.

Formal honorific words are often a component part of noun phrases. For example, honorific nouns "师 master" (as in "老师 teacher [*old master*]," "法师 master of the law"), and "家 expert, master" (as in "专家 [*specialized*] expert," "翻译家 master translator [*translating expert*]," "画家 master artist," "杰出的评论家" outstanding master critic") are used to address people with high professional expertise or trade skills. Honorific adjectives such as "老 old/senior/veteran" (as in "老领导 old leader," "老前辈 forerunner, respected veteran"), "高 high/profound/top/great" (as in "高才生 top student [*high talent student*]," "高师 great master teacher," "高人 sage [*profound person*]," "高升 promoted high [*high risen*]"), "大 great" (as in "大头目 big/super boss," "外交大臣 foreign minister [*great official*]," "剧作大将 great master playwright," "立大功 perform an outstanding service"), and "荣 honor/honorable" (as in "荣升 have the honor of being promoted [*honorable risen*]") are used to show respect to people or their

accomplishments. All these honorific words raise the complimentee to a higher status and thus strengthen the positive semantic force of the positive assessment.

A total of 88 *lexical items of high intensity* are used as positive assessments in the core compliment strategies. Examples 5.96 to 5.110 illustrate how nouns or noun phrases, adjectives, stative verbs, or verb phrases are used as *lexical items of high intensity* to achieve high semantic strength of the positive assessment.

Example Number	Core Strategy	Core Strategy English Translation	Number of Support Strategies
Lexical items of high intensity: nouns or noun phrases			
(5.96)	嗳伊拉讲伊是格个格个，**中国美女**！	Hey, they say she's a... a... **Chinese beauty**!	14
(5.97)	阿拉小史勿要看伊年纪轻，**老法师**噢！	Don't be deceived by our Xiao Shi's youthful looks. She's a **master of the law**.	15
(5.98)	你们，你们这边，**画家**很多！	You... you have lots of **master/expert artists** here.	4
(5.99)	没想到**高人**在此！	Didn't think I'd run into the **sage** (*profound person*) here!	2
(5.100)	何剑青是格个，成功，伊是**成功的典范**。	He Jianqing is a... success... he's a **model of success**.	8
(5.101)	那你这个**技术权威**嗳！	You're a **tech authority**!	3
(5.102)	讲俙囡五伊个叫啥个，优秀，**优秀人才**嗳！	They say your daughter… what did they say? Yeah, outstanding... **outstanding talent**.	9
(5.103)	俙格批人，……社，**社会额精华**。	You guys... are the **cream of society**.	14
(5.104)	侬迭搭额地段是**黄金地段**嗳！	The area you live in here is the "**golden district**"!	6
(5.105)	喔唷，蒋丽华俙屋里哪能介许多**无价之宝**啦？	Wow, Jiang Lihua, how come your house is so full of **priceless treasures**?	33
Lexical items of high intensity: adjectives, stative verbs, verb phrases, etc.			
(5.106)	难怪他们说你是**第一流**的司机！	No wonder they say you're a **first-class** driver!	10

(5.107)	伊哝没物事好去斗。她比较 perfect（完美）。	She's impeccable. She's almost *perfect*.	50
(5.108)	格连小平**立大功**了！	Lian Xiaoping's **done** us [our class] **an outstanding service**.	11
(5.109)	听说你**荣升**院长了，	I hear you just **had the honor of being promoted** to Dean of the Language School.	15
(5.110)	要是早一点，早一点就好寻许先生呢，有人**掌舵**了。	If it were earlier… if we had found Prof. Xu earlier, we would have someone **to be our helmsman**/to **steer our ship**.	4

As can be seen, in Examples 5.96 to 5.110, the *lexical items of high intensity* are realized by using **nouns** or **noun phrases** such as 美女 beauty, 法师 master of the law, 画家 master artist (*painting expert*), 高人 sage, 典范 model, 权威 authority, 人才 talent, 精华 cream/elite, 宝 treasure; **adjectives/stative verbs** such as 优秀 outstanding, 黄金 golden, 无价 priceless, 第一流 first-class, *perfect* 完美; **verb phrases** such as 立大功 perform an outstanding service, 荣升院长 had the honor of being promoted to Dean of the Language School, 掌舵 steer [our] ship; and **honorific words** such as 老 old/veteran, 高 (人) profound (person), 大 (功) great/outstanding (service), 荣 (升) had the honor of (being promoted). They are used by themselves (e.g., 画家 master artist, 第一流 first-class, 掌舵 steer the ship) or combined (e.g., 优秀人才 outstanding talent, 无价之宝 priceless treasures). They imply "excellence," "expertise," "accomplishment"... of high or highest degree or level, giving high positive semantic strength to the positive assessments of the core compliment strategies.

Chinese idioms or idiomatic expressions are set phrases mostly consisting of four characters. A large number of Chinese idioms are derived from myths, ballads, stories, classics, poems... of rich historical reference or literary allusion. Their meanings are

therefore often difficult to deduct from the constituents without the background knowledge of their origin (see Intensification Strategy in Chapter VII for a more detailed analysis). However, idioms free of metaphorical nuances also pervade. Chinese idioms are highly succinct, full of rhythm and cadence, but bear profound cultural, moral or philosophical implications. They are powerful stylistic or rhetorical devices widely used in classical Chinese as well as written and spoken vernacular Chinese. Examples 5.111 to 5.115 illustrate how idioms or idiomatic expressions are used as *lexical items of high intensity* to achieve high semantic strength of the positive assessment.

Example Number	Core Strategy	Core Strategy English Translation	Number of Support Strategies
Lexical items of high intensity: idioms or idiomatic expressions			
(5.111)	伊弄得来**井井有条**！	She arranged everything **in perfect order** / **shipshape**!	7
(5.112)	侬格个阿姐**文武双全**，	This older sister of yours, **master of all trades**.	18
(5.113)	赵丽媛**见多识广**，	Zhao Liyuan **is experienced and well-informed** / **has seen it all**.	6
(5.114)	格趟真额**诚心诚意**噢！	He's **really sincere** / **heart and soul** about making this trip.	9
(5.115)	侬编额教材到现在，到现在**无人超越**啊！	The textbooks you compiled... they'**ve never been surpassed**.	15

Excerpt 5.6 illustrates in a complete compliment-response sequence how *lexical items of high intensity* are used as positive assessment to achieve high semantic strength of the core compliment strategies.

Excerpt 5.6 [230] "Cheers, our new big boss!"

Situation: A Buddhist organization and some travel organizations are having a joint party. After a toast to the managers of the travel organizations, the host Master Jin [M] from Longhua Buddhist Temple, and a manager [M] and an assistant manager [F] from the travel organizations toast to Master Yuan [M], who is the co-sponsor of the event from the Longhua Buddhist Temple. All the participants are between 45–55 years old.

01		金师傅：来，袁师傅来！	Master Jin: Master Yuan,	
02			cheers!	
03		副经理：袁师傅来！	Assistant Manager: Master	
04			Yuan, cheers!	
05		袁师傅：嗳，	Master Yuan: Oh...	
06		大家：　来，来……	Everyone: Come, come drink...	
07	→	副经理：1.阿拉……新师长	Assistant Manager: 1.Our...	1.core 1
08		大头目。	new big boss.	new big
09		袁师傅：嗳，……	Master Yuan: Oh...	boss
10	→	金师傅：2.老前辈！	Master Jin: 2.A forerunner.	2.core 2
11		副经理：3.老前辈！	Assistant Manager: 3.A	forerunner
12			forerunner.	3.agreement
13	→	金师傅：4.权威伊是！	Master Jin: 4.He's an	4.core 3
14			authority.	authority
15	→	经理：　5.先进劳动	Manager: 5.An outstanding	5.core 4
16		者！……	worker...	outstanding
17		金师傅：其实当时辰光是格	Master Jin: Actually... it	worker
18		个后首来记者来采	was... at the time...	
19		访我讲格桩事体我	then reporters came to	
20		是可以解释的……	interview me on this	
21			thing... I can	
22			understand...	
23		(Master Jin returns to	(Master Jin returns to the	
24		the previous topic)	previous topic)	

In Excerpt 5.6, a series of four core compliment strategies are used by Master Jin and two managers of the travel organizations to introduce Master Yuan. These four core compliments consist of *lexical items of high intensity*, all of them noun or noun phrases: "a new big boss (*new respected teacher and big chief*)" ("新师长大头目"), "a forerunner (*old/veteran predecessor*)" ("老前辈"), "an authority" ("权威"), and "an outstanding worker" ("先进劳动者"). The honorific words (e.g., "师长 respected teacher," "大 big/great," "老 old/veteran") and high intensity nouns and adjectives (e.g., "前辈 forerunner/predecessor," "权威 authority," or "先进 outstanding") used alone or in combination, give high semantic strength to the positive assessments. These *lexical items of high intensity* encode Master Yuan's "accumulative" competence ("big boss"),

accomplishments and contributions (e.g., "forerunner"), expertise ("authority") and

dedication ("outstanding worker"), bringing out the general, summative nature of the core

compliment strategies.

Using intensifiers. *Intensifiers* are lexical items, especially adverbs or phrases

functioning as adverbs, that are used to strengthen the semantic force expressed in a

positive assessment. A typical example of intensifiers is "很/蛮, very" in "很/蛮漂亮,

very beautiful" where the degree of beauty is reinforced by the use of the *intensifier*.

Chinese intensifiers usually intensify and appear before an adjective or a (stative or

dynamic) verb, or in some cases before a sentence. Very few of them can appear in a

post-adjective/verb position. (See Intensification Strategy in Chapter VII for a more

detailed analysis.) The following are examples of the most commonly used intensifiers in

the positive assessments of the core compliment strategies.

Degree adverbs (increasing the degree of positiveness):

    e.g. 蛮, 很, 挺……的, 相当, 比较, 交关, 非常, 老……的/额 (quite, pretty, very), 邪气 (very, terribly, exceedingly), 瞎 (so, unbelievably); 来得个 (especially, unusually, absolutely, undeniably), ……得来 (very, so), ……得勿得了 (extremely, exceptionally, exceedingly); 够 (enough); 真, 真的/额 (really, truly); 介, 这么, 那么 (so, such); 多 (how, what); 太……了 (too, extremely); 特, 特别 (exceptionally, especially); 最, 顶 (most, top); 勿要太……噢 (can't be more..., can't beat it); 一点 呒没, 一点也勿, 一眼也勿 (not at all, not a little bit); 正 (just); 更, 更加, 还要 (even more), etc.

Modal adverbs (increasing the degree of certainty):

    e.g., 是 (truly, indeed); 确实 (truly, really, indeed); 才 (truly, only); 就, 就是 (just, simply, exactly, precisely); 一定, 肯定, 督定 (definitely, undoubtedly); 当然 (of course); 难怪 (no wonder), etc.

Other adverbs (emphasizing the scope, time, frequency, etc.):
e.g., 都, 全, 全部, 完全 (all, completely, totally); 专门 (specially, especially, exclusively); 只有 (only); 又 (again); 还, 还是 (still); 总归 (always), 一直 (always, constantly, continuously), etc.

Phrases (functioning as adverbs or connectors):
e.g., 勿是讲啥 (to be honest), 到啥个地步 (to an indescribable degree/extent), 一个礼拜一个 [男朋友] (a [boyfriend] a week), 横一 [套], 竖一 [套] ([publications] one after another), 不但……连…… (not only... even...), 不管 [什么事] (no matter [what you do]), etc.

Degree adverbs and modal adverbs are the most frequently used intensifiers in the data.
Degree adverbs are used to increase the degree of positiveness of a positive assessment
composed mainly of an adjective or a stative verb. Modal adverbs are used to increase
the degree of certainty of a positive assessment composed of either a stative or a dynamic
verb. Other types of adverbs are also found to be used as intensifiers to emphasize the
scope, time, frequency, etc., of a positive assessment. A total of 285 *intensifiers* are used
in the 525 core compliment strategies. They are used alone or in combination with other
high semantic strength forms (e.g., lexical items of high intensity) to reinforce the
positive semantic strength of the positive assessments. The following are only a few
examples extracted from the compliment-response sequences.

Example Number	Core Strategy	Core Strategy English Translation	Number of Support Strategies
Intensifiers: degree adverbs (increasing the degree of positiveness)			
(5.116)	据小郑说么老孙，歌喉**相当**好！	I hear from Xiao Zheng... Lao Sun has a **pretty** good voice!	8
(5.117)	灯**交关**漂亮么，叶明丽！	The lighting is **very** beautiful, Ye Mingli!	13
(5.118)	周建平是**老**好混得！（笑）	Zhou Jianping is doing **fabulously** well. (laughs)	8

(5.119)	侬格经验是**邪气**重要啊！	Your advice on this is **exceedingly** important!	5
(5.120)	谢谢侬噢，上趟伊个菜包子**瞎**好吃！	Thank you, the vegetable buns you brought last time were **unbelievably** delicious!	6
(5.121)	侬拍出来照还**来得个**灵了！	You looked **absolutely** wonderful in the pictures taken.	21
(5.122)	我对伐，我听了以后我讲㑊黄浦区哪能对侬**介**［好］！	I… when I heard about it, I said to him, how can the Huangpu District be **so** generous to you.	10
(5.123)	郭老师的女儿**特**漂亮！	Prof. Guo's daughter is a **knock-out** beauty / *exceptionally beautiful*!	8
(5.124)	卫娟娟读书脑子**勿要太好**噢！（笑）对伐？	Wei Juanjuan had a **terribly** good mind in school (laughs), didn't she? **You can't beat it**.	16
(5.125)	侬一点也**吭没**变化。	You **haven't** changed **a bit**.	10

Intensifiers: modal adverbs (increasing the degree of certainty)

(5.126)	延安中学**是**好额。	Yan'an High School is **indeed** a great school.	4
(5.127)	嗳，像伊**就是**，**就是**开脱。	Well, he is **really**... **really** free of constraints / his own boss.	12
(5.128)	她**才**重要呢，	She's the **truly** important one.	11
(5.129)	格徐玉英上去侬**督定**好，	If Xu Yuying got the promotion, you **definitely** should.	8
(5.130)	**难怪**他们说你是第一流的司机！	**No wonder** they say you're a first-class driver!	10

Intensifiers: other adverbs (emphasizing the scope, time, frequency, etc.)

(5.131)	他的画**都**卖完了，	His paintings are **all** sold out.	5
(5.132)	阿拉姆妈**全部**，全侬来看！	My mom **totally**... **totally** depends on you for help!	9
(5.133)	阿拉格搭夜大学，**完全还是**用㑊额，用侬额书做教材噢！	Our evening colleges here... they're **all still** using your... using your books as teaching materials.	7
(5.134)	（大笑）哟——！你怎么**又**老灵的啦！（大笑）	(laughs out loud) Wow:::! How can you look so cool **again**! (laughs out loud)	15
(5.135)	张医生搓麻将**一直**赢额伐？	Dr. Zhang, you must **always** win when you play mahjong, don't you?	4

Intensifiers: phrases (functioning as adverbs or connectors)			
(5.136)	勿晓得俀漂亮**到啥个地步**！	...they feel you're **so** pretty, and make you out to be something **out of this world**.	13
(5.137)	喔唷**横**一套，**竖**一套。	Wow, publications **one after another**.	10
(5.138)	像俀格能样子噢**我勿是讲啥**我蛮佩服额！	To live like you… **to be honest**… I really admire you.	11
(5.139)	**不但**美国人迷俀，**连**俀额学生子也迷俀！（笑）	**Not only** Americans fall for you, **even** your students fall for you! (laughs)	11
(5.140)	我总觉得你，嗯，跟你谈谈呢，**不管什么事**吧人家象个办事样子！	I keep having this feeling… talking with you… **anything/no matter what** you do, you're professional.	5

As can be seen, the high semantic strength of the positive assessments in these core compliment strategies is achieved by using various types of *intensifiers* (words in boldface). They increase the degree of positiveness or degree of certainty of the positive assessments.

Using sentence-initial interjections. *Sentence-initial interjections* or "*exclamative particles*" in compliments are a type of function word[3] used to express a speaker's moods, that is, positive emotions, such as approval or admiration, to reinforce the positive tone expressed in a positive assessment. *Sentence-initial interjections* are not grammatically related to any other part of the sentence. They may form complete utterances on their own (e.g., "喔唷！Wow!"), or function as part of a larger sentence. When they form a part of a larger sentence, they usually appear at the beginning (e.g., "啊呀 [āyā]！你英文说得很好！Wow! You speak English so well."). A total of 25

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[3] Function words are words which have little lexical meaning, but serve primarily to express the grammatical relationships between other words in a sentence or specify the attitude or mood of the speaker. Content words, on the other hand, are words which have full lexical meaning.

instances of *sentence-initial interjections* are identified in the 525 core compliment

strategies. They are used alone (5) or in combination with another high semantic strength

form (20) to achieve high semantic strength of the positive assessment in the core

compliment strategy. The following are examples of the most commonly used *sentence-initial interjections* in the core compliment strategies.

Sentence-initial interjections:

    e.g., 哇 [wā], 哟 [yō], 喔唷 [ōyō], 啊呀 [āyā], 哎呀 [āiyā], 哎哟 [āiyō], ("oh,"
"wow," "my goodness," "oh my"), etc.

        Examples 5.141 to 5.146 illustrate how high semantic strength of the positive

assessment in a core compliment strategy is achieved by using *sentence-initial*

interjections.

Example Number	Core Strategy	Core Strategy English Translation	Number of Support Strategies
Sentence-initial interjections			
(5.141)	哇 [wā] ！	**Wow**!	9
(5.142)	宋：（舒服地坐在新沙发上）**喔唷** [ōyō]！……**喔唷** [ōyō]！（笑） 邢：我讲叶明丽，坐了格搭勿想走了！	Song: (sits comfortably on the new couch) **Wow**... **wow**! (laughs) Xing: I should say, Ye Mingli, sitting here I don't want to leave.	2
(5.143)	（大笑）哟 [yō]——！你怎么又老灵的啦！（大笑）	(laughs out loud) **Wow**:::! How can you look so cool again! (laughs out loud)	15
(5.144)	你上次给我带来的茶叶，这个就是…… 我们吃了，**啊呀** [āyā] 这个茶叶是好！	The tea you gave us last time... we've tried it… **wow**, it's truly amazing! (wow, there's nothing like it.)	4
(5.145)	**哎呀** [āiyā]，这么热的天，张股长还坚守岗位战高温，	**Oh my**, such hot weather... and Chief Zhang's still at your post despite the heat.	5
(5.146)	**哎哟** [āiyō]，老灵的呕！	**Wow**... exquisite, isn't it!	11

Different forms of *sentence-initial interjections* are used in these examples. In Examples

5.141 and 5.142, *sentence-initial interjections* are used alone, while in Examples 5.143 to

5.146 they appear at the beginning of a larger sentence. The strong emotion of

admiration expressed in these *sentence-initial interjections* has definitely reinforced the

positive tone of the positive assessments in the core compliment strategies.

   Using sentence-final particles. *Sentence-final particles* or "*modal particles*" in

compliments are another type of function word used to express a speaker's moods, that is,

positive emotions, such as approval, admiration, or strong affirmation to reinforce the

positive tone expressed in a positive assessment. Unlike *sentence-initial interjections*,

sentence-final particles cannot stand alone, but are attached to the end (or in some cases

the middle) of a sentence. According to the Chinese linguist Wang (1943/1985, as cited

in Dai, 2006), there are many ways to express modality, but Chinese tends to use

sentence-final particles for modality, and these *modal particles* have no equivalent in

English. What can be expressed by the *sentence-final particles* in Chinese must be

described by words, multi-word parenthetical expressions, word order changes, or

intonation changes in English. For example,

Example Number	Core Strategy	Core Strategy English Translation	Number of Support Strategies
(5.147)	丁涵菱额字么嗲**啊**——！	Ding Hanling's handwriting is **so** cool:::!	13

In Example 5.147, the complimenter attaches a *sentence-final particle* "啊 [a]" to the end

of her core compliment strategy to express the mood of strong admiration. While

Chinese can use a degree adverb such as "邪气, very/exceedingly" or "瞎,

so/unbelievably" (see section on *Intensifiers*) as an alternative to express the same mood,

English has no other choice but to resort to words such as "very/exceedingly" or "so/unbelievably" to express the same mood.

There are abundant *sentence-final particles* in Chinese. These particles in Chinese dialects are quite varied and distinct; they are not easily interchangeable. A total of 113 instances of *sentence-final particles* are identified in the 525 core compliment strategies. They are used alone (38) or in combination with another high semantic strength form (75) to achieve the high semantic strength of the positive assessment in the core compliment strategy. The following are examples of the most commonly used *sentence-final particles* in the core compliment strategies.

Sentence-final particles:

e.g. 啊 [a], 啦 [la], 呕 [ou], 嗳/哎 [ai], 噢/哦 [o], 呀 [ya], 来 [lai], 咾 [lao], 嘛 [ma], 么 [me], 呢 [ne], 呶 [nao], ("what" or "how" [in exclamation], "so," "sure," "indeed," "certainly," "definitely," "of course"), etc.

Like degree adverbs or modal adverbs (see section on *Intensifiers*) which are used to increase the degree of positiveness or degree of certainty of a positive assessment, these *sentence-final particles* express a speaker's strong feeling of admiration or affirmation, reinforcing the positiveness or certainty of a positive assessment. Examples 5.148 to 5.157 illustrate how high semantic strength of the positive assessment in a core compliment strategy is achieved by using various *sentence-final particles*.

Example Number	Core Strategy	Core Strategy English Translation	Number of Support Strategies
Sentence-final particles			
(5.148)	黄芳苓是道地**啊**[a]！	Huang Fangling is **so** thorough/considerate.	22
(5.149)	阳阳，侬格信写得是真好**啦** [la]！	Yangyang, your letters are **so very** well written.	7

(5.150)	弹得蛮好呕[ou]！	She plays [the piano] quite well. **She sure does**!	7
(5.151)	侬来拉农工商［房地产公司］老灵嗳[ai]，	You have **such** a wonderful job at Nong Gong Shang [*Agricultural Industrial and Commercial*] Real Estate!	11
(5.152)	我知道你，你是，你那时候能干着呢[ne]！	I know you. You were... you were **exceedingly** capable back then.	4
(5.153)	外婆间房间好呀[ya]。	Granny's got a good room **indeed**.	10
(5.154)	［侬编额教材］勿过时噢[o]！	[The textbooks you compiled] they're **certainly** not dated.	15
(5.155)	高经理侬现在走运来[lai]，	Manager Gao, you've hit a streak of good luck. **No doubt about it**!	17
(5.156)	伊是老来三额嘛[ma]！	**Of course** he's very talented!	5
(5.157)	正好呶[nao]！	It **really** fits you well!	27

The *sentence-final particles* in Examples 5.148 to 5.152 (""啊 [a] so," "啦 [la] so very,"

"呕 [ou] sure does," "嗳 [ai] such," "呢 [ne] exceedingly") express the complimenters'

strong admiration, while those in Examples 5.153 to 5.157 (""呀 [ya] indeed," "噢 [o]

certainly," "来 [lai] no doubt," "嘛 [ma] of course," "呶 [nao] really") express the

complimenters' strong affirmation of the positive assessment. The *sentence-final*

particles in Examples 5.148, and 5.152 to 5.155 are used alone, while those in other

examples are used in combination with another high semantic strength form, mostly

intensifiers such as "真 very/really," "蛮 quite," "老 very/exceedingly," and "正 just."

All these *sentence-final particles*, especially when combined with other high semantic

strength forms, have forcefully strengthened the positive tone of the positive assessments

in the core compliment strategies.

As has been stated in the introductory remarks of this chapter, the core

compliment strategy is a general summative statement covering a wide breadth, with the

majority of the core strategies aligned with, elaborated and emphasized by support

compliment strategies (506, 96.4% of 525, see Figure 5.1). However, not all core

compliment strategies are general summative statements elaborated and emphasized by

support compliment strategies. Among the total 525 core compliment strategies, 36

(6.9%) have no or few support strategies following. Excerpt 5.6 (p. 160) serves as an

example. In Excerpt 5.6, Master Yuan is introduced as "a new big boss" ("新师长大头

目"), "a forerunner" ("老前辈"), "an authority" ("权威"), and "an outstanding worker" ("先

进劳动者"), with only one agreement strategy ("老前辈！A forerunner.") (C3) aligning

with core compliment strategy 2. Excerpt 5.7 gives another example.

Excerpt 5.7 [215] "Our Teacher Xu is the great master playwright, also an outstanding
        critic..."

Situation: At a business dinner meeting sponsored by the Municipal Bureau of Cultural
Affairs to discuss the creation of a new play. Present at the meeting are Deputy Bureau
Chief Wu [F], playwrights Shi [M], Xu [M] and Wang (Zuxuan) [M], an editor and vice
president [M], and some others. Before the meeting starts, they are introducing each other.
In this part of the conversation, Xu and Wang are being introduced to Deputy Bureau
Chief Wu. Most of the participants are between 45-55 years old.

01		施：	好伐，格么上菜了！	Shi: Are we ready? [Have the	
02			向，向吴局长汇报。	waiters] start serving	
03			大家来，大家来。	the food. Let's report	
04				to Bureau Chief Wu. Come	
05				on, let's be seated.	
06		吴副局长：勿要客气勿要客		Deputy Bureau Chief Wu: Don't	
07			气！	stand on ceremony. Don't	
08				stand on ceremony.	
09	→	编辑：1. 格阿拉，阿拉许老		Editor: 1.This is our... our	1.core 1
10			师呢，伊，剧作大	Teacher Xu... he's...	great
11			将，	the great master	master
12				playwright.	playwright
13		吴副局长：嗯，		Deputy Bureau Chief Wu: Oh.	
14	→	编辑：2. 外加是杰出额评论		Editor: 2.Also an outstanding	2.core 2
15			家，	critic.	outstanding
16		吴副局长：嗯，		Deputy Bureau Chief Wu: Uh	critic
17				hum.	

		Chinese	English	Core
18	→	编辑：3.来拉音乐界当中呢	Editor: 3.He's also made a	3.core 3
19		出名额，	name for himself in	famous in
20			musical circles.	musical
21		吴副局长：嗯，	Deputy Bureau Chief Wu: Uh	circles
22			hum.	
23		编辑：嗯。	Editor: Yeah.	
24		……（noisy, not clear）	...(noisy, not clear)	
25		吴副局长：侬姓啥？	Deputy Bureau Chief Wu:	
26			What's your last name?	
27		王： 我啊？王祖宣……我	Wang: Me? Wang Zuxuan...I'm	
28		退休了。	retired.	
29		吴副局长：……（？）	Deputy Bureau Chief Wu: ...	
30			(not clear)	
31		王： 嗳嗳嗳。	Wang: Yeah, yeah, yeah.	
32		（服务员斟酒）	(Waiters serve wine.)	
33	→	吴副局长：4.侬大名老早我	Deputy Bureau Chief Wu:	4.core 4
34		也老早就晓得了噢，	4.I've known your great	great
35		就呒没对牢。	reputation (*name*) for a	reputation
36			long...a long time. I	
37			just didn't have a face	
38			to match up with it.	
39	→	许： 5.格个王祖宣是阿拉	Xu: 5.Wang Zuxuan is with	5.core 5
40		是——上海教育会	our Shanghai Educational	important
41		额，	Association...	in an
42		王： 嗳，	Wang: Yeah.	excellent
43		许： 相当优，优秀文化额	Xu: ...an excellent cultural	cultural
44		中心，6.能够一道，	center. 6.Let me put it	center
45		阿拉就说明呢〔勿是	out in the open. [It's	6.intensifi-
46		碰巧……	not just by chance that	cation
47			we are here together	
48			(Like attracts like)...	
49		王： 〔迭能	Wang: [This	
50		开个头，下趟有机	is a beginning. There	
51		会，有得好碰头了。	will be many	
52			opportunities down the	
53			road. We can see a lot	
54			of each other in the	
55			future.	
56		许： ……好坐勿啦？	Xu: ...Are you comfortable	
57			in your seat?	
58		王： 好坐好坐额。	Wang: I'm fine. I'm fine.	
59		许： 乃么格趟是……（Xu	Xu: Now this meeting... (Xu	
60		begins his speech.）	begins his speech.)	

In Excerpt 5.7, five core compliment strategies are used to introduce the two playwrights. Mr. Xu is introduced as "a great master playwright" ("剧作大将"), "an outstanding critic" ("杰出额评论家"), "has made a name for himself in musical circles" ("来拉音乐界当中呢出名额") (C1–C3); Mr. Wang (Zuxuan) is introduced as having "great reputation (*name*)" known by Deputy Bureau Chief Wu "for a long time" ("大名老早我也老早就晓得了噢"), and as being important in the "Shanghai Educational Association... an excellent cultural center" ("上海教育会额，相当优，优秀文化额中心") (C4–C5). These five core compliment strategies are followed by only one support compliment strategy (C6), which emphasizes the fact that Mr. Wang, Mr. Xu and others are all outstanding because "like attracts like" ("能够一道，阿拉就说明呢勿是碰巧。It's not just by chance that we are here together.").

It is interesting to note that both Excerpt 5.6 and Excerpt 5.7 happen in settings involving more formal introductions. Each introducer presents the person with a list of commendable accomplishments/merits with few support strategies following. Also, Excerpt 5.7 serves as another example of how *lexical items of high intensity*, mainly nouns or noun phrases, are used to realize positive assessments of high semantic strength. The high semantic strength is achieved by using the honorific words such as "大 big/great" (as in "(剧作) 大将, great master (playwright)"; "大名, great reputation/*name*"), "家 expert" (as in "评论家, critic expert"), as well as high intensity adjectives such as "杰出 outstanding," "优秀 excellent," and verb "出名 made a name," etc. The high semantic strength is also achieved by using intensifiers such as adverbs of time "老早 for a long time."

In this section I have described the topic "breadth," what makes the topic introduced by the core compliment strategy "general" and "summative." An analysis of the 525 core compliment strategies reveals that the general summative nature of the topic is largely brought out by the *content-nonspecificity* and the *high semantic strength* of the positive assessment. The *content-nonspecificity* is realized by using content-nonspecific lexical items. The *high semantic strength* is achieved by using a variety of lexical and syntactic forms (totaling 511), mainly *lexical items of high intensity*, *intensifiers*, *sentence-initial interjections*, and *sentence-final* [*modal*] *particles*. These forms are used alone or in combination. To specify the content-nonspecific or high semantic strength "general summative" topic, a series of support compliment strategies usually follow.

So far I have described the position, topic composition and topic breadth of the core compliment strategy. In the next section, I will describe the topic relationships in multiple core compliment strategies.

Topic Relationships in Multiple Core Compliments

Of the 300 compliment-response sequences, 168 have one core compliment strategy per sequence, while 132 have two or more core compliment strategies per sequence. An examination of the topics introduced by the core compliment strategies indicate that when a compliment-response sequence has only one core compliment strategy, the core compliment strategy introduces an overall compliment topic to be discussed in the sequence. For example, the core compliment strategy in Excerpt 5.1 introduces the general topic of "the best salmon dish," while the core compliment strategy in Excerpt 5.3 introduces the general topic of the mother-in-law's "kindness"

towards her future daughter-in-law. When a compliment-response sequence has more than one core compliment strategy, the topics introduced by the core compliment strategies are usually *related in content meaning*. Depending on the number of complimentees (single or multiple) receiving the compliments, these topics can be (1) different facets of an overall topic not overtly stated (e.g., taste, cooking skill, and hospitality are different facets of the topic food), or (2) different or same topics within the same topic field (e.g., teaching job and computer job are within the same topic field of career).

Multiple Compliments to a Single Complimentee: Different Facets of a Compliment Topic

It is observed from the 132 multi-core compliment sequences that when multiple core compliments are *directed to a single complimentee*, the topics introduced by the core compliment strategies are usually *different facets* of one overall topic not overtly stated, whether the core compliments are (a) initiated by the complimenter(s) or (b) prompted by the complimentee.

Compliments initiated by the complimenter(s). When multiple core compliments directed to a single complimentee are all *initiated by one or more complimenters*, the topics introduced by the core compliment strategies are usually *different facets* of an overall topic not overtly stated. For example, the core compliment strategies in Excerpt 5.6 introduce Master Yuan as "a new big boss" ("新师长大头目"), "a forerunner" ("老前辈"), "an authority" ("权威"), and "an outstanding worker" ("先进劳动者"). They list his research and knowledge about Buddhism, his leadership, dedication/hard work, and contribution to the development of the Buddhist organizations. These are all his

different merits/accomplishments, although the overall topic of "merits/accomplishments" is not overtly stated. The same applies to Excerpt 5.7, in which Mr. Xu is introduced as "a great master playwright" ("剧作大将"), "an outstanding critic" ("杰出额评论家"), "has made a name for himself in musical circles" ("来拉音乐界当中呢出名额"); Mr. Wang (Zuxuan) is introduced as having "great reputation (*name*)" known "for a long time" ("大名老早我也老早就晓得了噢"), and as being important in "Shanghai Educational Association… an excellent cultural center" ("上海教育会额，相当优，优秀文化额中心"). These are all different outstanding accomplishments, although the overall topic of "accomplishments" is not overtly stated for each complimentee. All the core compliment strategies in the two excerpts are *initiated by the complimenters*, three different complimenters in Excerpt 5.6 (Master Jin, an assistant manager and a manager), and two different complimenters in Excerpt 5.7 (an editor and vice president, and Deputy Bureau Chief Wu). The following are some more examples.

Example Number	Core Strategy	Core Strategy English Translation	Topic, Facet
Compliments initiated by the complimenter(s)			
(5.158)	慧：倷露露长得老好额！ 慧：倷囡五蛮文雅额噢？	Hui: Your daughter Lulu has grown into a beauty. Hui: Your daughter is quite ladylike, isn't she?	appearance: beautiful & ladylike manner
(5.159)	梅：我觉着侬对伐，就讲侬，好像，处理事体好像老麻利的， 梅：就讲看上去好像侬，可以老厉害，实质上侬（笑），良心还是蛮好额！（笑）	Mei: I feel that… you know… you appear to be very efficient, very decisive in... the way you deal with things... Mei: It's like... you appear... you can be very tough… but actually (laughs)… your heart is in the right place! (laughs)	personal trait: tough, decisive in dealing with things, but kind, heart in the right place

(5.160)	领队：你懂这个懂得很多噢！ 领队：你，你今天解释得特别清楚，	Tour Leader: You are very knowledgeable about this [Buddhism]. Tour Leader: You... you explained it so clearly today.	tour guide skill: knowledge & presentation
(5.161)	日亮：侬此地还清爽， 日亮：侬此地还安静来！地段也算比较好，	Riliang: It's quite clean here where you live. Riliang: Your place is quiet. A better neighborhood too.	possession, residential area: clean, quiet, good neighborhood
(5.162)	乔：　格只歌蛮好听！ 男1：好！唱得好！ 乔：　呖像似音色蛮好噢？ 男3：挺俏的！（笑）	Qiao: That's a beautiful song! Man1: Bravo! Excellent singing! Qiao: The quality of the voice is great. Man3: Quite sexy. (laughs)	singing performance: song choice, singing skill, quality of the voice, and presentation

All the core compliment strategies listed in Examples 5.158 to 5.162 are *initiated by the complimenters*. The topics introduced by the core compliments in each compliment-response sequence are *related in content meaning*. They are *different facets* of an unstated general compliment topic (see last column): daughter Lulu's beautiful appearance and her ladylike manner (appearance); tough and decisive in dealing with things but kind and heart in the right place (personality); the local guide's rich knowledge about Buddhism and his clear presentation to the tourists (tour guide skill); clean, quiet, good neighborhood (possession, residential area); the singer's beautiful song choice, excellent singing skill, great quality of voice, and sexy presentation appearance (singing performance). Except for Example 5.162, all the core compliments in other examples are initiated by one complimenter.

Excerpt 5.8 illustrates in a complete compliment-response sequence the topic relationships in multiple core compliments *initiated by one complimenter* Director Yan to a single complimentee, a medical equipment company in Shanghai.

Excerpt 5.8 [193] "As far as business is concerned, your product is in demand. Personally..."

Situation: At a business meeting in a restaurant/hotel in Henan Province. General Manager Lei [M, 47] and Assistant Manager Cheng [M, 43] from a medical equipment company in Shanghai are meeting with Director Yan [M, 51] from the Henan Province Office of Tooth Disease Treatment and Prevention, to discuss how to promote their medical equipment in Henan.

01		厂长：我呢跟小成俩研究下	General Manager: I've	
02		来呢就是……，总	discussed this matter	
03		多，总要多麻烦你	with Xiao Cheng, in the	
04		了！	end... in the end, we'll	
05			have to bother you a lot	
06			for help!	
07		主任：那没事！	Director: That's no problem.	
08		厂长：你说是不是啊？	General Manager: Do you think	
09			it's ok...	
10		主任：那个没事，那没事！	Director: That's no problem,	
11		我这个……	no problem. I...	
12		厂长：多麻烦你。	General Manager: ...to bother	
13			you a lot.	
14		主任：我们可能怎么搞呢，	Director: How should we go	
15		一个呢你们，从我个	about doing it? On the	
16		人对你们这个了解和	one hand, you... from	
17	→	认识来讲的话，1.从	what I personally	1.core 1
18		工作上讲呢你们本身	understand and know about	popular
19		这个产品是一个，得	you... 1.As far as	product
20		到……很多的应用，	business is concerned,	
21		嗯，觉得从你们两	your product is... in	
22		位……这个在上海大	demand. Hum, as for the	
23	→	家结识以后呢，2.从	two of you... since we	2.core 2
24		你们这个为人来讲	got to know one another	reliable
25		呢，这个一工作跟一	in Shanghai... 2.from a	
26		私人，一私人你们够	personal perspective...	
27	→	朋友，3.一工作呢我	business-wise and	3.core 3
28		们合作得很好！	personally... personally,	good
29			you can be counted on	collaboration
30			like a friend.	
31			3.Business-wise, we've	
32			collaborated well!	
33		厂长：（笑）嗳，	General Manager: (laughs)	
34			Yes.	
35		副厂长：哈哈！（笑）	Assistant Manager: Ha ha!	
36			(laughs out aloud)	
37		主任：（笑）4.这是，这	Director: (laughs) 4.Of	4.intensifi-

38		是，〔应该讲是……	course...of course...[it	cation
39		这个公私的两方面呢	should be so... I truly	
40		我的确是这样认识	think so, both from	
41		的。	a business perspective	
42			and a personal	
43			perspective.	
44	厂长：	〔嗳嗳，	General Manager: [Yes,	
45			yes.	
46	主任：	〔其他方面，也也	Director: [In other	
47		也……	ways, also...	
48	副厂长：〔……我跟雷厂长		Assistant Manager:[...General	
49		呢，我上次我到河南	Manager Lei and I... Last	
50		来呢我自己也谈了一	time when I came to	
51		点看法，我再谈一个	Henan, I expressed a view	
52		实际情况，……	that... Now let me raise	
53			a practical issue...	
54	(The Assistant Manager		(The Assistant Manager	
55	describes the issue.）		describes the issue.)	

The three core compliment strategies in Excerpt 5.8 *initiated by the complimenter*,

Director Yan, are directed to a single complimentee, the company, referenced by using a

plural personal pronoun "你们 you." The three core compliments praise the company on

three *different facets*: popular product ("产品得到……很多的应用") (C1), reliable

personal quality ("够朋友") (C2), and good business relationship with others ("合作得很

好") (C3). They are defining qualities of a good/successful business company (which are

also prerequisites for obtaining help from the provincial director and pursuing further

collaboration) although the general/overall topic "good business qualities" is not overtly

stated. It is interesting to note that in this excerpt, the complimenter uses the expressions

"从工作上讲呢 as far as business is concerned," "从你们这个为人来讲呢 from a

personal perspective," "一私人 personally," and "一工作呢 business-wise," to explicitly

state that he is positively assessing *various facets* of the company, rather than presenting

an overall picture of the company.

Excerpt 5.9 illustrates in another complete compliment-response sequence the topic relationships in multiple core compliments *initiated by multiple complimenters* to a single complimentee.

Excerpt 5.9 [156] "Back then Du Baishan was already very savvy."

Situation: At a high school class reunion. The group is reminiscing about the past. The following part of the conversation focuses on Du Baishan [M, 46], who was liked by the class in high school. Wu [M], Shi [M], Zou [M], Cao [F], Chang [F], and Deng [F] are all around 45 years old.

01	→	吴：1.伊个辰光是，伊辰光杜伯山已经老懂了，	Wu:	1.Back then... back then Du Baishan was already very savvy.	1.core 1 savvy
02 03 04 05 06 07		2.我格辰光我还是，小，小八拉子，我，响，响也勿大响额。		2.As for me... I was nobody... I... I hardly ever said a word.	2.comparison self
08 09 10 11 12 13		杜：我也勿懂额！我也勿响额呀！伊辰光瞎，瞎搞八搞！	Du:	I didn't understand anything either. I hardly said a word either. Back then, I did everything blindly.	
14 15 16	→	吴：3.杜伯山么脑子特别老活络，杜大头。	Wu:	3.Du Baishan was the brainy one. "Big Head Du."	3.core 2 brainy
17		曹：4.嗳。	Cao:	4.Yeah.	4.agreement
18 19		常：5.杜伯山脑子特别好！	Chang:	5.Du Baishan was especially brainy.	5.intensifi-cation
20 21		邓：〔杜伯山格辰光闲话老多噢？	Deng:	[Du Baishan talked a lot back then.	
22 23 24		常：〔阿拉每日天搭伊算命！	Chang:	[We were telling fortunes with him every day.	
25 26		杜：我瞎胡搞额。	Du:	I was just fooling around.	
27 28	→	施：6.杜伯山也蛮活跃噢？	Shi:	6.Du Baishan was very active too, right?	6.core 3 active
29		邓：7.嗳老活络额，	Deng:	7.Yeah, very active.	7.agreement
30 31		施：8.嗳，阿是啊？伊也蛮活跃额。	Shi:	8.Yeah, wasn't he? Very active too.	8.repetition
32 33	→	邓：9.闲话么讲得老幽默额。	Deng:	9.He was very humorous when he talked.	9.core 4 humorous

34	邹：嗳，你那时候是英语，	Zou:　Hey, weren't you back
35	英语课代表吧？你好像	then our English...
36	是英语课代表，是吧？	English class
37		representative? You
38		were, weren't you?
39	杜：嗳。	Du:　　Yeah.
40	曹：杜伯山，啥人先生肝炎	Cao:　Du Baishan, who got
41	啊？生好子我生肝炎？	hepatitis first?
42	（笑）	Didn't I get it right
43		after you recovered?
44	(They talk about	(laughs)
45	hepatitis.)	(They talk about hepatitis.)

There are four core compliment strategies in Excerpt 5.9, all of them are directed to a single complimentee, Du Baishan (杜伯山). Similar to Excerpt 5.8, these four core compliment strategies portray four specific traits of Du Baishan's personal quality—"very savvy" ("老懂了") (C1), "brainy" ("脑子老活络") (C3), "very active" ("蛮活跃") (C6), and "very humorous when he talked" ("闲话么讲得老幽默额") (C9)—with no overall summative compliment topic "good personal quality" overtly stated. Different from Excerpt 5.8, the four core compliments in this excerpt are *initiated by three different complimenters* (吴 Wu, 施 Shi, and 邓 Deng) instead of one. They each add to the list of specific personal traits to present the whole picture of Du's personal quality.

We can see from the examples that whether the multiple core compliments are initiated by one complimenter or multiple complimenters, when they are directed to a single complimentee they tend to present different facets of an overall compliment topic not overtly stated.

Compliment(s) prompted by the complimentee. Not all multiple core compliments directed to a single complimentee are initiated by the complimenter(s). Sometimes the core compliment(s), especially the one(s) subsequent to the first one may

be *prompted by the complimentee*. In most of these cases, the topics introduced by the

core compliment strategies are still *related in content meaning*, usually *different facets* of

an overall topic not overtly stated. Let us take a look at the beginning part of

Excerpt 5.10 below.

Excerpt 5.10 [172] "Your textbooks have never been surpassed."

Situation: At a high school reunion. Qiu [M] praises Le [F] for the textbooks she has
published. The following is the beginning part of a long compliment-response sequence.
Both participants are around 45 years old.

```
01 →  丘：1.侬编额教材到现在，    Qiu: 1.The textbooks you     1.core 1
02       到现在无人超越啊！            compiled... they've        unsurpassed
03                                     never been surpassed.      textbooks
04    乐：无人超越，全过时了！   Le:  Never been surpassed...
05      （笑）                         They're all outdated!
06                                    (laughs)
07 →  丘：2.勿过时噢！3.现在全    Qiu: 2.Not outdated at all!   2.core 2
08       来用，4.外头全来用，          3.Now everyone's           not
09       5.一直来用！6.用了多         adopting them. 4.They're    outdated
10       少年了！格套教材              used everywhere, 5.and      textbooks
11       是……                         all the time. 6.It's       3.comment
12                                    been so many years! This  4.comment
13                                    series of textbooks       5.comment
14                                    is...                     6.intensifi-
15    (The rest of the        (the rest of the compliments    cation
16    compliments are omitted) are omitted)
```

Qiu, an ESL teacher, is very impressed by the English textbooks Le compiled, which are

used all over China. After he initiates the first core compliment strategy that Le's

textbooks "have never been surpassed" ("侬编额教材到现在，到现在无人超越啊！")

(C1), Le rejects it by saying that the textbooks are "outdated" ("全过时了！") (line 4).

This rejection *prompts* Qiu to issue the second core compliment strategy that the

textbooks are "not outdated at all" ("勿过时噢！") (C2). It is interesting to observe that

although the second core compliment strategy is *prompted by the complimentee's*

response, the content of which is often not controlled by the complimenter, the topic

introduced by the second/prompted core compliment is still *related in content meaning* to

the first core compliment (the textbooks are "excellent" and "popular"), and the two core

compliments introduce two facets of an unstated overall topic—Le's "successful

publication achievement." Examples 5.163 and 5.164 give two more instances.

Example Number	Core Strategy	Core Strategy English Translation	Topic, Facet
Compliment(s) prompted by the complimentee			
(5.163)	实习医生：段大夫医术很高， 实习医生：医德高尚。	Medical Intern: Dr. Duan has superb medical skills. Medical Intern: You have high standards of medical ethics.	professionalism: expertise & ethics
(5.164)	处长：太棒了！ 处长：学院的教师都象您这么敬业、爱业，学院就发达了。	Dean: Excellent! (published a book) Dean: If all the teachers in the institute had your degree of dedication and professionalism, our institute would be thriving. (digitalizing pictures in the book)	achievement, publication: expertise & dedication

In Example 5.163, a patient came to seek medical help from Dr. Duan, a top traditional

Chinese medicine doctor. After an intern introduces and compliments Dr. Duan on his

"superb medical skills" ("段大夫医术很高"), Dr. Duan shows the intern the herbs he

uses to treat patients, which are both effective and affordable. Then he emphasizes that a

doctor should not prescribe expensive medicine only for the purpose of getting a

commission. This comment prompts the intern to initiate the second core compliment

strategy praising Dr. Duan for his "high standards of medical ethics" ("医德高尚"). In

Example 5.164, the Associate Dean of Teaching and Curriculum in the College of

Traditional Chinese Medicine [of a city] compliments Director Liu on the "excellent"

("太棒了！") book he has published. After the Associate Dean's series of support

compliment strategies, Director Liu tells the Associate Dean that he is digitalizing the

pictures and maps in his book and creating multi-media teaching units. Learning that

after ten years of hard work on the book, Director Liu is still innovating and modernizing

teaching, the Associate Dean issues the second core compliment strategy praising him

highly on his "dedication and professionalism" ("学院的教师都象您这么敬业、爱业，

学院就发达了。"). Note, the second core compliment strategy subsequent to the first

one in each example is *prompted by the complimentee's response*. The two topics

introduced by two core compliment strategies in each example are *related in content

meaning*, presenting two *different facets* ("expertise and ethics"; "expertise and

dedication") of an unstated overall topic: "professionalism" and "achievement"

respectively.

**Multiple Compliments to Multiple Complimentees: Distributed or Mutual
Compliments within the Same Topic Field**

It is observed from the 132 multi-core compliment sequences that when multiple

core compliments are *directed to multiple complimentees*, the topics introduced by the

core compliment strategies are either the same or different topics *within the same topic

field* (e.g., teaching job and computer job are within the same topic field of career),

whether the core compliments are (a) distributed compliments, or (b) mutual

compliments.

Distributed compliments. *Distributed compliments* are multiple core

compliment strategies initiated by the complimenter(s) that are addressed to different

complimentees. In such a case, the topics introduced by the core compliment strategies

are usually different topics *within the same topic field*. Excerpt 5.11 gives an example.

Excerpt 5.11 [221] "Speaking of accounting skills, Teacher Shi is tops. As for stocks...
    Teacher Su is tops."

Situation: At a company social dinner in honor of Su [F, 38] and Shi [F, 34], both auditors
for the government Bureau of Taxation. After a discussion about the stock market and
investments, the company manager Yu [F, 32] and accountant Hong [M, 35] compliment
the two auditors.

01	→	洪财务：〔1.讲起阿拉会计方面额——史老师，	Accountant Hong: [1.Speaking of accounting skills... Teacher Shi's tops/*it's Teacher Shi*.	1.core 1 expert accounting skills
05	→	郁经理：〔2.呶股票么——苏老师来！	Manager Yu: [2.As for stocks... Teacher Su's tops/*it's Teacher Su*.	2.core 2 expert stock trading skills
08		苏审计：噢我吃额吃额。	Auditor Su: (to the host who is serving her more food and urging her to eat more) Oh, I AM eating... I AM eating.	
13		洪财务：〔3.股，股票是苏老师！	Accountant Hong: [3.Stocks... stocks, Teacher Su's tops/*it's Teacher Su*.	3.agreement
16		史审计：〔4.股，股票倒是下趟跟格个苏老师专门来学。	Auditor Shi: [4.Stocks... stocks... I must find a way of learning from Teacher Su.	4.intensifi-cation
20		苏审计：我也瞎，瞎弄弄额呀！（笑）	Auditor Su: I'm just... just playing around. (laughs)	
22		洪财务：〔5.嗳，来跟侬学。	Accountant Hong: 5.Yeah, I must come and learn from you.	5.agreement
25		······(omit four turns)	...(omit four turns)	
26		苏审计：勿是额，就是讲······	Auditor Su: No, that's not it... I mean...	
28		(Auditor Su starts talking about stocks.)	(Auditor Su starts talking about stocks.)	

Instead of addressing the compliments to one complimentee, in Excerpt 5.11, two core

compliment strategies initiated by two complimenters (Accountant Hong and Manager

Yu) are *distributed to two different complimentees*: Auditor Shi (史老师) and Auditor Su

(苏老师). It is interesting to note that the topics introduced by these two core

compliment strategies are not two facets of an unstated overall topic, but two different

topics: "accounting skills" ("讲起阿拉会计方面额") (C1) and "stock trading expertise"

("呶股票么") (C2). However, they fall into *the same topic field*—skills. The following

are more examples.

Example Number	Core Strategy	Core Strategy English Translation	Topic Field, Topic
Distributed compliments			
(5.165)	厂长：嗳——唱歌么，应该是我们老陈唱得很好！ 厂长：他呢，他呢唱戏唱得很好的！	General Manager: Well… when it comes to singing, our Lao Chen (board chairman) is the one. General Manager: He (office director) can sing opera really well.	skill: song singing, opera singing
(5.166)	董事长：嗯我感到你——有能力！ 小郑么能吃苦，	Board Chairman: Um... I feel you (general manager)... have ability. As for Xiao Zheng (assistant manager)... he's a hard worker.	business manager quality: ability, work ethic

In Example 5.165 and 5.166, multiple core compliment strategies, initiated by a single

complimenter in each example, are *distributed to multiple complimentees*: the board

chairman Lao Chen (老陈) and the office director in Example 5.165, and the general

manager and the assistant manager Xiao Zheng (小郑) in Example 5.166. In each

example, the two core compliments introduce two different topics *within the same topic

field*: great song singing and great opera singing—both singing skills; general manager's

management ability and assistant manager's hard-working ethic—both qualities of a good

business manager.

Mutual compliments. Frequently, multiple core compliment strategies are *mutual compliments* that are initiated by the complimenter and returned by the complimentee. Different from the distributed compliments, the topics introduced by the mutual core compliment strategies can be different or the same. However, they all fall *within the same topic field*, just like the topics introduced by the distributed compliments. Examples 5.167 to 5.173 illustrate how mutual core compliment strategies introduce topics *within the same topic field*.

Example Number	Core Strategy	Core Strategy English Translation	Topic Field, Topic
Mutual compliments			
(5.167)	农民：老师好， 老师："农业是基础，"	Farmer: Teachers are great. Teacher: "Agriculture is the foundation [of the national economy]."	career: teaching, farming
(5.168)	王：丁涵菱额字么嗲啊——！ 丁：我呢觉着伊（王）额英文蛮，蛮嗲额。	Wang: Ding Hanling's handwriting's so cool:::! Ding: I feel... her (Wang's) English is really… really cool.	writing skill: cool Chinese handwriting, cool English writing
(5.169)	女游客：你们，你们这边，画家很多！ 男店主：现在你，现在是桃李满天下了啊？（笑）	Woman Tourist: You... you have lots of master artists here. Male Store Owner: Now... now you have peaches and plums [students] all over the world. (laughs)	accomplishment: great artist and great teacher
(5.170)	董：嗯，不容易！（从江西到上海复旦大学） 戴：那你也是，更不容易了！（出亚洲）	Dong: Um, remarkable! (to make it out of Jiangxi Province and to Shanghai Fudan University) Dai: You too, even more amazing! (to make it out of Asia and to America)	academic achievement: entering key university in Shanghai and advancing education abroad
(5.171)	苗：嗳伊拉讲伊是格个格个，中国美女！ 邵：（笑）侬跑到西方全是美女了！（笑）	Miao: Hey, they say she's a... a... Chinese beauty! Shao: (laughs) If you go to the West, you'll all be beauties! (laughs)	appearance: each looks beautiful

(5.172)	赵：（对张说）侬看勿像——［七十］， 赵：（对陈说）侬勿大额么！ 陈：（对赵说）格侬……看得出伐啦？	Zhao: (to Zhang) You don't look [70]. Zhao: (to Chen) You're young! Chen: (to Zhao) Well you... do you look your age? / So you... can you tell?	appearance: each looks younger than his age
(5.173)	领队：我们这次很幸运， 地陪：他（全陪）才重要呢， 全陪：她（领队）才重要呢，	Tour Leader: We're so lucky this time (to have the general manager of the tour agency to guide our tour). Local Guide: He's (national guide) the important one. National Guide: She's (tour leader) the truly important one.	social status: each is important/holds important position

In all these examples, the complimentee responds to the complimenter's core compliment strategy with a return compliment. The topics introduced by the complimenter's and complimentee's *mutual core compliment strategies* can be different: great teaching job and great farming job; cool Chinese handwriting and cool English writing; great artist and great teacher; or entering key university in Shanghai and advancing education abroad (Examples 5.167 to 5.170). The topics introduced by the complimenter's and complimentee's *mutual core compliment strategies* can also be the same: each looks beautiful; each looks younger than his age; or each holds an important position (Examples 5.171 to 5.173). However, like the topics introduced by the distributed core compliment strategies, the topics introduced by the *mutual core compliment strategies* in each example *fall into the same topic field*: career, writing skill, career accomplishment, academic achievement, appearance, or social status.

Excerpt 5.12 illustrates in a complete compliment-response sequence the topic relationships in multiple *mutual core compliment strategies* initiated by and *directed to both the complimenter and the complimentee*.

Excerpt 5.12 [245] "You hold the lifeline of the economy in your hands!" "You're lord of real estate."

Situation: At the reunion to commemorate the 30th anniversary of "Educated youth going to the Heilongjiang [province] farms." Ni [F, 46] walks to the table of Gao [M, 43] and Tang (Bonian) [M, 44]. All three are from the same high school and worked on the same farm, but Ni doesn't know Tang very well.

01	→	倪：1. 汤伯年，侬来拉中国银行老灵嗳！	Ni: 1.Tang Bonian, you have a great job at the Bank of China.	1.core 1 great bank job
02				
03				
04		高：2. 掌管经济命脉的嘛！	Gao: 2.You hold the lifeline of the economy in your hands. 3.You have billions at your discretionary disposal!	2.comment
05		3. 手掌万贯啊！		3.intensifi-cation
06				
07				
08				
09		汤：格有啥！全是国家额钞票，又勿是我额钞票！	Tang: What of it? All the money belongs to the state. It doesn't belong to me.	
10				
11				
12				
13		倪：（笑）	Ni: (laughs)	
14	→	汤：4. 呶，像伊呶，土地老爷，5. 全要朝伊磕头额！	Tang: 4.Well, look at him... he's lord of real estate. 5.Everybody *kowtows* to him.	4.core 2 great real estate job
15				
16				5.intensifi-cation
17				
18		高：呒没呒没，坐坐办公室，现在又呒没噱头水额咾！	Gao: That's not true. I'm stuck sitting in my office. No clout whatsoever.	
19				
20				
21				

As we can see, the two core compliment strategies in Excerpt 5.12 are two *mutual compliments*, one initiated by the complimenter Ni (倪) and aligned with by Gao (高), one initiated by Tang (汤) as a return compliment. The two mutual compliments introduce two different topics: great bank job ("侬来拉中国银行老灵嗳！") (C1) and great real estate job ("像伊呶，土地老爷，") (C4), both positions were red hot in China at the time. However, it is interesting to see that in the case of mutual compliments, the two different topics fall into *the same topic field*: career achievement.

Summary

In this chapter, I have examined the *core* compliment strategy, its position in the compliment-response sequence, the topic composition, topic breadth, and topic relationships in multiple *core* compliment strategies.

An analysis of the 525 *core* compliment strategies has revealed that the overwhelming majority (97.5%) of the *core* compliment strategies take the beginning or the first turn position in the *core* compliment sequence. The *core* compliment strategy initiates the compliment topic, the content of the compliment, in the *core* compliment sequence. The topic is realized by two component parts of the *core* compliment strategy: an assessable (what the compliment is about) and a positive assessment (what is said positively about the assessable). The assessable can be reference-specific, reference-nonspecific, or with no overt reference. The positive assessment can be content-specific or content-nonspecific. The compliment topic/content is brought out by either the reference-specific assessable, or the content-specific positive assessment, or both. When the assessable and the positive assessment are both nonspecific, sequential context or situational context has to be examined to locate the assessable, or support elaboration strategies are used to specify the compliment topic. A wide variety of lexical and syntactic forms are used to realize the assessable and the positive assessment: noun phrases for people (e.g., names, kinship terms, titles) and for objects, personal pronouns, demonstrative pronouns, verb phrases, clauses, generic terms, adjectives/stative verbs, adverbs/adverbial phrases, interjections, modal particles, idioms, idiomatic expressions, honorific words, etc., with no formulaicity and predictability in lexical or syntactic distribution.

The analysis has also revealed that the *core* compliment strategy is usually a general summative statement covering a wide breadth, with the majority of the *core* strategies aligned with, elaborated and emphasized by support compliment strategies. The general summative nature of the topic is largely brought out by the content-nonspecificity and the high semantic strength of the positive assessment. The content-nonspecificity is realized by using content-nonspecific lexical items/semantic carriers. The high semantic strength is mainly achieved by using lexical items of high intensity, intensifiers, sentence-initial interjections, and sentence-final [modal] particles. These forms are used alone or in combination. To specify the content-nonspecific or high semantic strength "general summative" topic, a series of support compliment strategies usually follows.

Of the 300 compliment-response sequences, 168 have one *core* compliment strategy per sequence, while 132 have two or more *core* compliment strategies per sequence. When a compliment-response sequence has more than one *core* compliment strategy, the topics introduced by the *core* compliment strategies are usually related in content meaning. They are related in two different ways depending on the number of complimentee (single or multiple) receiving the compliments. When multiple *core* compliments are directed to a single complimentee, the topics introduced by the *core* compliment strategies are usually different facets of an overall topic not overtly stated (e.g., taste, cooking skill, and hospitality are different facets of the topic food), whether the *core* compliments are initiated by the complimenter(s) or prompted by the complimentee. When multiple *core* compliments are directed to multiple complimentees, the topics introduced by the *core* compliment strategies can be different or same but are

all within the same topic field (e.g., teaching job and computer job are within the same topic field of career), whether the *core* compliments are distributed compliments (i.e., multiple core compliments initiated by the complimenter(s) that are addressed to different complimentees) or mutual compliments (i.e., multiple core compliments that are initiated by the complimenter and returned by the complimentee).

The important features of the *core* compliment strategy summarized above have not been addressed in the compliment literature so far. In the next three chapters, I will discuss the seven *support* compliment strategies: *agreement*, *comment*, and *example* strategies in Chapter VI, *repetition* and *intensification* strategies in Chapter VII, and *quote* and *comparison* strategies in Chapter VIII.

Chapter VI

SUPPORT COMPLIMENT STRATEGIES FOR ALIGNMENT AND ELABORATION

This chapter examines the support compliment strategies for alignment and for elaboration: *agreement strategy*, *comment strategy* and *example strategy*. As has been stated in Chapter IV (Overview of Chinese Compliment Structure), the support compliment strategy is defined by the semantic or pragmatic function of the utterance in relation to the core compliment strategy or other utterances in the sequence. They play three major pragmatic-discursive functions: (1) to align with, (2) to elaborate, or (3) to emphasize the core compliment strategy or another support compliment strategy. The *agreement* strategy fulfills the first function, while the *comment* and *example* strategies fulfill the second function. How do *agreement, comment* and *example* strategies strengthen the positive semantic force of a core or another support compliment strategy? In this chapter, I will describe the realization of each strategy in detail, the strategy's linguistic form, and discourse and functional characteristics.

Agreement

The support compliment strategy of *agreement* aligns with the same position expressed in a compliment action taken by *another speaker*. The compliment action can be a core compliment strategy or a support compliment strategy. *Another speaker* is normally the complimenter or the third party in a multi-party conversation, or occasionally the complimentee in a two-party or multi-party conversation. In the latter

case, the complimentee usually initiates a self-compliment, which prompts the

complimenter to agree with the complimentee. For example,

Core or Other Strategy	Agreement	Core or Other Strategy English Translation	Agreement English Translation
(6.1) 青：我最近十年来也就等于是，拿家庭生活改变了一下。 芳：嗳， 青：就是，也勿是利用职权，靠自家，靠自家本事来进行。 青：也勿依靠任何人，全靠自家。	芳：**对额**。青奋斗精神强（笑）！ [1]	Qing: In the past ten years...that is... I've turned my life around. Fang: Uh huh. Qing: Not relying on the power of my office, but on myself, on my own ability. Qing: And I don't rely on anybody. I'm self-reliant.	Fang: **Right**/**True**. Qing is full of entrepreneurial spirit (laughs)! [1]

(Please see the footnote below for how to read Example 6.1.) In Example 6.1, Qing is

very proud of his achievement in turning his life around by relying on his own ability.

Fang admires his spirit. Her compliment "Qing is full of entrepreneurial spirit" ("青奋斗

精神强！") comes after her agreement strategy "对额。 Right/True." affirming Qing's

self-compliments.

　　Figure 4.1 (p. 110) shows that a total of 423 *agreement* strategies (12.7% of 3,310

support strategies) are observed in the 300 compliment-response sequences. The support

compliment strategy of *agreement* is realized in three different ways: (1) by using an

agreement token (243 or 57.5%), (2) by repeating another speaker's compliment strategy

---

[1] Note: In Example 6.1, the support strategy in the 2nd (or 4th) column follows and supports the utterance on its left side in the 1st (or 3rd) column. If there are more core or other strategies following the support strategy, they continue in the first column (see Examples 6.3–6.5 later). This applies to all the examples in this format throughout the dissertation.

(111 or 26.2%), or (3) by using a combination of the agreement token and repetition (69 or 16.3%).

Agreement Token

Out of the 423 agreement strategies, 243 (57.5%) align with another speaker's position expressed in a compliment strategy by using *agreement tokens*. *Agreement tokens* consist of mostly sentence-initial interjections or "exclamative particles" (a type of function word used to express a speaker's moods; see Chapter V Core Compliment Strategy) or words or phrases expressing a speaker's mood of agreement. These *agreement tokens* are not grammatically related to any other part of the sentence. They may form complete utterances on their own (e.g., "嗳。 Yeah."), or function as part of a larger sentence. When they form a part of a larger sentence, they usually appear at the beginning (e.g., "对额，我跟侬讲。 Yeah, I must say."). To enhance the tone of agreement, an *agreement token* is frequently repeated (e.g., "对对对。 Right, right, right."), or combined with an intensification form such as an intensifier (e.g., "**就**是。 Exactly."), or used together with another agreement token (e.g., "嗯，格倒是额。 Um, it's true."). The following are examples of the most commonly used *agreement tokens* in the data.

Agreement tokens:

 e.g. 嗯 [en] ("yeah," "um/uhm/mhm"), 嗳 [ai], 对 [duì], 对的/对额 [duìde/dui'e], 是 [shì], 是的/是额 [shìde/shi'e] ("yes/yeah," "right," "true"); 是额呀 [shi'e ya], 就是 [jiù shì], 就是讲呀 ("exactly," "it sure is"); 对对对 [duì duì duì], 是是是 [shì shì shì] ("right, right, right," "yeah, yeah, yeah"); 格倒是额, 是这样的 ("it's true"), 是格能介啊 ("it's so true"), etc.

Examples 6.2 to 6.5 illustrate how *agreement tokens* are used to realize the agreement

strategy.

Core or Other Strategy	Agreement	Core or Other Strategy English Translation	Agreement English Translation
Agreement by using agreement tokens			
(6.2) 张：江冬芹老早，中一进来读书老好额。 邱：老卖力额。	徐：嗯［en］。 张：嗳［ai］。 马：江冬芹也是好学生。	Zhang: Jiang Dongqin back then... she was outstanding even as a freshman. Qiu: Very diligent.	Xu: **Yeah**. Zhang: **Yeah**. Ma: Jiang Dongqin was also an excellent student.
(6.3) 仙姐：婆婆对伐记性老好嗳！ 仙姐：记性老好嗳！	莹莹：伊是记了海！ 莹莹：**是额呀**！［shi'e ya］	Xian: Mom has a great memory, doesn't she? Xian: It's good indeed.	Ying: She remembers everything. Ying: **It sure is**!
(6.4) 卢审计：不过俚碰着阿拉史老师俚也算运道好额！ 卢审计：碰着格种人家格种男小团，态度清高一点，啥地方拨侬介好耐心啊！上趟就拨侬罚款跑路了！	会计 1：嗳［ai］，**我就格能讲呀**。 会计 2：嗯［en］，**对额**［dui'e］。 会计 1：**是格能介啊**，	Auditor Lu: But you are really lucky to have our teacher Shi. Auditor Lu: If you run into those... those guys... with an air of arrogance, who would have such patience with you? They would have given you a fine last time!	Accountant 1: **Yeah. That's what I say too**. Accountant 2: **Yeah, true/exactly**. Accountant 1: **Exactly/ It's so true**.
(6.5) 陈教授：我朋友，脚不好，请张医生看看。 朱教授：噢，那好，他这个，最有办法！ 朱教授：他有，出国来的。	陈教授：**对**［duì］。	Prof. Chen: My friend here is having trouble with her leg. She's here to see Dr. Zhang. Prof. Zhu: Oh, no problem. It's right up his alley. Prof. Zhu: He's been overseas.	Prof. Chen: **Exactly**.

陈教授：所以就寻他来了。	朱教授：**嗳** ［ai］，**对对对** ［duì duì duì］。	Prof. Chen: That's why we're here.	Prof. Zhu: **Yeah, right, right, right**.

In Examples 6.2, simple *agreement tokens* "嗯 [en] um/yeah" and "嗳 [ai] yeah" are used

as complete utterances on their own. To enhance the tone of agreement, an

intensification form—the sentence-final [modal] particle (see Chapter V Core

Compliment Strategy)—is attached to the end of some *agreement tokens*: "是额**呀** [shi'e

ya]！ It **sure** is!" (Example 6.3), and "是格能介**啊 [a]**， It's **so** true." (Example 6.4),

while in Example 6.5, the *agreement token* "对 right" is repeated. In addition, multiple

agreement tokens are used together to reinforce the tone of agreement: "嗳，Yeah." +

"我就格能讲呀。 That's what I say too."; "嗯，Yeah," + "对额。 true/exactly."

(Example 6.4); "嗳，Yeah," + "对对对。 right, right, right." (Example 6.5).

Excerpt 6.1 illustrates how different *agreement tokens* are used to realize the

agreement strategy in a complete compliment-response sequence.

Excerpt 6.1 [260] "The way you talk is so interesting!" "Isn't it."

Situation: On the bus from the airport to the ancient city of Xi'an. Shi [M, 32] is the local
tour guide. His running commentaries made to the tourists are very humorous. The
national tour guide Wang [M, 28] and the tour group leader Yang [F, 48] are very
impressed. This is part of the compliment-response sequence.

01		王：1. 你说话真有意思！	Wang: 1.The way you talk is	1.core 1
02			so interesting!	interesting
03	→	杨：2. 是的。	Yang: 2.Isn't it.	talk
04		石：嗳，习惯了，习惯了。	Shi: Well, I've gotten used	2.agreement
05			to it... gotten used to	
06			it.	
07		杨：3. 很，很幽默！	Yang: 3.Very...very humorous!	3.comment
08	→	王：4. 就是！	Wang: 4.Exactly!	4.agreement
09		杨：5. 很幽默！6.（笑）他	Yang: 5.Very humorous.	5.repetition
10		们喜欢这样，听你这样	6.(laughs) They like it	6.quote other

		讲（笑）。	like this... to hear you talk like this (laughs).	
11				
12				
13				
14	→	王：7.对对。	Wang: 7.Yeah, yeah.	7.agreement
15		石：我，我，我主要接美国	Shi: My... my... my job has	
16		团，从八九年到现在，	mainly been to lead	
17		……	American tour groups,	
18			from (19)89 to now.	
19			...	
20		(Shi talks about how he	(Shi talks about how he	
21		became a tour guide. The	became a tour guide. The rest	
22		rest of the compliments	of the compliments are	
23		are omitted.)	omitted.)	

Three agreement strategies are used in Excerpt 6.1. The first agreement strategy (C2) is given by the tour leader Yang to align with the national tour guide Wang's core compliment strategy that the local tour guide Shi's talk is "so interesting" ("你说话真有意思！") (C1). The second and third agreement strategies (C4 and C7) are given by the national guide Wang to the tour leader Yang to align with her support comment strategy that the local guide Shi's talk is "very humorous" ("很，很幽默！") (C3) and her support quote strategy that the tourists all "like to hear your [Shi's] talk" ("他们喜欢这样，听你这样讲") (C6). All three agreement strategies consist of *agreement tokens* that are used as complete utterances on their own: "是的。 Isn't it." (C2), "就是！ Exactly!" (C4), and "对对。 Yeah, yeah." (C7), two of them in emphatic forms—one with an intensifier "就 exactly" preceding it and one repeats itself "对对。 Yeah, yeah."

Repetition

Out of the 423 agreement strategies, 111 (26.2%) align with another speaker's position expressed in a compliment strategy by *repeating* the speaker's compliment strategy. Please note the repetition used in an agreement strategy differs from a repetition

strategy in that the repetition used in an agreement strategy restates a strategy initiated by a *different speaker* whereas the repetition strategy restates a strategy initiated by the *same speaker*. Excerpt 6.2 illustrates the difference.

Excerpt 6.2 [258] "Right, right, right, her pronunciation is truly beautiful."

Situation: On a tour bus in Beijing. The tour group member Mrs. Dong [F, 47] wants to tell the national guide Wang [M, 26] how they like him. However, he switches the topic and starts to compliment the local guide Dai Xiaoyu [F, 24]. Qi Tieshan [M, 26] is a local guide from a different city.

01		董：啊？	Dong: Uh?	
02		王：1. 祁铁山讲的英语比我	Wang: 1.Qi Tieshan's English	1.core 1
03		们戴小玉讲的……	compared with our Dai	beautiful
04			Xiaoyu's is...	pronuncia-
05		董：比较起来？	Dong: Comparatively speaking?	tion
06		王：他的声音发音没有戴小	Wang: His (Qi's) voice...	
07		玉的好听。2. 戴小玉的	pronunciation isn't as	2.intensifi-
08		发音真好听啊！	pleasant to the ear as	cation
09			Dai Xiaoyu's. 2.Dai	
10			Xiaoyu's pronunciation	
11			is truly beautiful.	
12	→	董：3. 对对对，她的发音真	Dong: 3.Right, right, right,	3.agreement
13		好听啊！	her pronunciation is	
14			truly beautiful.	
15	→	王：4. 嗳，好听得很。	Wang: 4.Yeah, very beautiful.	4.repetition
16		戴：（笑）	Dai: (laughs).	

In Excerpt 6.2, part of Mrs. Dong's agreement strategy "对对对，**她的发音真好听啊！** Right, right, right, **her pronunciation is truly beautiful**." (C3) repeats Wang's intensification strategy "戴小玉的发音真好听啊！ Dai Xiaoyu's pronunciation is truly beautiful." (C2). However, the repetition is considered an *agreement* strategy because it restates the strategy initiated by Wang—a *different speaker*, in alignment with his position. Wang's repetition "嗳，**好听得很**。 Yeah, **very beautiful**." (C4), on the other hand, is considered a *repetition* strategy because he restates the strategy (C2) already stated by himself—the *same speaker*.

It is observed from the data that when agreeing by *repeating* another speaker's compliment strategy, the *repetition* can be a complete restatement of the compliment strategy or a partial restatement (usually the positive assessment part) of the compliment strategy; the *repetition* can be in exact words (i.e., restate a compliment strategy word for word without any change) or in non-exact words (i.e., restate a compliment strategy with minor changes in wording, word order, structure, etc.). (See Repetition Strategy in Chapter VII for a more detailed analysis.) Examples 6.6 to 6.10 illustrate how *repetition* is used to realize the agreement strategy.

Core or Other Strategy	Agreement	Core or Other Strategy English Translation	Agreement English Translation
Agreement by using repetition			
(6.6) 杜：阿拉格搭，夜大学，完全还是用俹额，用侬额书做教材嗳！ 乐：啊？（笑）勿晓得啥额，啥额辰光…… 杜：《Step By Step》对伐？用了十几年侬看**还来用**。	邹：**还来用**。	Du: Our evening colleges here... they're all still using your... using your books as textbooks. Le: What？ (laughs) That was so long ago… Du: "Step By Step" you see... we've been using it for over a decade. And look here, we're **still using it**.	Zou: **Still using it**.
(6.7) 李：侬看阿拉姆妈讲侬总归是后生额。（笑） 余：哎，面孔上一塌糊涂，画得来像地图一样额！地震！ 李母：**呒没噢**！	李：**呒没噢**！	Li: After all, you do look young as my mother says. (laughs) Yu: Look, my face is a mess. It's painted like a map! An earthquake! Li's Mom: **No way**!	Li: **No way**!

(6.8) 陆审计：侬格个阿姐文武双全， 陆审计：**样样物事全来三额！**	女财务：**样样物事全会额，**	Auditor Lu: This older sister of yours, master of all trades, Auditor Lu: She'**s good at everything**.	Female Accountant: She **knows how to do everything**.
(6.9) 吴：小彭啊，侬应该属于幸运者。 刘：上海交关人下岗来！ 吴：老彭属于**苦尽甜来**。	刘：**苦尽甘来**。 吴：嗳。	Wu: Xiao Peng, you are one of the luckier ones. Liu: A lot of people in Shanghai have lost their jobs. Wu: Lao Peng's case is the opposite: **a bitter beginning but a sweet ending**.	Liu: **A bitter beginning, (but) a sweet ending**. Wu: Yeah.
(6.10) 赵：何剑青是格个，成功，伊**是成功的典范**， 何：勿勿。	常：**很成功的！** 韩：……对额我跟侬讲。	Zhao: He Jianqing is a… success… he'**s a model of success**. He：No, no.	Chang: **Very successful**. Han: ...Yeah, I must say.

The agreement strategies in Examples 6.6 and 6.7 *repeat* (the positive assessment part of) the compliment strategy initiated by a different speaker in exact words (see words in boldface). The agreement strategies in the other three examples *repeat* another speaker's compliment strategy in non-exact words with minor changes of wording or structure: changing the wording from "来三 is good at" to "会 knows how to do" (Example 6.8), substituting the word "甜 sweet" for a synonym "甘 sweet" (Example 6.9), and replacing the noun phrase "成功的典范 a model of success" with a stative verb phrase "很成功的 very successful" (Example 6.10). All three *repetitions* retain the meaning of the other speaker's compliment strategy with minimal wording or structural change.

Excerpt 6.3 illustrates in a complete compliment-response sequence how *repetition* in exact words is used to realize the agreement strategy.

Excerpt 6.3 [174] "Zhou is the expert." "Expert."

Situation: At a high school reunion. Zhou [M, 46], who is in a remodeling business, advises Ren [M, 47] to spend his money on the most critical parts of the remodeling of his apartment. He talks about how to do the floors and what materials to use. Yao [F, 47] has been through all this herself and experienced the same problems, so she feels for Ren. Fang [M], Tong [M], Lian [M], and Zhang [F] are all around 47 years old.

01		姚：1.格个，周建平是专	Yao: 1.Now this... Zhou is	1.core
02		家！（笑）	the expert. (laughs)	expert
03	→	方：2.专家。	Fang: 2.Expert.	2.agreement
04	→	童：3.专家。	Tong: 3.Expert.	3.agreement
05		连：4.装潢专家！	Lian: 4.Remodeling expert.	4.comment
06		张：5.不过伊，伊格理论倒	Zhang:5.Now... what he	5.comment
07		是讲得对额呀！6.地板	says... he's got the	6.comment
08		一般性，漆要买得好。	principles right.	
09			6.The floor boards	
10			don't have to be	
11			expensive, but the	
12			paint must be good.	
13		连：7.姚清清假使从国外回	Lian: 7.If Yao Qingqing	7.intensifi-
14		来，房子肯定叫侬装	comes back from	cation
15		修。阿是？（笑）	abroad, she's bound to	
16			have you do her	
17			apartment. (to Yao)	
18			Isn't that so?	
19		姚：（笑）我，我一般性，	Yao: (laughs) I... I'm easy	
20		我随便哪能全可以过日	easy going. I can live	
21		脚额（笑）。	in any apartment.	
22		（大家笑）	(everyone laughs.)	
23		周：（对任说）……嗳，自	Zhou: (talks to Ren)...yeah,	
24		家苦头吃得介多嗳，乃	you suffer too much	
25		末侬看了也勿开心……	getting it done, and	
26			just looking at it is	
27			enough to make you	
28			unhappy...	

In Excerpt 6.3, after Yao initiates the core compliment strategy that Zhou is "the expert" in floor remodeling ("格个，周建平是专家！") (C1) at the beginning of the sequence, Fang and Tong agree to Yao's compliment by *repeating* the positive assessment part of her compliment in exact words "专家。 Expert." (C2 and C3). Although Lian's support

strategy "装潢专家！ Remodeling expert." (C4) also contains the word "专家 expert" in it, it is considered a comment strategy because it adds detail—Zhou's "remodeling" specialty ("装潢")—to the core compliment.

Excerpt 6.4 illustrates in another complete compliment-response sequence how *repetitions* in non-exact words as well as in exact words are used to realize the agreement strategy.

Excerpt 6.4 [292] "Wow! The stamps are so beautiful!"

Situation: At a small get-together. Weiqi [F, 38] has brought some foreign commemorative stamps for her friends Liping [F, 48], Wenjuan [F, 45] and Fangling [F, 47]. Liping and Wenjuan collect stamps. They love foreign stamps.

01		玮琦：我对伐，我带了一样	Weiqi: I... I've brought	
02		物事拨俉，俉肯定	something for you guys.	
03		要。要伐？先讲！	You're bound to like it.	
04			Do you want it? Say if	
05			you want it first.	
06		文娟：要额！	Wenjuan: I want it.	
07		芳苓：〔我记得上趟伊，上	Fangling: [I remember last	
08		趟也拨额……	time she... last time	
09			she also brought...	
10		玮琦：〔我带了两套，呶，	Weiqi: [I brought two	
11		我已经拨了……呶，	sets. I've already	
12		格张拨侬。	given... Here, this sheet	
13			goes to you.	
14		文娟：谢谢！谢谢！1.喔	Wenjuan: Thank you, thank	1.core
15		唷！老灵额！	you! 1.Wow! So beautiful!	beautiful
16	→	芳苓：2.喔唷！介灵额！	Fangling: 2.Wow! So	gift stamps
17			beautiful!	2.agreement
18	→	莉萍：3.喔唷，老灵额，让	Liping: 3.Wow, so beautiful!	3.agreement
19		我看看叫。	Let me see them.	
20		玮琦：现在伊拉全格能介子	Weiqi: So now they're	
21		额啦，一版一样还要	printing them like this	
22		好看，我欢喜……	(in sheets). All the same	
23		（不清楚）	on one sheet is even	
24			better. I like...(?)	
25		文娟：嗳玮琦，格也蛮……	Wenjuan: Oh, Weiqi, this is	
26		（不清楚）	also very...(?)	
27		玮琦：格张嗲伐？American	Weiqi: Isn't this sheet cool?	

28		dolls。	*American dolls* [in	
29			English].	
30		文娟：4.喔唷！老灵额！	Wenjuan: 4.Wow! So wonderful!	4.comment
31		5.灵是灵得来！	5.So very wonderful!	5.intensifi-
32		玮琦：对伐？	Weiqi: Didn't I say so?	cation
33		文娟：让我……	Wenjuan: Let me...	
34	→	莉萍：6.喔唷！7.嗳，格个	Liping: 6.Wow! 7.Yeah, this	6.agreement
35	→	好！8.格个好！9.嗳	one's great! 8.This	7.agreement
36		迭个蛮灵额，迭个全	one's great! 9.Hey this	8.repetition
37		是点恐龙！	one's cool. These are	9.comment
38			all dinosaurs.	
39		玮琦：喔唷，格搭已经有	Weiqi: Oh-oh... this one is	
40		点……格只呢，吭没	somewhat... This one...	
41		办法了，格只吭没办	can't do anything about	
42		法 [分了] ……	it... this one's hard to	
43			[divide] (there are	
44			stamps on both sides of	
45			the sheet)...	
46		莉萍：嗳，格能一张几钿	Liping: Hey, how much for a	
47		啊？嗳，格能介一张	sheet like this? Hey,	
48		几钿啊？	how much for a sheet	
49			like this?	
50		(talk about price)	(talk about price)	
51		文娟：10.蛮灵额玮琦，侬	Wenjuan: 10.Wonderful, Weiqi.	10.repetition
52		哪能每趟全想着带格	How can you think of	
53		个，11.上趟也是老	bringing stamps every	11.comment
54		灵额！	time you come. 11.What	
55			you brought last time	
56			were wonderful too.	
57		玮琦：我还带了交关，全是	Weiqi: I brought a lot more,	
58		送拨人家额，因为人	all as gifts, Because	
59		家……	people...	
60		莉萍：噢，我讲拨侬听，迭	Liping: Oh, listen. Here...	
61		个迭个，撕开来勿要	you can peel it apart	
62		紧额。	and it won't tear.	
63		(tries to divide the	(tries to divide the stamps)	
64		stamps)		
65		文娟：12.喜欢死了，这些	Wenjuan: 12.I love them so	12.intensifi-
66		东西！	much (*like to death*),	cation
67			these stamps!	
68		玮琦：侬欢喜格套物事啊？	Weiqi: You like this set?	
69		我"飞机"对伐，真	I... the "Airplanes"...	
70		额老漂亮额，可惜买	they are really	
71		勿着了，已经吭	beautiful, but too bad	
72		没了，后来阿拉阿	they were sold out. All	
73		嫂……	gone. Then my sister-in-	

74			law...	
75		文娟：13.好了好了！格已	Wenjuan: 13.Alright, alright.	13.intensifi-
76		经，格已经够好了！	This is already... this	cation
77			is already good enough.	
78		莉萍：14.阿拉格搭，吥没	Liping: 14.Here [in China]	14.comparison
79		看见过。	we've never seen anything	self
80			like it.	
81	→	文娟：15.吥没额。	Wenjuan: 15.No, never.	15.agreement
82		莉萍：16.看见过就老好	Liping: 16.We're lucky just	16.intensifi-
83		了。	to have a chance to see	cation
84			them.	
85	→	文娟：17.嗳。看见就够好	Wenjuan: 17.Yeah, lucky just	17.agreement
86		了，阿是啊？	to see them. Isn't it	
87		（指玮琦的裙子）	true? (pointing to	
88			Weiqi's skirt)	
89		玮琦：做啥（笑）？	Weiqi: What? (laughs)	
90		文娟：（笑）	Wenjuan: (chuckles)	
91		玮琦：（笑）格旧额呀！旧	Weiqi: (laughs) This is old.	
92		得来是一塌糊涂！	Terribly old.	
93		(talk about Weiqi's	(talk about Weiqi's skirt)	
94		skirt)		

Six agreement strategies are used in Excerpt 6.4 to align with the core or other support

compliment strategies on Weiqi's beautiful gift stamps. All six agreement strategies are

realized by using *repetition*, either in exact words or non-exact words. The first two

agreement strategies (C2, C3) are given by Fangling and Liping to align with Wenjuan's

core compliment strategy ("喔唷！老灵额！ Wow! So/*Very* beautiful!") (C1). While

Liping's agreement strategy (C3) *repeats* the core strategy in exact words, Fangling

replaces the intensifier in the positive assessment of the core strategy "老 very/so" with a

different intensifier of the same strength "介 so" ("喔唷！介灵额！ Wow, **so** beautiful!")

(C2). The third and fourth agreement strategies (C6 and C7) are given by Liping to align

with Wenjuan's support comment strategy on Weiqi's "American Dolls" stamps ("喔

唷！老灵额！ Wow! So wonderful!") (C4). Liping first *repeats* the sentence-initial

interjection "喔唷！ Wow!" (C6), and then uses a combination of an agreement token

"噯， Yeah," and a *repetition* in non-exact words "格个好！ this one's great!" (C7) (see next section on *combination* strategy). Note the *repetition* uses different wording to express the same meaning: instead of "[格个] **老灵额**！ [This one's] **so wonderful**!" Liping uses a different stative verb of similar meaning "格个**好**！ this one's **great**!" The fifth and sixth agreement strategies (C15, C17) are given by Wenjuan to align with Liping's support strategies of comparison ("阿拉格搭，吪没看见过。 Here [in China] we've never seen anything like it.") (C14) and intensification ("看见过就老好了。 We're lucky just to have a chance to see them.") (C16). Both agreement strategies *repeat* in non-exact words. The fifth agreement strategy changes the wording from "吪没看见 过 *have never seen*" (C15) to "吪没额 *do not have*" (C16), while the sixth agreement strategy replaces "老好了 very lucky/*very good*" with "够好了 very lucky/*good enough*." The last agreement strategy is also headed with an agreement token "噯。 Yeah." We can see in Excerpt 6.4 that when *repeating* in non-exact words, the changes are minimal (cf. *repetition* strategy in Chapter VII).

Combination of Agreement Token and Repetition

Out of the 423 agreement strategies, 69 (16.3%) align with another speaker's position expressed in a compliment strategy by using a *combination of agreement token and repetition*. For example, both Mrs. Dong's agreement strategy "对对对，她的发音 真好听啊！ Right, right, right, her pronunciation is truly beautiful." (C3) in Excerpt 6.2 (p. 198), and Liping's agreement strategy "噯，格个好！ Yeah, this one's great!" (C7) in Excerpt 6.4 (p. 202) consist of *an agreement token and a repetition*. Examples 6.11 to

6.14 are more instances of how agreement strategy is realized by using a *combination of*

agreement token and repetition.

Core or Other Strategy	Repetition	Core or Other Strategy English Translation	Repetition English Translation
Agreement by using a combination of agreement token and repetition			
(6.11) 胡：嗳，老上海，老上海搭外地人比勿上额！	范：老上海实际上大多数全比勿上额，是额［shi'e］。 许：就是！	Hu: Shanghai natives... Shanghai natives aren't doing as well as [they] outsiders.	Fan: Actually, most Shanghai natives aren't doing as well as outsiders... yeah. Xu: True.
(6.12) 女病属：格医生水平高额！	女病人：对呀［duiya］，水平高呀！	A Patient's Wife: What an excellent doctor!	Female Patient: Yeah, excellent indeed!
(6.13) 总经理秘书：阿拉格搭房子做了老好，全是伊拉弄额伊辰光！ 唐：全是，何剑青额作品！全是。 总经理秘书：嗳，弄得老好额！ 唐：倷格么，倷过两年再叫伊，再来…… 总经理秘书：装潢了蛮好额。	总经理秘书：嗳［ai］，过两年再叫伊弄， 苏：蛮好，蛮好，嗳［ai］。	Secretary to General Manager: They did a great job remodeling this place. They deserve all the credit. Tang: It's all... He Jianqing's masterpiece. All of it! Secretary to General Manager: Yeah, he did a great job. Tang: Then you... you… ask him to come again in a couple of years... Secretary to General Manager: They did a great job remodeling this place.	Secretary to General Manager: Yeah… we'll ask him to come and do it again in a couple of years. Su: Great job, great job, Yeah.
(6.14) 林：不过来拉国外，是算漂亮额！（笑） 林：侬，侬晓得额	康：嗳［ai］！（笑） 康：（笑）嗳	Lin: To be honest, we would be considered very pretty over there (*overseas*)! (laughs) Lin: You... you know,	Kang: We would! (laughs) Kang: (laughs) Yeah,

呀，全讲侬漂亮。	［ai］，对对对［dui dui dui］，来国外是……	everyone says you're beautiful.	right, right, right... over there (*overseas*)...

In Examples 6.11 to 6.14, different *agreement tokens* ("是额 [shi'e]," "对呀 [duiya]," "嗳 [ai]," "对对对 [dui dui dui]") are used in combination with *repetition* of another speaker's compliment strategy to realize the agreement strategy. The *repetitions* in all these examples restate the compliment strategies in non-exact words but with minimal changes: replacing the generic reference "老上海 Shanghai natives" with another qualified generic reference "老上海大多数全 most Shanghai natives" (Example 6.11); replacing the sentence-final [modal] particle "额 [的]" with another one of similar strength "呀 [ya]" (Example 6.12); changing the verb "来 come" to the verb "弄 do," and restating the positive assessment "蛮好额 did a great job" in repeated form ("蛮好，蛮好， Great job, great job,") (Example 6.13); using the shortened form "来 [在] at/in" for the word "来拉 [在] at/in" (Example 6.14). In the last example, we see an instance of *repetition* combined with two *agreement tokens*, one of which is in the repeated form ("嗳 [ai], 对对对 [dui dui dui], Yeah, right, right, right..."). It is interesting to note that while in the majority of the *combination* strategies the *agreement token* appears before *repetition*, in Examples 6.11 and 6.13 the order is reversed.

Excerpt 6.5 illustrates in a complete compliment-response sequence how *combination of agreement token and repetition* is used to realize the agreement strategy. Excerpt 6.5 [261] "Yeah, he's eloquent indeed."

Situation: On the bus from the airport to the ancient city of Xi'an. The local tour guide Shi [M, 32] is very eloquent. The national tour guide Wang [M, 28] and the tour group leader Yang [F, 48] are very impressed with his presentation on the history of Xi'an.

		王：1.老石很能说噢？2.说得真好！	Wang: 1.Lao Shi is so eloquent, isn't he? 2.He made the perfect pitch.	1.core 1 eloquent 2.core 2 perfect pitch
01 02 03 04				
05 06 07 08	→	杨：3.是的，很能说。4.这样一路上说，够辛苦的！	Yang: 3.Yeah, he's eloquent indeed. 4.Talking the whole way, very demanding.	3.agreement 4.comment
09		石：小意思。	Shi: It's nothing.	
10 11 12		杨：（笑）小意思，5.真的很能说！	Yang: (laughs) Nothing... 5.You're really eloquent.	5.intensifi- cation
13 14 15		王：6.从一下飞机就说。	Wang: 6.He began talking the minute we got off the plane.	6.comment
16	→	杨：7.对。	Yang: 7.Yeah.	7.agreement
17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24		石：就我们西安的噢，老外团全部要求讲，从机场要讲到市内，	Shi: Our (company) here in Xi'an has this requirement. When it's a group of foreigners, you must be talking to them... all the way from the airport to downtown.	
25 26		杨：（笑）讲到市内，	Yang: (laughs) All the way to downtown...	
27 28 29 30		石：嗳，从市内要讲到兵马俑（笑），	Shi: Yeah, and all the way from downtown to the Terra Cotta Warriors. (laughs)	
31		杨：（笑）	Yang: (laughs)	
32		王：（笑）	Wang: (laughs)	
33 34		石：还要不一样。	Shi: And it mustn't be a replay.	
35		杨：8.你讲得很好。	Yang: 8.You did great.	8.repetition
36		石：谢谢。	Shi: Thank you.	
37 38 39		杨：9.讲得真的〔很好，噢？	Yang: 9.You did really [great, (to Wang) don't you think?	9.intensifi- cation
40 41		王：　　　　〔10.很有意思，11.很有意思。	Wang: [10.Very interesting. 11.Very interesting.	10.comment 11.repetition
42 43 44	→	杨：12.很有意思，对，13.很清楚，而且。	Yang: 12.Very interesting, yeah. 13.And very clear.	12.agreement 13.comment
45	→	王：14.对。	Wang: 14.Yeah.	14.agreement

46		杨：15. 他们，你看他们很	Yang: 15.You could tell by	15.intensifi-
47		专心听的（笑），16.	just looking at them.	cation
48		很喜欢听。	They... they were all	16.intensifi-
49			ears (laughs). 16.They	cation
50			loved your stories.	
51	→	王：17. 对。	Wang: 17.Yeah.	17.agreement
52		石：我喜欢这样，他们要不	Shi: I like it like this. If	
53		听我就不讲。	they don't listen, I	
54			stop talking.	
55		杨：（笑）	Yang: (laughs)	
56		王：（笑）	Wang: (laughs)	
57		石：就是，你看很多团，他	Shi: Yeah. A lot of	
58		们不好好听，不好好	groups... they don't	
59		听，就给他们随便讲	pay any attention to	
60		讲。	what you're saying...	
61			they don't pay any	
62			attention, so I go	
63			through it very	
64			casually too.	
65		(Shi goes on to tell how	(Shi goes on to tell how some	
66		some groups are not used	groups are not used to	
67		to talking about	talking about history.)	
68		history.)		

Five agreement strategies are observed in Excerpt 6.5, three made by the tour leader

Yang in agreement with the compliment strategies given by the national guide Wang (C3,

C7 and C12), and two made by the national guide Wang in agreement with the

compliment strategies given by the tour leader Yang (C14 and C17). Among the five

agreement strategies, two are in *combination* form. The first *combination* strategy (C3)

consists of an *agreement token* "是的 [shìde]，Yeah," plus a *repetition* "很能说。[he's]

eloquent indeed/*so eloquent*." The *repetition* restates the positive assessment part of

Wang's first core compliment strategy ("老石**很能说**噢？ Lao Shi is **so eloquent**, isn't

he?") (C1) in exact words. The second *combination* strategy (C12) consists of a

repetition "很有意思，Very interesting," plus an *agreement token* "对，yeah." The

repetition also restates Wang's comment strategy ("很有意思，Very interesting.") (C10)

in exact words. The other three agreement strategies all use a simple *agreement token* "对。Yeah." (C7, C14, C17).

So far I have described how the *agreement* strategy is realized: by using an *agreement token*, *repetition*, or a *combination* of the two. The *agreement token* can be used alone, or combined with another *agreement token* or repeated for emphasis. The *repetition* can be a complete or a partial restatement of another speaker's compliment strategy in exact words or non-exact words. Different *agreement tokens* and *repetition* can also be *combined* to enhance the tone of agreement.

Sequentially, it is observed that the *agreement* strategy is frequently followed by *comment* strategy adding details to the core or another support compliment strategy (see next section on *Comment* strategy). In Excerpt 5.1 in Chapter V (p. 115) for example, Ma follows her *agreement* to Zhang's compliment strategies on the excellent salmon dish ("这三纹鱼啊！最好的啦！ This is salmon! The best!" "何剑青，侬三纹鱼属于老好额！ He Jianqing, salmon is an excellent kind of fish!") (C1, C2) with a *comment* strategy ("嗳，**老好吃额**！ Yeah, **great taste**!") (C3, **C4**). When Zhang repeats her core compliment strategy again that the salmon dish is wonderful ("今朝只鱼片属于老好额！") (C5), Chang *agrees* with Zhang first ("嗳，格只鱼是老好额！ Yeah, this fish is great.") (C6) and follows her *agreement* strategy immediately with another *comment* strategy ("鲜得勿得了噢？ Exceptionally delicious!") (C7), which is in turn *agreed* to by Ma ("嗳。 Yeah.") (C8). For another example, in Excerpt 6.1 (p. 196), Wang's core compliment strategy on the local tour guide Shi's "interesting talk" is *agreed* to by Yang ("是的。 Isn't it.") (C2). Following the *agreement* strategy, Yang also adds a *comment*

strategy ("很，很幽默！ Very...very humorous.") (C3) which is in turn *agreed* to by Wang ("就是！ Exactly!") (C4). The same is observed in Excerpt 6.5. After Yang's *agreement* strategy to Wang's first core compliment strategy on the local tour guide Shi's "eloquence in talk" ("是的，很能说。 Yeah, he's eloquent indeed.") (C3), Yang and Wang each adds a *comment* elaborating the "eloquence": Shi "talks the whole way," which is very demanding ("这样一路上说，够辛苦的！") (C4), and Shi "began talking the minute they [we] got off the plane" ("从一下飞机就说。") (C6), which is in turn *agreed* to by Yang ("对。") (C7). After Yang repeats and intensifies the second core compliment strategy that the local guide Shi "made the perfect pitch/*did really great*" ("讲得真的很好，") (C9), Wang adds another *comment* ("很有意思， Very interesting.") (C10) elaborating the second core compliment strategy. Yang aligns with Wang's *comment* with an *agreement* strategy ("很有意思，对，") (C12), and immediately following the *agreement* strategy Yang adds one more *comment* further elaborating the "great talk": "很清楚，而且。 And very clear." (C13), which is further supported by Wang with an *agreement* strategy ("对。 Yeah.") (C14).

Interactionally, the *agreement* strategy does not seem to be contingent upon the complimentee's response. Instead of the "normal" complimenter–complimentee interaction, it is frequently observed (e.g., in Excerpts 5.1, 6.1, 6.5) that the complimenter and the third party align with each other in a back and forth "incremental" way: compliment – agreement – comment – agreement – further comment – further agreement... This back and forth "incremental" pattern of alignment builds up the

crescendo and excitement, forcefully enhancing the positive tone of the compliment action.

Having described the support compliment strategy for alignment—the *agreement* strategy, I will now turn to the support compliment strategies for elaboration—the *comment* strategy and the *example* strategy.

Comment

The support compliment strategy of *comment* is the most frequently used strategy among all the support compliment strategies. Figure 4.1 (p. 110) shows that a total of 891 (26.9% of 3,310) *comment* strategies are observed in the 300 compliment-response sequences. The support compliment strategy of *comment* presents a specific detail or account (e.g., a component part, a facet, a specific characteristic, etc.) to elaborate a core or another support compliment strategy. In other words, it specifies in what way(s) the complimentee is good. In Example 6.15, the complimenter explicitly states the purpose of the *comment* strategy.

Core or Other Strategy	Comment	Core or Other Strategy English Translation	Comment English Translation
(6.15) 胡：伊拉呢，也老勿简单额， 许：勿简单。 胡：〔**哪能勿简单呢？** 许：〔是老勿容易额。	胡：伊拉来拉江西噢，江西呢回沪来创业，现在蹲了上海房子也买好，事业也有，	Hu: They too... are really remarkable. Xu: Remarkable. Hu: [**In what ways are they remarkable?** Xu: [Truly remarkable.	Hu: They were in Jiangxi Province. Then they came back to Shanghai to start a business. Now they've bought their own housing in Shanghai. They've established their own business.

In Example 6.15, following the core compliment strategy that Mr. and Mrs. Wan are "really remarkable" ("伊拉呢，也老勿简单额，"), Miss Hu poses a question: "哪能勿简单呢？ In what ways are they remarkable?" which she answers herself immediately with three *comment* strategies. The three *comments* present the Wans' three "remarkable" accomplishments: relocation from an underdeveloped region to the most desired metropolitan Shanghai ("伊拉来拉江西噢，江西呢回沪来创业，"), ownership of their own housing ("现在蹲了上海房子也买好，"), and establishment of their own [private] business ("事业也有，")—achievements characteristic of China's economic reform that were still unthinkable for people of similar background and status at the time. Miss Hu's question not only makes explicit the purpose of her *comment* strategies—to specify in what ways the Wans' are "remarkable," it also provides a window into the purpose of the *comment* strategy in general—to specify in what way(s) the complimentee is good.

When examining the 891 *comment* strategies in terms of their linguistic realization, a wide variety of forms are found with no formulaicity and predictability in lexical or syntactic distribution. However, almost all the *comment* strategies have either a reference-specific assessable or a content-specific positive assessment or both (see Chapter V Core Compliment Strategy) that bring out a particular component part or facet or characteristic of a general or relatively general compliment topic. For instance, the positive assessments used in the *comment* strategies in Example 6.15 ("回沪来创业 came back to Shanghai to start a business," "房子也买好 have bought their own housing," "事业也有 have established their own business") are content-specific. They specify the

three important facets of the general topic "不简单 remarkable" encoded in the core

compliment strategy.

Examples 6.16 to 6.18 illustrate how *comment* strategies are realized and used to

elaborate the core or other support compliment strategies.

Core or Other Strategy	Comment	Core or Other Strategy English Translation	Comment English Translation
(6.16) 客1：格荠菜有技术额来烧额。 客2：嗳。 客1：噢？烧额本事老高额！	客2：真额炒得老好吃额！ （笑） 客1：侬看伊格个色，闻……格个刀功真额是，介细额，	Guest 1: This ji-vegetable is cooked with such skill. Guest 2: Yeah. Guest 1: Don't you think? Cooked with such high skills!	Guest 2: It tastes so good! (laughs) Guest 1: Look at the color, the aroma... Great knife work... it's cut so finely.
(6.17) 陆审计：阿拉史老师好伐！ 经理：史老师好噢！	陆审计：平易近人噢！ 陆审计：［政策］掌，掌握得好。又为人直爽，	Auditor Lu: Our Teacher Shi is really a good person. Manager: Teacher Shi is really great!	Auditor Lu: Personable and approachable. Auditor Lu: A good grasp [of official policy]. And open and straightforward.
(6.18) 男导游：听，听阿拉表弟讲，伊拉，全讲，选一套教材蛮好， 领队：（笑）蛮好（笑）……	男导游：内容邪气多， 男导游：哎能够能够听到，各种各样额勿同额就是，各种各样额 accents，	Male Guide: My cousin... my cousin says... they all say... this set of textbooks is great. Tour Leader: (laughs) Great (laughs) ...	Male Guide: A lot of stuff/content in it. Male Guide: You see you can listen to all sorts of different... all sorts of *accents* [in English].

	女导游：嗳，语法比较，相当复杂， 女导游：……侬格套……还是有规律额。		Female Guide: Yeah. The grammar is... quite complicated. Female Guide: ...Your series... is very systematic.

In Examples 6.16 to 6.18 *comment* strategies are used to elaborate the core or other support compliment strategies (agreement or repetition). In Example 6.16, the core compliment "high cooking skill" of a Chinese special Ji-vegetable ("格荠菜有技术额来烧额。") is specified as having great taste ("真额炒得老好吃额！ It tastes so good!"), color ("侬看伊格个色，Look at the color,"), aroma ("闻…… the aroma..."), and fine knife work ("格个刀功真额是，介细额， Great knife work. It's cut so finely.")—defining aspects of skilled cooking. In Example 6.17, the core compliment that Auditor Shi is "a good person" ("阿拉史老师好伐！") is personalized with three concrete traits: "personable and approachable" ("平易近人噢！"), "has good grasp of official policy" ("[政策] 掌，掌握得好。"), and "open and straightforward" ("又为人直爽，"). In Example 6.18, the "great [listening] textbook series" ("迭一套教材蛮好，") is substantiated with four specific characteristics: rich content ("内容邪气多，"), various kinds of accents ("哎能够能够听到，各种各样额勿同额就是，各种各样额 *accents*，"), sophisticated language/grammar ("语法比较，相当复杂，"), and very systematic organization ("还是有规律额。")—criteria for good [listening] textbooks.

As can be seen, the core compliment strategies (and agreement or repetition strategies) are general, three of them realized by using content-nonspecific positive assessments "高 high" and "好 good/great." In contrast, the *comment* strategies that

bring out the specific facets or characteristics of the general core compliments consist of either reference-specific assessables (e.g., "色 color," "闻 aroma," and "刀功 knife work" in Example 6.16), or content-specific positive assessments (e.g., "平易近人 personable and approachable," "[政策] 掌握得好 has good grasp [of official policy]," "为人直爽 open and straightforward" in Example 6.17), or both (e.g., "内容 stuff/content" + "邪气 多 a lot/rich"; "语法 grammar" + "相当复杂 quite complicated"; "侬格套 your series" + "还是有规律的 very systematic" in Example 6.18).

Excerpts 6.6 and 6.7 illustrate how the *comment* strategies are used in complete compliment-response sequences to elaborate the core or other support compliment strategies. The *comment* strategies in Excerpt 6.6 are given by a male tour guide to a female tour group member, Ms. Hang, on her gift buying choice.

Excerpt 6.6 [253] "The scarf you picked is out of this world!"

Situation: In the silk factory. Ms. Hang [37], a tour group member, is picking out silk scarves as gifts for friends. She picks one, but is uncertain about her choice, so she asks the guide [M, 28] for his opinion.

01	杭：	我自己不会挑东西！	Hang:	I'm not good at	
02		特别是……		shopping, especially	
03				when it comes to	
04				picking...	
05	地陪：	1.不过可以啊！	Guide:	1.But you're doing	1.core good
06		2.刚才挑的，那个		fine. 2.The one you	gift choice
07		〔挑得挺好的！		just picked [is very	2.example
08				good.	
09	杭：	〔这个啊？这个是她	Hang:	[This one?	
10		帮我挑的。		She helped me.	
11	地陪：	噢，3.我觉得比白的	Guide:	Oh, 3.I think it looks	3.comparison
12		颜色要好，		better than the white	other
13				one.	
14	杭：	白颜色好看对吧比？	Hang:	Better than the white	
15				one, right?	
16	地陪：	4.比白颜色比白色好	Guide:	4.Better than the	4.repetition
17		看！		white, the white one.	

18 19 20 21 22		杭：	噢。中国人呢在这边就看你皮肤怎么样，然后戴什么颜色！（笑）	Hang:	Ok. As far as Chinese are concerned, it depends on your skin color... then pick the color. (laughs)	
23 24 25 26 27	→	地陪：	5.刚才那个，那个，我看了一下，颗粒啊，	Guide:	5.That one you just picked... that one... I took a look at it. It has a granular texture.	5.comment
28		杭：	嗳，	Hang:	Yeah.	
29 30 31 32	→	地陪：	6.比较居于另外那种色彩，	Guide:	6.It has a rather special color shade./ It's rather more colorful.	6.comment
33		杭：	对对对对，	Hang:	*Yes, yes, yes, yes.*	
34 35 36	→	地陪：	7.感觉有接触感，是吧？	Guide:	7.You can feel the texture, don't you think?	7.comment
37		杭：	对对对对对，	Hang:	*Yes, yes, yes, yes.*	
38	→	地陪：	8.挺漂亮的！	Guide:	8.Very pretty!	8.comment
39		杭：	挺漂亮啊？（笑）	Hang:	Very pretty? (laughs)	
40 41		地陪：	9.不一般！	Guide:	9.Out of this world!	9.intensifi-cation

Note how elaborate the *comments* are on the silk scarf the tour group member Ms. Hang has picked in Excerpt 6.6. After the tour guide's general core compliment that Hang is "doing fine" with her scarf choice ("不过可以啊！") (C1) and his example strategy that the one she just picked is "very good" ("刚才挑的，那个挑得挺好的！") (C2), he first compares the color of the present choice with the white scarf someone picked earlier ("我觉得比白的颜色要好，I think it looks better than the white one.") (C3), and then he makes four *comments* to specify why it is a very good choice. He *comments* on the material ("颗粒啊，It has the granular texture."), the color ("比较居于另外那种色彩，It has a rather special color shade."), the feel ("感觉有接触感，You can feel the texture,"), and the look ("挺漂亮的！Very pretty!") (C5–C8), all defining characteristics

of a choice silk scarf. These *comments* create a vivid image of the silk scarf Hang has picked, making the general compliment "good choice" tangible. Note the topical core and example strategies both have content-nonspecific positive assessments "可以 all right/fine" and "挺好的 very good," whereas the four elaborating *comments* consist of content-specific positive assessments: "颗粒 granular texture," "另外那种色彩 rather special color shade," "接触感 feel of texture," as well as "漂亮 pretty."

Excerpt 6.7 illustrates the use of *comment* strategies by a man (Sun) to a longtime close woman friend (Zhu) on the topic of personal character. Sun still loves Zhu. His admiration for Zhu can be seen from his long and elaborated *comments*.

Excerpt 6.7 [44] "To live like you... to be honest... I really admire you!"

Situation: Sun [M, 47] and Zhu [F, 45] are longtime close friends. Sun is concerned about Zhu. Since her divorce, Zhu has struggled to make a living for herself, and she has never really had a life. But Zhu is quite philosophical about it all. Sun really admires her.

01		孙：不过侬也，1.像侬格能	Sun: But you... 1.To live	1.core:
02		样子噢我勿是讲啥我蛮	like you... to be	character
03	→	佩服侬额！2.侬，能够	honest... I really	2.comment
04		撑，迭能撑下来噢，真	admire you! 2.You... you	
05		额勿容易！	can brave it and tough	
06			it out, no easy task!	
07		朱：〔(笑)	Zhu: [(laughs)	
08	→	孙：〔3.还蛮有啥呢，还	Sun: [3.You're also... also	3.comment
09	→	蛮，是蛮乐观额，4.格	very... very optimistic.	4.comment
10		点还蛮好。	4.That's great.	
11		朱：嗳，想得开眼，	Zhu: Oh well ... look at the	
12			bright side of things.	
13		孙：〔5. 朱佩莲有志气！	Sun: [5.Zhu Peilian has high	5.intensifi-
14			aspirations!	cation[2]
15		朱：〔我觉着想得开眼	Zhu: [I believe if you can	
16		么……	look at the bright	
17			side ...	
18		孙：〔呶，	Sun: [Well...	

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[2] Though it appears to be a *comment* in translation, it is an *intensification* in the original Chinese.

19		朱：〔一个人等到想穿了就	Zhu: [When you can let go of	
20		自由了！	things, you become a	
21			free person.	
22		孙：6.呃，虽然我呒没搭侬	Sun: [6.well, although you	6.intensifi-
23		最后，成为一家人家对	and I didn't end up	cation
24		伐，	being one family...	
25		朱：（笑）	Zhu: [(laughs)	
26		孙：但是呃我总觉着迭个一	Sun: ...it still makes me	
27		生当中认得过侬呢我觉	very happy to think I've	
28		着还蛮开心额！	known you in my	
29			lifetime.	
30		朱：（笑）〔不过我觉	Zhu: (laughs) [I feel it's	
31		着还有几个好朋友总	always good to have a	
32		归。	few good friends.	
33		孙： 〔7.再加上侬确	Sun: [7.What's more,	7.intensifi-
34		实是个，呃，侬确实是	you're no doubt, you're	cation
35		一个女强人。	no doubt a superwoman.	
36		朱：女强人（笑）……	Zhu: Superwoman (laughs)...	
37		孙：8.嗳，呃侬进行，回忆	Sun: 8.Just think about it...	8.example
38		回忆侬像来拉东北老	like when you were in	
39		啥，9.侬像当学生全，	the Northeast [on the	9.example
40		全是，蹲了上海额几	farm], 9.like when you	
41		年，侬啥个，人一热	were a student, like the	
42		是，〔立刻动心额事	years you were in	
43		体嗳！	Shanghai... you were	
44			always... you were so	
45			[passionately involved	
46			in everything!	
47		朱： 〔老戆噢格辰光！	Zhu: [Terribly foolhardy back	
48		老戆额！	then... terribly	
49			foolhardy!	
50		孙：嗳，迭辰光是！迭个是	Sun: Yeah, you were then.	
51	→	侬，10.反过来侬迭个	But you, 10.but looked	10.comment
52		一套又，摆到力量上来	at from another angle,	
53		看呢，侬力量，力量也	you have strength, you	
54		蛮强额，对伐？	have the strength of	
55			character, right?	
56		朱：（笑）	Zhu: (laughs)	
57	→	孙：11.一个人还是，蛮聪	Sun: 11.You're also quite	11.comment
58		明额！	smart.	
59		朱：马马虎虎——	Zhu: Just so-so::: (laughs).	
60		（笑）。		
61		孙：12.是额呀，朱佩莲！	Sun: 12.But you are, Zhu	12.intensifi-
62			Peilian!	cation
63		朱：我比人家想得开！	Zhu: I'm more willing than	
64			others to let go.	

65	孙：想得开对伐。	Sun: Yeah, to let go.
66	朱：暧，我觉着，觉着我现	Zhu: Well, I feel that...feel
67	在想得蛮穿额，想得蛮	that I can let things go
68	穿呢，〔我觉着一个人	now. I feel that if a
69	就自己解放自己了。	person can let things
70		go, [you liberate
71		yourself.
72	孙： 〔乃末乃侬……	Sun: [So you... so you...
73	乃侬呢（？）……	
74	朱：要勿然对伐一日到	Zhu: Otherwise, all day
75	夜……，侬要想勿穿额	long... if you can't let
76	闲话对伐一个人就拿自	things go, you tie
77	己束缚牢了。	yourself up in knots.
78	(They continue to talk	(They continue to talk about
79	about the difficulty of	the difficulty of finding the
80	finding the right	right relationship.)
81	relationship.)	

Like most compliment-response sequences in the data, Sun opens the compliment

sequence with a general topic statement using a content-nonspecific positive assessment:

"像侬格能样子噢我勿是讲啥我蛮**佩服**侬额！ To live like you... to be honest... I really

admire you!" (C1). He follows his core compliment strategy with five *comments* and

two examples to spell out what he specifically admires about Zhu. He admires Zhu for

her bravery and toughness towards hardship and the vicissitudes of life ("侬，能够撑，

迭能撑下来噢，真额勿容易！") (C2), for her positive "optimistic" attitude ("还蛮，是

蛮乐观额，") (C3), her passionate involvement in social activities ("侬啥个，人一热

是，立刻动心额事体嗳！") (C8, C9), her strength of character ("侬力量，力量也蛮强

额，") (C10), and her smartness ("一个人还是，蛮聪明额！") (C11). Again content-

specific positive assessments "撑下来 brave it and tough it out," "人一热立刻动心 so

passionately involved in everything," "力量蛮强额 have strength [of character]," "蛮乐

观额 very optimistic" and "蛮聪明额 quite smart" are used to realize the *comment*

strategies. These *comment* strategies flesh out the general topic introduced by the core

compliment strategy, making Zhu a real person with multiple dimensions.

Excerpts 6.6 and 6.7 are both two-party conversations in which the complimenter

makes all the *comments*. In a multi-party conversation however, the elaboration is

achieved by the joint efforts of the complimenter and the third party. Excerpt 6.8

illustrates how *comments* are presented in a multi-party conversation.

Excerpt 6.8 [125] "Wow...wow! The calligraphy is unbelievably great!"

Situation: Kong [F] has invited her old high school friends Lian [M], Zhang [F], Pan [F],
Jiang [F], and Gong [F], to visit her new apartment. They are all around 47 years old.
Lian brought a piece of calligraphy for Kong as a house-warming gift. He takes out the
calligraphy and everyone praises the skills of the artist.

01		连：我有幅字拨孔伟静。	Lian: I have a piece of	
02			calligraphy for Kong	
03			Weijing.	
04		(Zhang opens and holds	(Zhang opens and holds up the	
05		up the calligraphy)	calligraphy)	
06		张：嗳我，手，手举勿牢	Zhang: Oh, my... my hand...	
07		了。	can't go any higher.	
08		潘：1.喔唷，蛮好！	Pan: 1.Wow, very good!	1.core
09		张：2.喔唷，赞额！	Zhang: 2.Wow, great!	great
10		潘：3.蛮好蛮好，4.赞赞赞	Pan: 3.Very good, very good,	calligraphy
11		赞！	4.great, great, great,	2.agreement
12			great!	3.repetition
13		张：5.喔唷唷唷！6.格字瞎	Zhang: 5.Wow...wow! 6.The	4.repetition
14		赞！7.赞额！	calligraphy is	5.intensifi-
15			unbelievably great!	cation
16			7.Great!	6.intensifi-
17		潘：8.嗳！赞赞赞！	Pan: 8.Yeah, great, great,	cation
18			great.	7.repetition
19		张：9.嗯。	Zhang: 9.Hum/Yeah.	8.repetition
20		江：10.比格个还写得好！	Jiang: 10.Better than that.	9.agreement
21		（笑）（指徐墙上挂的	(laughs) (pointing to a	10.comparison
22		字，张大千徒弟的字）	piece of calligraphy on	other
23			the wall, written by a	
24			student of the great	
25			master Zhang Daqian)	
26		潘：11.瞎赞！	Pan: 11.Unbelievably great!	11.intensifi-
27	→	张：12.格个字适意！	Zhang: 12.It looks very	cation

		中文	English	标注
28			comfortable.	12.comment
29		潘：13.嗳。	Pan: 13.Yeah.	13.agreement
30		连：阿是啊？	Lian: Isn't it?	
31		龚：〔侬写额是啥物事啊？	Gong: [What did he write?	
32		江：〔14.啊呀侬格个字好	Jiang:[14.Wow, his writing	14.repetition
33		像比格个灵噢我觉着好	seems to be better than	
34		像！	this... it looks to me.	
35		龚：〔写额是啥物事啊？	Gong: [What does it say?	
36	→	潘：〔15.一个么秀气就是	Pan: [15.One is delicate/	15.comment
37		讲，……	graceful... you might	
38			say.	
39	→	龚：〔16.一个是帅直。	Gong: [16.One/The other is	16.comment
40		……（不清楚）	straightforward...	
41			(unclear)	
42		张：侬看连阿拉都认得格种	Zhang: Look... even I can	
43		字，说明老伊个额就是	read this kind of	
44		讲……	writing... that goes to	
45			show you...	
46		连：就是"山重水复疑无	Lian: "Mountain range after	
47		路"。	mountain range, river	
48			after river, and you	
49			fear you've come to the	
50			end of the road" [a line	
51			of a classical poem]	
52	→	江：17.格我格能介额字勿	Jiang: 17.I can't read this	17.comment
53		大认得额咾，我就觉着	kind of calligraphy. All	
54		看上去格种字老适意	I know is that it looks	
55		额！	very comfortable to me.	
56	→	张：18.蛮适意额，19.蛮，	Zhang: 18.It looks very	18.repetition
57		蛮潇洒额！	comfortable, 19. very...	19.comment
58			very natural and	
59			unrestrained!	
60		张：（读）噢——。	Zhang: (reads) Oh...	
61		江：我根本看勿下来额我。	Jiang: I simply can't read	
62			it.	
63		连：〔格个人呢一直自作，	Lian: [This guy's been	
64		民间的一个……	writing in his own	
65			style, a folk...	
66		潘：〔20.蛮好蛮好蛮好蛮	Pan: [20.Very good, very	20.repetition
67		好！21.真额老好额！	good. 21.It's truly very	21.intensifi-
68			good.	cation
69		江："莫笑农家"…	Jiang: "Don't scoff at the	
70			peasant family..."	
71		(They continue to read	(They continue to read the	
72		the poems of Lu You 陆	poems of Lu You.)	
73		游.)		

Five *comment* strategies are given in Excerpt 6.8 to elaborate the core compliment and other support compliment strategies on the gift of "unbelievably great calligraphy" ("喔唷，蛮好！Wow, very good!" "格字瞎赞！ The calligraphy is unbelievably great!") (C1, C6). Like the *comment* strategies in other examples, they specify in what ways the calligraphy is great: it looks "very comfortable" ("格个字适意！" "我就觉着看上去格种字老适意额！") (C12, C17), "delicate/graceful" ("一个么秀气就是讲，") (C15), "straightforward" ("一个是率直。") (C16), and "very natural and unrestrained" ("蛮，蛮潇洒额！") (C19). Again content-nonspecific positive assessments "好 good," "赞 great" are used for the general compliment topic, while content-specific positive assessments "适意 comfortable," "秀气 delicate/graceful," "率直 straightforward," and "潇洒 natural and unrestrained" are used to realize the *comment* strategies. Unlike the two-party conversation in Excerpts 6.6 and 6.7 in which the complimenter (the tour guide or Sun) makes all the *comments*, in Excerpt 6.8, a multi-party conversation, every participant (张 Zhang, 潘 Pan, 龚 Gong and 江 Jiang) joins in the *comment* action. Pan and Gong even use the structure "一个么 one [characteristic] is..." "一个是 one/the other [characteristic] is..." to complement each other's *comment*:

> 潘：**一个么**秀气就是讲， (C15)
> Pan: **One is** delicate/graceful... you might say.
> 龚：**一个是**帅直。 (C16)
> Gong: **One/The other is** straightforward..."

Together, they present a vivid, multidimensional picture, enabling people to see the "greatness" of the gift of calligraphy.

It is observed from the data that *comments* are often used in different "layers," i.e., *comments* are used to elaborate other *comments*. In Excerpt 6.7 (p. 218) for example, Sun really appreciates Zhu's positive optimistic attitude towards life, so he follows his *comment* "还蛮，是蛮乐观额， also very... very optimistic." (C3) with another *comment* "格点还蛮好。 That's great." (C4). The use of "layered" *comments* can also be seen in Excerpt 6.3 (p. 201). In Excerpt 6.3, the core compliment about Zhou as an "expert" ("专家") is elaborated with three support *comments*. The first *comment* ("装潢专家！ Remodeling expert.") (C4) specifies Zhou's general area of expertise—remodeling. The second *comment* ("伊格理论倒是讲得对额呀！ …he's got the principles right.") (C5) specifies the aspect of Zhou's remodeling expertise: he knows how to remodel the floor (the reference-nonspecific demonstrative pronoun "格 (理论) this/the (principles)" refers to the floor remodeling in the prior talk). The third *comment* ("地板一般性，漆要买得好。 The floor boards don't have to be expensive, but the paint must be good.") (C6) further specifies his floor remodeling expertise—contrary to common belief, people should pay more attention to the quality of paint rather than that of the boards. We can see from Excerpt 6.3 that the three *comments* are not "parallel" (i.e., not on the same level of generality/specificity) but "layered" (i.e., on different levels of generality/specificity), unpacking the general topic of the core compliment "expert" ("专家") in three steps: from "expert" to "remodeling" expert, to "floor" remodeling expert, and finally to specific "floor remodeling expertise" that "good paint is more important than good floor boards." Each *comment* adds more detail to the previous one. Together the three *comments* make the abstract concept of "expert" more concrete, and

thus the compliment more convincing. Excerpt 6.9 gives another example about how

"layered" *comments* are realized.

Excerpt 6.9 [167] "Isn't her place wonderful?"

Situation: The Party Secretary [F, 45] and Director of Curriculum and Teaching [M, 49] of a high school are visiting a teacher [F, 41]. They walk into her apartment.

01		教师：你们来啦！这么晚还	Teacher: So you've come. I'm	
02		没回家，辛苦！辛	so sorry to keep you away	
03		苦！	from home so late.	
04		书记：没啥，应该的。（对	Party Secretary: That's all	
05		主任说）1.你看她家	right. It's part of our	1.core
06		嗲吗？	job. (to Director)	wonderful
07			1.Isn't her place	decoration
08			wonderful?	
09	→	主任：2.嗲！3.房间里煞	Director: 2.Wonderful! 3.The	2.agreement
10		清。要脱鞋子吗？	rooms are spotless.	3.comment
11			Should we take off our	
12			shoes?	
13		教师：不要不要，阿拉从来	Teacher: No, no. We never	
14		不行脱鞋子额。	ask people to take off	
15			their shoes.	
16		主任：4.你家老灵的，我老	Director: 4.Your home's	4.quote
17		早就听说了。	beautiful... I heard it a	
18			long time ago.	
19	→	书记：5.你看阳台安排得老	Party Secretary: 5.You see	5.comment
20	→	好的，6.这么小还好	how beautifully the	6.comment
21	→	摆洗衣机，7.还有快	balcony is arranged.	7.comment
22		餐桌。	6.It's so small and yet	
23			she managed to fit a	
24			washing machine into it.	
25			7.She even has a "fast	
26			food" booth [*table*].	
27		主任：8.真的�，9.老会弄	Director: 8.You're right.	8.agreement
28	→	的。10.充分利用空	9.So well arranged.	9.agreement
29		间。	10.You've fully utilized	10.comment
30			all the spaces.	
31		教师：房子小没有办法呀！	Teacher: There's so little	
32		你们什么时候好给我	space, we have to make	
33		分房子啦？房子大点	use of every bit of it.	
34		弄得还要家（能干）	When are you going to	
35		来。	assign me an apartment?	
36			I could do an even	
37			better job if I had a	

38			larger apartment.	
39	→	主任：11. 小管小，布置老	Director: 11.Although small,	11.comment
40	→	有艺术性的，12. 摆	the decoration is	12.comment
41	→	得下钢琴，13. 玻璃	artistic. 12.They even	13.comment
42	→	柜里还有灯亮，14.	fit a piano in the space.	14.comment
43		走廊里也老漂亮，	13.The display cabinet is	
44		15. 象外头的精品商	lit from the inside.	15.comparison
45		店。	14.The hallway is also	other
46			beautifully decorated.	
47			15.It's like a fancy	
48			premium store.	
49		书记：16. 平常看不出哦。	Party Secretary: 16.It's hard	16.intensifi-
50		只有到了家里，布置	to tell day in and day	cation
51		的情趣，看出的人才	out at work. But once you	
52		是立体的。	put someone in her home	
53			environment, she becomes	
54			three dimensional.	
55		（大家笑，转话题）	(Everyone laughs. Change	
56			topic.)	

Nine *comment* strategies are used in Excerpt 6.9 to elaborate the general [content-nonspecific] core compliment strategy on the teacher's "wonderful" apartment ("你看她家嗲吗？") (C1). These nine *comment* strategies are not on the same level of generality/specificity. Four of them bring out the main features of the "wonderfulness": cleanness ("房间里煞清。 The rooms are spotless.") (C3), well-arranged balcony ("你看阳台安排得老好的， You see how beautifully the balcony is arranged.") (C5), full use of space ("充分利用空间。 You've fully utilized all the spaces.") (C10), and artistic decoration ("布置老有艺术性的， the decoration is artistic.") (C11). The other five *comments* further elaborate three main *comments*: in what ways the balcony is well/beautifully arranged—they have managed to fit a washing machine ("这么小还好摆洗衣机，") (C6) and a "fast food" booth ("还有快餐桌。") (C7) into the small space; in what ways the decoration is artistic—they fit a piano in the space ("摆得下钢琴，") (C12), the display

cabinet is lit from the inside ("玻璃柜里还有灯亮，") (C13), and the hallway is

beautifully decorated ("走廊里也老漂亮，") (C14); both involve good use of small

space. As can be seen in this excerpt, *comments* can be "layered" in different levels of

generality/specificity: some *comments* elaborate the core or other support strategies, and

these *comments* are in turn substantiated by other *comments*.

Examining the discourse characteristics of the *comment* strategy, it is interesting

to observe that sequentially, the use of *comment* strategy is not contingent upon the

complimentee's response strategy. In other words, the *comment* strategy is used whether

the complimentee accepts, rejects, or downplays the compliment strategy, or remains

silent. It frequently follows the complimenter's own or other's compliment strategy.

Similar to the use of agreement strategy, in a multi-party conversation (e.g., in Excerpts

6.8 and 6.9), all the participants "chime in" with *comments*. *Comments* from the

complimenter and the third party build onto each other, complement each other, add

embellishing touches to the main frame, creating a colorful, "tangible," multi-

dimensional picture. The "accounts" provided by the *comments* make the compliment

"claims" not only exciting but also convincing, forcefully enhancing the positiveness of

the compliment action.

Example

Example is another support compliment strategy frequently used to elaborate a

core compliment strategy or another support compliment strategy. Figure 4.1 (p. 110)

shows that a total of 171 (5.2 % of 3,310) *example* strategies are observed in the 300

compliment-response sequences. The support compliment strategy of *example* presents a

particular case or occurrence of a complimented attribute or action to elaborate a core or

another support compliment strategy. For example,

Core or Other Strategy	Example	Core or Other Strategy English Translation	Example English Translation
(6.19) 胡：伊拉呢，也老勿简单额， 许：勿简单。 胡：哪能勿简单呢？ 胡：伊拉来拉江西噢，江西呢回沪来创业，现在蹲了上海房子也买好，事业也有，	胡：呶格搭额，格幢两层全是伊拉夫妻额。	Hu: They too... are really remarkable. Xu: Remarkable. Hu: How are they remarkable? Hu: They were in Jiangxi Province. Then they came back to Shanghai to start a business. Now they've bought their own housing in Shanghai. They've established their own business.	Hu: You see this two-story building... the two of them own it all.

Example 6.19 is a continuation of Example 6.15. After Miss Hu makes three comment

strategies presenting Mr. and Mrs. Wan's three remarkable accomplishments, she cites an

example to further elaborate the second comment strategy that they "have bought their

own housing in Shanghai" ("现在蹲了上海房子也买好，"). The *example* strategy

gives a specific instance of the housing they own: the two-story [business] building they

are having the dinner party in ("呶格搭额，格幢两层全是伊拉夫妻额。"). It

substantiates the comment strategy, making the Wans' "remarkableness" even more

visible.

The support compliment strategy of *example* can be (1) in detailed description of

one instance, or (2) in simple listings of multiple instances.

Detailing One Instance

The support compliment strategy of *example* can *cite one case or occurrence* of a complimented attribute or action *in detailed description*. When *detailing one instance*, the *example* strategy usually presents "what" or "what happened"—the most important component of an instance. It also often specifies the contextual information such as "who," "when," "where," if the context is unclear or not shared by the participants. The "example marker," the word "像 like, such as/for instance" is occasionally observed to introduce an *example*. In Excerpt 6.7 (p. 218) for instance, to support his intensification strategy that Zhu is no doubt a "superwoman" ("侬确实是一个女强人。") (C7), Sun cites two *examples* about how Zhu was passionately involved in everything ("侬啥个，人一热是，立刻动心额事体嗳！") when she was [on the farm] in the Northeast and when she was a [college] student in Shanghai (C8, C9). The two *examples* are both headed by the word "像 like": "侬**像**来拉东北老啥，**like** when you were in the Northeast," "侬**像**当学生全，全是，蹲了上海额几年，**like** when you were a student... the years you were in Shanghai...." They both contain contextual information of "where" (in the Northeast and in Shanghai) and "when" ([the years] in the northeast, and the student years in Shanghai). Although no exact years are given, the specification is not necessary since "[farm] years in the Northeast" and "student years in Shanghai" are shared experiences.

Examples 6.20 to 6.22 illustrate how *example* by *detailing one instance* is realized.

Core or Other Strategy	Example	Core or Other Strategy English Translation	Example English Translation
Detailing one instance			
(6.20) 肖副处长：昨天开会后吃午饭时，黄文敏副处长……她夸了你半天！……说你能干、勤劲儿！	肖副处长：她说**每次全国大学英语四、六级统考后**，她都看见你是用自行车驮着试卷交到市教委。而她们学校不给汽车就不送。	Associate Dean Xiao: Yesterday Associate Dean Huang Wenmin was praising you for a long time at lunch after the meeting, saying you're capable and hard-working.	Associate Dean Xiao: She said she sees you on your bike delivering the test papers to the Municipal Education Commission **every year after the National College English Level 4 and Level 6 Tests**. But their school refuses to deliver the test papers unless the Commission sends a car.
(6.21) 田：格任文耀态度还是蛮好额。（笑） 鲍：不过任文耀**上一次**我蛮感动额，	田：噯**上趟**，上**趟**，缺席么请，缺席么请假对伐，……伊呒没来么伊拉太太来请假额， 鲍：伊拉爷**格辰光**生病死塌，伊还来了……	Tian: Ren Wenyao's attitude [towards reunion] was admirable. (laughs) Bao: But **last time** what Ren Wenyao did was deeply moving.	Tian: **Last time**... **last time** he couldn't come ... couldn't come so he asked to be excused... He couldn't come, so his wife came to ask for leave. Bao: His father was sick and then died... but he still came to the reunion...
(6.22) 温：钟淑华**伊辰光蹲了黑龙江**侬蛮苦额，我晓得侬额，阿是啊？老卖力额！ 钟：〔侬啥地方听得来啊？（笑）	温：侬勿是发子寒热还挑担子老啥就是讲……	Wen: Zhong Shuhua, **back then in Heilongjiang [state farm]** you endured a lot of hardship. I know you did... right? You worked very hard. Zhong: [Where... where did you hear that from (laughs)?	Wen: Even when you were (*Weren't you*) running a fever, you were still carrying heavy loads...

温：〔哪能呒没听到啦？	温：因为侬**伊辰光**，寒热发得老高嗳！还勿肯下来，挑担子老啥额手上全磨出老茧来了！	Wen:　[How could I not hear about it?	Wen: Because... you were running a high fever **at the time**, even so, you refused to quit. You were carrying heavy loads... Your palms were covered with calluses.

The *example* strategies in Examples 6.20 to 6.22 all present an instance *in detailed description*. In addition to describing "what happened," all the *examples* specify "when" the instance occurred, either in definite terms as in Example 6.20 ("每次全国大学英语四、六级统考后，every year after the National College English Level 4 and Level 6 Tests") or in indefinite terms (e.g., "上趟 last time," "上一次 last time," "格辰光 then/at that time," "伊辰光 back then/at the time"). Example 6.22 also specifies "where" the instance occurred in the core compliment strategy ("蹲了黑龙江 in Heilongjiang [state farm]"). The specification here is important because Zhong Shuhua has moved several times, overcome many hardships, and always works hard. In the majority of cases, no exact time or place is specified. The elaboration is not necessary because the context is shared by the participants.

Excerpts 6.10 and 6.11 illustrate how *examples in detailed description* are realized in complete compliment-response sequences.

Excerpt 6.10 [403] "She's still all right."

Situation: At a high school class reunion dinner honoring Xie [F, 44], who has just returned from abroad. Xu and Du are male; the rest are female. They are all around 45 years old.

01 02		常：你妈现在还住老地方 啊？	Chang: Does your mom still live at the old place?	
03 04		谢：老地方呀，没动过。	Xie: The same old place. Never moved.	
05		常：噢。	Chang: Oh.	
06		谢：嗳。	Xie: Yeah.	
07 08 09		常：那你回来呢，你住宾馆 吗？	Chang: Where do you stay when you come back? Stay at a hotel?	
10 11		谢：没有，住家里噢！ （笑）	Xie: No. Stay at home. (laughs)	
12 13		徐：1.那那那她，还， 还……	Xu: 1.Then, then she's still, still...	1.core compliment
14 15		张：2.还可以。	Zhang: 2.She's all right (pretty good).	2.agreement
16 17		徐：……还可以，嗳。 （笑）	Xu: ...all right, yeah. (laughs)	
18 19 20 21 22 23 24		常：〔3.我们那儿好多子女 回来已经家里住不惯 来！住宾馆去来！	Chang: [3.Where I am, a lot of children... when they come back, they're not used to the old place any longer. They stay at hotels.	3.comparison other
25 26 27 28		徐：〔4.很多人，其实呢， 家里不住的，嗳。	Xu: [4.Lots of them, actually, don't stay at home any more, yeah.	4.comparison other
29 30 31 32		谢：（笑）格勿搭界额！ （笑）	Xie: (laughs) It's no big deal (referring to her staying at home). (laughs)	
33		杜：（笑）	Du: (laughs)	
34 35		张：5.伊是伐，老实伐？	Zhang: 5.She's wholesome, isn't she?	5.comment
36		江：6.嗳。	Jiang: 6.Yeah.	6.agreement
37 38 39 40 41 42	→	常：7.像我们邻居住在西藏 路对吧，嫌家里老脏的 啦，	Chang: 7.For instance, we have a neighbor, who lives on Xizang Road, you know. She thinks her home is too dirty for her...	7.example
43		谢：嗳，	Xie: Oh.	
44 45	→	常：就住宾馆来！	Chang: ...so she stays at a hotel.	

46	谢：勿搭界，勿搭界	Xie: It's no big deal. No
47	（笑）。	big deal (laughs).
48	马：嗳，杜柏山，现在，现	Ma: Well, Du Baishan,
49	在社会这个，嗯嗯，财	now, in the current
50	产再分配，权利再分配	society...uh, uh...
51	老明显的噢？啊？	the redistribution of
52		wealth, the
53		redistribution of
54		power is so obvious,
55		isn't it?
56	杜：嗳，是。	Du: Yeah, you're right.
57	（大家笑）	(all laugh)
58	（Heated discussion on	(Heated discussion on the
59	the redistribution of	redistribution of wealth and
60	wealth and power.)	power.)

In Excerpt 6.10, Xie is being complimented on her character—although she lives in a much better living condition abroad, she has not forgotten her roots. When she returns to Shanghai, she still stays at her old home, no matter how crowded it is. After the core compliment ("那那那她，还，还……还可以， Then, then she's still, still… all right,") (C1), Chang compares Xie with many other people in her neighborhood who are no longer used to the living condition they grew up in ("我们那儿好多子女回来已经家里住不惯来！住宾馆去来！ Where I am, a lot of children… when they come back, they're not used to the old place any longer. They stay at hotels.") (C3). Chang then gives an *example* to support her comparison strategy: "像我们邻居住在西藏路对吧，嫌家里老脏的啦，就住宾馆来！ **For instance**, we have a neighbor, who lives on Xizang Road, you know. She thinks her home is too dirty for her… so she stays at a hotel." (C7). This *example*, in detailed description, further substantiates Chang's comparison strategy with specific contextual information about who, where, and why. It spells out a more general "who" ("好多子女 a lot of children") with a specific person ("我们邻居 our

neighbor"), a more general "where" ("我们那儿 where I am") with a definite place ("住在西藏路 living on Xizang Road"), and a more general "why" ("已经家里住不惯来 not used to the old place any longer") with a specific reason ("嫌家里老脏的啦 thinks her home is too dirty for her"). This *example* fleshes out a relatively general comparison, making the compliment more personal and convincing. Note Chang uses the "example marker," the word "像 for instance" to introduce her *example* strategy.

As we have seen, the *example* in Excerpt 6.10 details the contextual information. In Excerpt 6.11 we will see an *example* which details the main action—"what happened."

Excerpt 6.11 [75] "Dr. Xu is so kind."

Situation: At Dr. Xu's office in Shanghai No. 9 Hospital. Dr. Xu [M, around 60] is an expert in cardiology. He is treating the mother of a woman [around 40]. Several other patients are waiting in the room. An intern is present.

01		女病属：	（给徐医生一包茶叶）徐医生，格是我姆妈拨侬的。	Woman:	(Presents the doctor with a packet of tea leaves.) Dr. Xu, this is from my mother.	
02						
03						
04						
05		徐医生：	（看上去有点难为情，轻轻把茶叶推开）	Doctor:	(Seems embarrassed, gently pushes the packet aside.)	
06						
07						
08		女病属：	徐医生，快收下来，应该的。天介热，清清火。	Woman:	Dr. Xu, just accept it. It's only right. The weather's so hot. Tea is cooling. (Speaking in a loud voice for everyone to hear.)	
09						
10						
11						
12			（大声对大家说）			
13						
14						
15			1.徐医生真好，		1.Dr. Xu is so kind.	1.core: kind, professional
16			2.勿能来看病还亲自通知病人，3.搭我姆妈写了三封信了。4.现在阿里有介好的医生，5.自家贴邮票搭病人寄信！阿拉姆妈讲今朝一定要谢谢徐医		2.When he couldn't see the patients, he personally informed the patients. 3.He wrote three letters to my mother. 4.You don't see such good doctors any more,	2.comment 3.example 4.comparison 5.example
17	→					
18						
19						
20	→					
21						
22						
23						

24	生。		5.paying the postage
25			to send letters to
26			his patients. My
27			mother said we must
28			express our
29			appreciation today.
30	徐医生： (看上去很难为	Doctor:	(Seems embarrassed
31	情，没有说话)		and says nothing.)
32	女病属：啊呀，一点点，快	Woman:	Oh, a very small
33	收下来，天介热，		present. Just accept
34	清清火。		it. The weather's so
35			hot. Tea is cooling.

In Excerpt 6.11, a patient's daughter compliments Dr. Xu on his kindness and professionalism. After she initiates the general core compliment "徐医生真好， Dr. Xu is so kind." (C1), she supports it with a comment to specify in what way Dr. Xu is kind: "勿能来看病还亲自通知病人， When he couldn't see the patients, he personally informed the patients." (C2). Immediately following this comment, she describes her mother's personal experience as an *example* to further specify how Dr. Xu personally informed the patients: "He wrote three letters to my mother" ("搭我姆妈写了三封信了。") (C3). And not only would Dr. Xu write to his patients, he would "pay the postage to send letters to his patients" ("自家贴邮票搭病人寄信！") (C5). With the *example*, the compliment on Dr. Xu's kindness and professionalism is no longer a general impersonal "routine formula," but a pleasant personal experience. We can see in our mind how Dr. Xu writes the letters, goes to the post office, buys the stamps with his own money and sends the letters to each patient, and not just once, but twice, three times.... As the patient's daughter rightly emphasizes that "you don't see such good doctors anymore." ("现在阿里有介好的医生，) (C4).

Listing Multiple Instances

The support compliment strategy of *example* can also be used *in simple listings*, i.e., presenting multiple instances with no detailed contextual information. Commonly used listing forms observed from the data include: repeated use of the conjunctive adverb "又 and/also," or "还 also/and also" before each *example* in a list; sentence-final particle "啊 [a]" attached to the end of each *example* in a list. The adverbs "又 and/also" and "还 also/and also" connect (parallel) verb or stative verb phrases, while the sentence-final particle "啊 [a]" is used with (parallel) nouns or noun phrases. Examples 6.23 to 6.26 illustrate how *examples in simple listings* are realized.

Core or Other Strategy	Example	Core or Other Strategy English Translation	Example English Translation
Listing multiple instances			
(6.23) 胡：阿，阿拉，就是讲〔看到，享受享受对伐？（笑） 许：　〔老万，今朝老万反正诚意已经是…… 胡：嗳，就是讲呀！	胡：阿拉今朝**又**欣赏了伊额美丽家园，对伐？**又**看了名画，**又**听了伊额老知青额一辈子额迭个，伊额叫啥额，伊额种，嗯啥额，创业额格额身世，对伐？**乃末**两室一厅额地方，	Hu: It's a great treat for us... [to have a chance to see everything. (laughs) Xu:　[Lao Wan, your sincerity today... is truly unbelievable... Hu: Yeah, it sure is!	Hu: Today we've had a chance to see their beautiful home, haven't we? **And** to see famous paintings. **And** to hear their story of how the "old educated youth" struggled all their lives... uh... to create a career... haven't we? **To end up** in a two-bedroom and a living room apartment.

胡：看得我眼热得勿得了！（笑）		Hu: Seeing all this makes me so envious! (laughs)	
(6.24) 胡：喔唷，蒋丽华倻屋里哪能介许多无价之宝啦？ 万妻：呒没啥物事呀！阿拉就，啥，啥个无价之宝……	胡：**又是**茶叶，**又是**名画，**又是**迭个……**还有**啥个名瓷！（笑） 胡：**还有**名人！ 许：**还有**名词名砚，砚台来**还有**！嗳！	Hu: Wow, Jiang Lihua, how come your house is so full of priceless treasures? Mrs.Wan: No, there's nothing valuable! We just... Priceless treasures, what, what nonsense...	Hu: **There's** tea, **there're** famous paintings, **and there's** this… this famous porcelain. (laughs) Hu: Famous people **too**! Xu: **Also** famous poems and famous inkstone… inkstone **also**, yeah.
(6.25) 邢：叶明丽是道地啊！ 叶：诚心伐？ 宋：诚心噢！	邢：茶**啊**，瓜**啊**，果汁**啊**，对伐，又**啊**……，阿是？（笑）	Xing: Ye Mingli is so thorough. Ye: Sincere, aren't I? Song: You sure are!	Xing: There's tea, melon, fruit juice... and even forks... everything. (laughs)
(6.26) 张：李俍民嗳，伊拉爸爸。翻译家。	张：翻译了，就是《牛虻》，《斯巴达克斯》。 徐：翻译，《哥达选集》，	Zhang: Li Liangmin, his dad. Master translator.	Zhang: Translated <u>The Gadfly</u>, <u>Spartacus</u>. Xu: Translated... <u>The Selected Works of Goethe</u>,

The *example* strategies in Examples 6.23 to 6.26 present *multiple instances in simple listings* with no detailed contextual information. In Example 6.23, conjunctive adverb "又 and" is used repeatedly to list the *examples* composed of verb phrases: "又欣赏了伊额美丽家园 **to see/enjoy** their beautiful home," "又看了名画 **And to see** famous

paintings," "又听了……创业额格额身世 **And to hear** their story of how... to create a

career." In Example 6.24, the first two *examples* are presented by using the conjunctive

adverb "又 and" ("又是茶叶，**There's** tea," "又是名画，**[and] there're** famous

paintings,"), while the next four *examples* are listed by using the conjunctive adverb "还

also/and also" ("还有啥个名瓷！**and there's** this… this famous porcelain." "还有名

人！**[there are]** Famous people **too**!" "还有名词名砚，砚台来还有！**[there are] Also**

famous poems and famous inkstone… inkstone **also**,"). Different from Example 6.23,

the same verb "是 [there] is/are" or "有 there is/are" is repeatedly used. Example 6.25

shows how the sentence-final particle "啊 [a]" is used to present *examples* composed of

nouns: instead of the front position, "啊 [a]" is attached to the end of each listed (noun)

example ("茶啊 **[a]**，瓜啊 **[a]**，果汁啊 **[a]**，对伐，叉啊 **[a]** ……，There's tea, melon,

fruit juice... and [even] forks..."). Not all *examples in simple listings* are presented with

conjunctive adverbs or sentence-final particles. In fact, many are not. In Example 6.26

for instance, the famous books translated by the master translator are listed with no

conjunctive adverbs or sentence-final particle 啊 [a]. Whether presented with or without

adverbs or sentence-final particles, most *examples* in each listing are parallel, i.e., the

items listed are in the same structure (e.g., all verb phrases, all noun phrases) or sense

category (e.g., all famous artifacts, all food items, all books). Although *examples in*

simple listings have no elaborate contextual information, the repeated use of the same

conjunctive adverb or sentence-final particle combined with parallel phrases create a

powerful rhythm, greatly enhancing the positive force of a core or support compliment

strategy.

Excerpts 6.12 and 6.13 illustrate how *examples in simple listings* are realized in complete compliment-response sequences.

Excerpt 6.12 [363] "He's our go-to guy."

Situation: Yang [F, around 35] is visiting her parents' old friends Mrs. Shi [F, 70] and Mr. Shi [M, 75]. Mr. Shi had a stroke and is partially paralyzed. They don't have any children. Their neighbor Zhou Peizhi [M, 48] is very kind and has been helping the old couple. Mrs. and Mr. Shi are very grateful.

01		施太太：（笑）来啦？	Mrs.Shi: (laughs) Coming?	
02		周培志：嗳，看看。	Zhou: Yeah, come look.	
03		施太太：（对杨）1.伊是阿	Mrs.Shi: (to Yang) 1.He's our	1.core
04		拉帮困对象！	go-to guy.	kindness to
05		周培志：（笑）	Zhou: (laughs).	help
06		施太太：2.所有事体全是伊	Mrs.Shi: 2.He does all the	2.comment
07		做额！（笑）	work for us.	
08			(laughs)	
09		小杨： 3.（笑）全是伊	Yang: 3.(smiles) He does	3.agreement
10		做，4.来帮忙	all the work...	4.agreement
11		（笑）。	4.comes to help you	
12			out (smiles).	
13		周培志：（笑）	Zhou: (laughs).	
14	→	施太太：5.伊总归常常来看	Mrs.Shi: 5.He frequently	5.example
15		看伊（施先生）额	comes to visit him	
16		（笑）。	(Mr. Shi)(laughs).	
17		周培志：来看看，啊——呀	Zhou: I look in on him...	
18		（声音很低）。	uh hum (low voice).	
19		施太太：伊格是吭没办法	Mrs.Shi: He can't manage on	
20	→	呀！6.有常时……	his own. 6.He (Zhou)	6.example
21		要抱伊（施先	sometimes has to...	
22		生），抱伊	carry him... carry	
23	→	（笑），7.买物	him (laughs), 7.and	7.example
24		事！	does shopping for	
25			us.	
26		小杨： （笑）	Yang: (smiles)	
27		施先生：8.也全靠周培志，	Mr.Shi: 8.I wouldn't know	8.intensifi-
28		噢？……	what to do without	cation
29			Zhou Peizhi...	
30		施太太：邻居，	Mrs.Shi: He's our neighbor.	
31		施先生：……邻居老啥！	Mr.Shi: ...[and] our	
32			neighbors.	
33		周培志：（没说话）	Zhou: (silent)	
34		小杨： 9.邻居好么是蛮好	Yang: 9.It's great to have	9.comment
35		噢？	good neighbors,	

36		isn't it?	
37	施太太：10. 嗳！喔唷，侬	Mrs.Shi: 10.Yeah! Oh my, just	10.agreement
38	看俉格点人么全走	look at you guys,	
39	了！（笑）	you all left.	
40		(laughs)	
41	小杨： 是的呀！剩下来全	Yang: Yeah, only the old	
42	是老人（笑）！	people are left	
43		behind (laughs).	
44	施太太：全是老人，喔唷。	Mrs.Shi: All old people, oh	
45		my/yes.	
46	(They continue to talk	(They continue to talk about	
47	about how difficult it	how difficult it is for the	
48	is for the elders to	elders to take care of	
49	take care of themselves	themselves after their	
50	after their children	children left home.)	
51	left home.)		

As can be seen in Excerpt 6.12, Mrs. and Mr. Shi are very grateful to their neighbor Zhou for his kindness in helping them out after Mr. Shi was partially paralyzed. Like the preceding excerpts, Mrs. Shi initiates the compliment with a general topic "伊是阿拉帮困对象！ He's our go-to guy." (C1). Then she substantiates the core compliment strategy with a support comment to detail in what way Zhou is their "go-to guy": "所有事体全是伊做额！ He does all the work for us." (C2). Mrs. Shi then lists three *examples* to show what Zhou does to help: he frequently comes to visit Mr. Shi ("伊总归常常来看看伊 (施先生) 额。"), sometimes has to carry Mr. Shi ("有常时……要抱伊，"), and does shopping for them ("买物事！") (C5–C7). Mr. Shi's intensification strategy ("也全靠周培志，噢？……邻居老啥！ I wouldn't know what to do without Zhou Peizhi... [and] our neighbors.") (C8) tops off Mrs. Shi's detailed descriptions, emphasizing how invaluable their neighbor's assistance has been to them and how deep their appreciation is to their neighbor. The three *examples* of what Zhou specifically does to help them flesh out the general core compliment, making it more visible and personal.

Note, all three *examples* are in *simple listing* form, presenting the "what" of an instance

(frequently visits Mr. Shi, sometimes carries him, does shopping for them) with no

detailed contextual information.

The *simple listings of examples* do not necessarily mean the instances listed are

simple; each instance could carry a story behind it. Excerpt 6.13 serves as an illustration.

Excerpt 6.13 [80] "We can't do without you!"

Situation: Four colleagues and good friends, Huang [55], Ding [56], Liang [53], and Wang
[46], all female, are having a small reunion. Huang is leaving on a business trip. Ding is a
caring person, who is always helping friends and neighbors. She offers to help Huang,
saying she'd get the milk every morning for Huang's husband, who is hopelessly
forgetful of small household chores.

01	黄：〔1.丁涵菱……	Huang:[1.Ding Hanling...	1.core
02	丁：（（继续模仿曹说的	Ding: [(continues mimicking	caring
03	话）"……我，我已经	Huang's husband) "...	person
04	练出来了，我练出来	I... I've learned by	
05	了。"	now. I can remember	
06		now."	
07	黄：……总归人家的事情啦	Huang:...you're always ready	
08	蛮乐意帮忙的。	to help others.	
09	丁：就是，跟侬讲小儿科	Ding: Exactly, childish	
10	呀。	(small) stuff.	
11	王：（笑）咿，小儿科呀	Wang: (chuckles) Childish	
12	（笑）。	stuff. (chuckles)	
13	丁：小儿科，大事做勿来，	Ding: Childish stuff. I can't	
14	只好做小事。	do big stuff, so I have	
15		to be content to do the	
16		small stuff.	
17	王：〔不过，哪能讲法子	Wang: [But... You can't say	
18	呢，	that...	
19	梁：〔2.我们少不了你的	Liang:[2.We can't do without	2.intensifi-
20	噢！你知道吗？	you! You know that?	cation
21	丁：噢，侬啊，一日到夜要	Ding: Oh, you, I always ask	
22	求侬……	you to do something...	
23	王：3.我少勿了伊额。	Wang: 3.I can't do without	3.agreement
24		her.	
25	丁：……外头嘛买买物事老	Ding: ...running an errand,	
26	啥。	doing a bit of shopping	
27		and so on.	
28	王：4.丁涵菱阿拉少勿了侬	Wang: 4.Ding Hanling, we	4.repetition

29		噢！		can't do without you!	
30		黄：5.阿拉全少勿了侬噢！	Huang:5.None of us can do		5.agreement
31				without you!	
32		梁：6.少勿了侬噢！	Liang:6.Can't do without you!		6.repetition
33	→	王：7.面条……	Wang: 7.Noodles...		7.example
34		丁：（笑）	Ding: (chuckles)		
35	→	王：……香得来！	Wang: ...delicious!		
36		〔8.简直是……不能够	[8.Simply...		8.intensifi-
37		忘记！（笑）	unforgettable! (laughs)		cation
38	→	梁：〔9.清茶，10.巧克	Liang:[9.Green tea,		9.example
39	→	力，	10.chocolate...		10.example
40	→	黄：11.买牛奶（笑），	Huang:11.To buy milk(laughs).		11.example
41	→	梁：12.鸭肫肝，	Liang:12.Duck gizzards.		12.example
42	→	黄：13.苔菜，	Huang:13.Seaweed.		13.example
43		丁：嗳（笑）。	Ding: Oh...(laughs)		
44		王：（笑）伊辰光吃面条哪	Wang: (laughs) Back then, how		
45		能介好吃法子！……	could noodles taste so		
46			good! ...		
47		(Wang reminisces about	(Wang reminisces about the		
48		the "noodle society"	"noodle society" in college		
49		in college days, and how	days, and how Ding often made		
50		Ding often made delicious	delicious noodles for		
51		noodles for everyone)	everyone.)		

Six *examples* are listed in Excerpt 6.13 to support the general core compliment strategy that Ding Hanling is "always ready to help others" ("丁涵菱……总归人家的事情啦蛮乐意帮忙的。") (C1) and its intensification that her friends "can't do without her" ("我们少不了你的噢！你知道吗？") (C2). These *examples* are in very simple listing of things: "面条……香得来！ Noodles… delicious!," "清茶， Green tea," "巧克力，chocolate…," "买牛奶， To buy milk.," "鸭肫肝， Duck gizzards." and "苔菜，Seaweed." (C7, C9–C13). Except for Zhang's *example* of buying milk, which is the original trigger of the entire compliment sequence, the other five *examples* have no reference to Ding's complimentary merits—whether Ding made the food, served the food, or bought the food… for others. As a matter of fact, almost every *example* has a story behind it, only the story is shared experience among the group and therefore there is no

need to state it. For instance, the "noodle" *example* has a big story behind it. It goes back to the time when Wang and other new teachers just started teaching college. To improve their academic standing and teaching skills, they lived in the dorm on campus. The cafeteria food was not appetizing, and they all missed home cooking. Ding, a veteran teacher at the time, was very considerate. She went out of her way to cook delicious noodles for these new teachers regularly. All the new teachers remember "the noodle society" and cherish Ding's kindness to date. We can see the *simple listings of examples* do not necessarily mean the instances listed are simple. Each simple listing triggers fond memories of the elaborate story behind it. Since the experience is shared, a simple *example* enjoys the same power as an *example* with detailed descriptions, adding personal touches to the otherwise general compliment strategy.

Similar to the *comment* strategy, sequentially, the use of the *example* strategy is not contingent upon the complimentee's response strategy. In other words, the *example* strategy is used whether the complimentee accepts, rejects, or downplays the compliment strategy, or remains silent. It frequently follows the complimenter's own or other's compliment strategy. In a multi-party conversation, especially when the group share the common experience (e.g., in Excerpt 6.13), all the participants "chime in" with *examples*. *Examples* from the complimenter and the third party build onto each other, complement each other, add credible personal "proof/account" to substantiate the general compliment "claim," forcefully enhancing the positiveness of the compliment action.

Summary

In this chapter, I have examined the support compliment strategy for *alignment*—the *agreement* strategy. I have also examined the support compliment strategies for *elaboration*—the *comment* strategy and the *example* strategy. I have described in detail how each strategy is realized, the strategy's linguistic form, and discourse and functional characteristics.

The *agreement* strategy supports the core or another support compliment strategy by aligning to the same position expressed in the compliment strategy by a different speaker. The *agreement* strategy is realized by using agreement token, repetition, or a combination of the two. The agreement token can be used alone, or combined with another agreement token or repeated for emphasis. The repetition can be a complete or a partial restatement of another speaker's compliment strategy in exact words or non-exact words. Different agreement tokens and repetition can also be combined to enhance the tone of agreement.

The *comment* and *example* strategies support the core or another support compliment strategy by elaborating the compliment strategy. The *comment* strategy, the most frequently used support strategy, presents a specific detail or account, specifying in what way(s) the complimentee is good. It provides a component part, a facet, a specific characteristic, etc., to elaborate a core or another support compliment strategy. The specific component part, facet, or characteristic of a general compliment topic is brought out by either the reference-specific assessable or content-specific positive assessment or both, which are in turn realized by a wide variety of linguistic forms with no formulaicity and predictability in lexical or syntactic distribution.

The *example* strategy presents a particular case or occurrence of a complimented attribute or action to elaborate a core or another support compliment strategy. The *example* can be in detailed descriptions of one instance, or in simple listings of multiple instances. When detailing one instance, the *example* strategy usually specifies the contextual information such as "who," "when," or "where." However, such information is unstated but tacitly shared by the participants when *examples* are presented in simple listings.

Sequentially, it is observed that the *agreement* strategy is frequently followed by the *comment* strategy adding details to the core or another support compliment strategy. Interactionally, the *agreement* strategy does not seem to be contingent upon the complimentee's response. Instead of the "normal" complimenter–complimentee interaction, it is frequently observed (e.g., in Excerpts 5.1, 6.1, 6.5) that the complimenter and the third party align with each other in a back and forth "incremental" way: compliment – agreement – comment – agreement – further comment – further agreement... This back and forth "incremental" pattern of alignment builds up the crescendo and excitement, forcefully enhancing the positive tone of the compliment action.

The same discourse pattern is found with *comment* and *example* strategies. Sequentially, the use of *comment* and *example* strategies is not contingent upon the complimentee's response strategy. The *comment* and *example* strategies are used whether the complimentee accepts, rejects, or downplays the compliment strategy, or remains silent. They frequently follow the complimenter's own or other's compliment strategy. Similar to the use of agreement strategy, in a multi-party conversation, all the

participants "chime in" with *comments* and *examples*. They build onto each other, complement each other. The personal "accounts" and "tangible" evidence provided by *the comments* and *examples* substantiate the general compliment "claim," forcefully enhancing the credibility and positiveness of the compliment action.

In Chapter VII, I will examine the support compliment strategies for *emphasis*— the *repetition* strategy and the *intensification* strategy. I will describe how each strategy is realized, the strategy's linguistic form, and discourse and functional characteristics.

Chapter VII

SUPPORT COMPLIMENT STRATEGIES FOR EMPHASIS

This chapter examines the support compliment strategies for emphasis: the

repetition strategy and the *intensification strategy*. As has been stated in Chapter IV

(Overview of Chinese Compliment Structure), the support compliment strategies play

three major pragmatic-discursive functions: (1) to align with, (2) to elaborate, or (3) to

emphasize the core compliment strategy or another support compliment strategy. The

agreement strategy fulfills the first function, while the *comment* and *example* strategies

fulfill the second function (see Chapter VI). The support compliment strategies of

repetition and *intensification* fulfill the third function. They upgrade a core or another

support compliment strategy by strengthening the positive semantic force of the

compliment strategy. How do *repetition* and *intensification* strategies strengthen the

positive semantic force of a core or another support compliment strategy? In this chapter,

I will describe the realization of each strategy in detail, the strategy's linguistic form, and

discourse and functional characteristics.

Repetition

Figure 4.1 (p. 110) shows that the support compliment strategy of *repetition* is the

second most frequently used strategy among all the support compliment strategies. A

total of 697 (21.1% of 3,310) *repetition* strategies are observed in the 300 compliment-

response sequences. The support compliment strategy of *repetition* restates a core

compliment strategy or another support compliment strategy to achieve emphasis. As has

been stated in Chapter VI, the *repetition* strategy differs from the repetition used in an

agreement strategy in that the *repetition* strategy restates a strategy initiated by the *same*

speaker whereas the repetition used in *agreement* strategy restates a strategy initiated by

a *different speaker*. Excerpt 6.13 in the preceding chapter (p. 241) illustrates the

difference. In Excerpt 6.13, Liang's intensification strategy (C2) is repeated four times

by three speakers:

Intensification:	梁:	我们少不了你的噢！你知道吗？	(C2)
	Liang:	We can't do without you! You know that?	
Agreement:	王:	我少勿了伊额。	(C3)
	Wang:	I can't do without her.	
Repetition:	王:	丁涵菱阿拉少勿了侬噢！	(C4)
	Wang:	Ding Hanling, we can't do without you!	
Agreement:	黄:	阿拉全少勿了侬噢！	(C5)
	Huang:	None of us can do without you!	
Repetition:	梁:	少勿了侬噢！	(C6)
	Liang:	Can't do without you!	

Wang's first repetition (C3) and Huang's repetition (C5) are considered *agreement*

strategies because both restate the strategy by Liang (C2)—a *different speaker*, in

alignment with her position. However, Wang's second repetition (C4) and Liang's

repetition (C6) are considered *repetition* strategies because each restates the strategy

already stated by herself—the *same speaker*.

The *repetition* strategy can restate a compliment strategy either completely or

partially. In fact, a great many *repetition* strategies in the data restate only the positive

assessment part of a compliment strategy with the assessable part omitted. Such

omission is understandable since the purpose of an upgrade is to emphasize the positive

assessment rather than the assessable—who or what is being positively assessed. An

examination of the data shows that the repetition of an assessable usually happens in a

multi-party conversation where the noise of the simultaneous talk or other activities may

necessitate the repetition. Example 7.1 gives an instance.

Core or Other Strategy	Repetition	Core or Other Strategy English Translation	Repetition English Translation
(7.1) 许：格房子勿错啊！ 范：真额房子勿错。	许：格房子勿错啊！ 许：勿错额。	Xu: This apartment is wonderful! Fan: This apartment is truly wonderful.	Xu: This apartment is wonderful! Xu: Wonderful.

In Example 7.1, Professor Xu has used two *repetition* strategies to emphasize his core

compliment strategy "格房子勿错啊！ This apartment is wonderful!" The first

repetition strategy restates the core compliment strategy in its entirety ("格房子勿错啊！

This apartment is wonderful!") whereas the second one restates only the positive

assessment part of the core compliment strategy ("勿错额。 Wonderful."). These

compliments are presented when the host and hostess are giving a tour of their new

apartment. There are six people in the room and the daughter has turned the TV on. This

may explain why Prof. Xu has restated the assessable of the core compliment strategy in

his first *repetition*. When Ms. Fan upgrades Prof. Xu's compliment strategy with the

assessable "房子 this apartment" mentioned, an indication that the assessable is known to

the coparticipants, Prof. Xu drops the assessable in his second *repetition*.

The *repetition* strategy is realized in three different ways: (1) by restating a

compliment strategy in *exact words* (271 or 38.9%), (2) by restating a compliment

strategy in *non-exact words* (368 or 52.8%), or (3) by restating a compliment strategy in

paraphrase (58 or 8.3%). (Cf. *repetition* in *agreement strategy* in Chapter VI.)

Restating in Exact Words

Out of the 697 repetition strategies, 271 (38.9%) restate a compliment strategy in

exact words, i.e., restate a compliment strategy word for word without any change.

Excerpt 7.1 shows an example.

Excerpt 7.1 [1] "This is the 'golden district'!"

Situation: Qing [M, 35] is visiting his cousin Fang [F, 44]. In the following part of the
conversation, they are talking about housing, a popular topic of the day. Qing has just
bought a new apartment, but he expresses an admiration for the residential area Fang
lives in.

01		芳：……现在上海也朝，全	Fang: ...Shanghai is also	
02		朝外头发展，我看全	expanding outward	
03		外，全到外头去噢？	now... spreading out	
04			into the suburbs, isn't	
05			it?	
06		青：嗳，全朝外头发展。交	Qing: Yeah, expanding	
07		关地主全迁塌了。1.侬	outward. Many local	1.core 2
08		选搭额地段是黄金地段	residents have been	top
09		噢！	relocated. 1.The area	residential
10			you live in here is the	area
11			"golden district"!	
12		芳：黄金地段（笑）……	Fang: The "golden district"	
13			(laughs)...	
14	→	青：2.（笑）黄金地段……	Qing: 2.(laughs) The "golden	2.repetition
15			district"...	
16		芳：格搭是黄金地段	Fang: This area here is the	
17		（笑）。	"golden district"	
18			(laughs).	
19	→	青：3.（笑）黄金地段。	Qing: 3.(laughs) the "golden	3.repetition
20			district."	

In Excerpt 7.1, Qing restates his core compliment strategy "侬选搭额地段是黄金地段

噢！ The area you lived in here is the 'golden district'!" (C1) twice. In both cases, the

positive assessment part of the core compliment "黄金地段, the golden district" (C2, C3)

is repeated in *exact words*. It is interesting to note that Fang echoes Qing's compliment

in response (line 12 and line 16), a very common compliment acceptance strategy

observed in the data. Examples 7.2 to 7.5 are more instances of the repetition strategy in

exact words.

Core or Other Strategy	Repetition	Core or Other Strategy English Translation	Repetition English Translation
(7.2) 李：卫娟娟来阿拉班级里是个**优秀学生**，啊？！ 马：〔嗳！ 卫：〔有啥用场啦？（笑）	李：班长，**优秀学生**， 马：**优秀学生**噢？	Li: Wei Juanjuan was an **outstanding student** in our class... wasn't she? Ma: [Yeah. Wei: [What's the use? (laughs)	Li: Class captain and **outstanding student**. Ma: **Outstanding student**, wasn't she?
(7.3) 女导：但是呢侬格套还是**经得起考验的**！ 领队：勿来……经得起考验（笑），勿来三！	女导：**经得起考验的**，	Female Guide: But your [textbook] series **has stood the test of time**. Tour Leader: Not... Stood the test of time (laughs)... Not really.	Female Guide: **Has stood the test of time**.
(7.4) 杜：施东平现在是**企业家**， 施：对额对额，企业家（微笑）。	杜：**企业家**。	Du: Shi Dongping is now an **entrepreneur**. Shi: Yes, yes, entrepreneur (smiles).	Du: **Entrepreneur**.
(7.5) 谢审计：阿拉魏老师现在是**国宝噢**！ 张经理：国宝啊？ 赵财务：（笑） 魏审计：（查帐，无声）	谢审计：**国宝噢**，阿拉局里寻勿出第二额来！	Auditor Xie: Our Teacher Wei is now a **national treasure**. Manager Zhang: National treasure? Accountant Zhao: (laughs) Auditor Wei: (auditing, silent)	Auditor Xie: **National treasure**. There's nobody as good as he is in our entire bureau.

The repetition strategy in each of the above four examples restates the positive

assessment part of the core or support strategy in *exact words* (see words in boldface).

Restating in Non-Exact Words

Out of the 697 repetition strategies, 368 (52.8%) restate a compliment strategy in *non-exact words*, i.e., restate a strategy with minor changes in wording (e.g. adding or omitting words, using a synonym), word order (e.g., switching the order of the assessable and the positive assessment), or structure (e.g., changing a stative verb phrase to a noun phrase), but usually with no change of the key positive semantic carrier (i.e., a lexical item that carries positive meaning) in the positive assessment. Excerpt 7.2 shows an example.

Excerpt 7.2 [51] "You weren't stupid!"

Situation: Mei [F, 45] is visiting her long time close friend Qun [F, 43]. They are reminiscing about their school days. Qun is very smart. Mei is surprised to hear that Qun doesn't think highly of herself.

01		群：我来拉，我格辰光，读	Qun: I was... back then... in	
02		书读了蛮呆额噢？	school... I was very	
03			stupid.	
04		梅：1.勿呆额！！	Mei: 1.You weren't stupid!!	1.core
05		群：我勿呆啊格辰光？	Qun: I wasn't stupid back	smart
06			then?	
07		梅：〔2.侬么是——班里厢	Mei: [2.You WERE one of the	2.comparison
08		额聪明人噢！3.搞啥物	smart ones in the class.	3.intensifi-
09		事侬！	3.What are you talking	cation
10			about?	
11		群：〔……嗳，格辰光勿是	Qun: [...Well, back then... I	
12		额！	wasn't!	
13	→	梅：4.侬勿是来班里厢聪明	Mei: 4.You were(*Weren't you*)	4.repetition
14		人嘛！侬格个是，	one of the smart ones in	
15		〔一直写文章写得……	the class! [Your writing	
16			was always...	
17		群：〔我实际上老呆额！	Qun: [I was	
18			actually quite stupid.	
19		群：〔侬印象还可以啊？	Qun: [So your impression [of	
20			me] was alright?	
21		梅：〔5.侬伊辰光，我，我	Mei: [5.My impression was	5.comment
22		印象当中侬成绩老好	that you had outstanding	
23		额！	grades.	

24		群：〔我格辰光是······ 锋	Qun: [I was too sharp. I	
25		芒毕露额，	singled myself out/I	
26			said what I thought.	
27		梅：〔6.就讲侬写物事老灵	Mei: [6.Your writing... you	6.comment
28	→	额就是讲，7.我，我印	wrote great stuff. 7.My	7.repetition
29		象当中对伐就讲侬老聪	impression was that you	
30		明额。	were super smart.	
31		群：格辰光是锋芒毕露额，	Qun: I was too sharp. I	
32			singled myself out/I	
33			said what I thought.	

In Excerpt 7.2, Mei restates her comparison strategy twice in *non-exact words*.

Comparison:　　梅：侬么是——班里厢额聪明人嗳！　　　　　　(C2)
　　　　　　　　Mei: you were::: in class smart people particle [ai] [surely]
　　　　　　　　Mei: You WERE [surely] one of the smart ones in the class!

Repetition:　　　梅：侬勿是来班里厢聪明人嘛！　　　　　　　　(C4)
　　　　　　　　Mei: you not were in class smart people particle [ma] [of course]
　　　　　　　　Mei: Weren't you one of the smart ones in the class!
　　　　　　　　　　You were [of course] one of the smart ones in the class!

Repetition:　　　梅：我，我印象当中对伐就讲侬老聪明额。　　　(C7)
　　　　　　　　Mei: my, in my impression uh you exceedingly smart
　　　　　　　　Mei: My impression was that you were super smart.

The first repetition strategy (C4) changes "侬么是 you were" to "侬勿是 weren't you" at

the beginning, and the sentence-final particle "嗳 [ai] surely" to "嘛 [ma] of course"—

both expressing the mood of certainty/affirmation. The structures of the two strategies

are basically the same. The second repetition strategy (C7) changes the sentence

structure from comparative ("班里厢额聪明人, one of the smart ones in the class") to

non-comparative ("老聪明额, super smart"). However, the key positive semantic carrier

"聪明 smart" in the positive assessment of the comparison strategy is retained by both

repetition strategies. Examples 7.6 to 7.10 are more instances of repetition strategy in

non-exact words.

Core or Other Strategy	Repetition	Core or Other Strategy English Translation	Repetition English Translation
(7.6) 女营业员 1：……依格件衣裳小花头额，**小花头老好看额**！ 女营业员 3：嗳，我今朝，今朝早上头搭伊讲呀，勿要太好看噢小花头！	女营业员 1：**老好看额小花头**！	Salesgirl 1: Your blouse has small flower-pattern. **Small flowers [look] very pretty**. Salesgirl 3: Yeah. I told her this... this morning, small flowers are so pretty! You can't beat them.	Salesgirl 1: **Very pretty... small flowers**.
(7.7) 邢：**顶做得介漂亮啦哪能**？ 宋：嗳！ 叶：啊？……这全是我设计的！（笑）	邢：**格顶哪能做得介漂亮**！	Xing: How could the ceiling be made so pretty? / *Ceiling made so pretty particle [la] how could?* Song: Yeah. Ye: Yeah? ...It's all by my own design. (chuckles)	Xing: How could the ceiling be made so pretty**!** / *This ceiling how could made so pretty!*
(7.8) 病属：格个女婿**勿要太好噢**！ 医生：昨日经过……（商店名字不清楚），帮伊进口物事全买搭去，钞票么也送搭去。	病属：格个女婿**好得来**！	Patient's Spouse: Isn't that a wonderful son-in-law! / *This son-in-law **can't [be] too wonderful particle [o]**!* Doctor: I was passing by... (name of store, not clear) yesterday. I bought all the imported stuff she [mother-in-law] wanted and took it to her and also took the money to her.	Patient's Spouse: What a wonderful son-in-law! / *This son-in-law wonderful extremely*!

(7.9) 李：宋莹莹**很孝**啊， 宋：啊？孝女啊？	李：**孝女**啊！	Li: Song Yingying is really *filial* [to her mother]. Song: What? A *filial* daughter?	Li: Really **a *filial* daughter**.
(7.10) 羽扬：……侬格双鞋子交关**漂亮**么！ 晓璐：（笑）格双鞋子么，实际上格双鞋子只底老勿适宜额，是塑料额。	羽扬：交关**好看**！	Yuyang: ...These shoes are very **beautiful**! Xiaolu: (laughs) These shoes... actually the pads of these shoes are very uncomfortable, they're plastic.	Yuyang: Very **good-looking**!

In Examples 7.6 and 7.7, the repetition strategy uses basically the same wording but different word order. Example 7.6 illustrates word order change of the assessable "小花头 small flowers" and the positive assessment "老好看额 very pretty," while Example 7.7 is an instance of word order change within the positive assessment: the question word "哪能 how could" is moved from the end position to a pre-verb position. The next three examples illustrate the change of structure or wording. In Example 7.8, the intensifier "勿要太 (好) 噢 *can't be too (wonderful)*" is replaced by an intensifier of similar strength "(好) 得来 so (wonderful)"; in Example 7.9, the stative verb phrase "很孝 very *filial*" is replaced by a noun phrase "孝女 a *filial* daughter"; in Example 7.10, the adjective "漂亮 beautiful" is substituted by a synonym "好看 good-looking." Except for the synonym substitution in Example 7.10, all the repetition strategies retain the key positive semantic carrier used in the positive assessment of the compliment strategy being repeated: "好看 pretty" in Example 7.6, "漂亮 pretty" in Example 7.7, "好 wonderful" in Example 7.8, and "孝 *filial*" in Example 7.9.

Restating in Paraphrase

Out of the 697 repetition strategies, 58 (8.3%) restate a compliment strategy in

paraphrase, i.e., restate the meaning expressed in a compliment strategy in different

words. Restating in *paraphrase* differs from restating in *non-exact words* in that restating

in *paraphrase* uses different words while restating in *non-exact words* uses different form

but retains the same key positive semantic carrier; restating in *paraphrase* spells out or

clarifies the meaning of the compliment strategy being repeated whereas restating in *non-*

exact words does not. Excerpt 7.3 illustrates the differences.

Excerpt 7.3 [180] "Tan is one of only a handful of success stories!"

Situation: At a high school class reunion. Tan [M, 46] is a very successful business
manager for both a state-owned company and his own private companies. Ren [M, 47],
also a business manager, is exchanging experiences with Tan. Lian [M], Fang [M], Qiu
[M], Zhao [F] and Han [F] are all around 47 years old.

01	连：谭立韦好像当私人老板	Lian: Tan Liwei seems to live	
02	是老松快额，当国家老	quite a leisurely life	
03	板呢？	running a private	
04		company. What's it like	
05		running a state	
06		company?	
07	任：(在和谭说话)……但是	Ren: (talking to Tan) ...	
08	呢，老甩得开额，……	What's good is that you	
09	勿好就是勿好赚自家	have lots of freedom...	
10	额。	What's bad is that you	
11		can't make money for	
12		yourself.	
13	谭：勿好赚额……（不清	Tan: You can't make money	
14	楚）	for yourself...(?)	
15	方：对额对额，格到是对	Fang: Exactly, exactly.	
16	额。		
17	赵：〔1.但是侬勿要讲，	Zhao: [1.But I must say...	1.core 1
18	任：〔(还在和谭说话)……	Ren: [(still talking to Tan)	business
19	呒没介许多……牵制	...fewer...restraints.	success
20	啊。		
21	赵：〔谭立韦属于是少数成	Zhao: [Tan Liwei is one of	
22	功人士啊！	only a handful of	

23			success stories/*people*!	
24		任：〔……	Ren: [...	
25		谭：〔……	Tan: [...	
26	→	赵：2.少数成功人士啊！	Zhao: [2.A handful of success	2.repetition
27			stories/*people*!	
28		韩：3.嗳。	Han: 3.Yeah.	3.agreement
29		赵：对伐？嗳！	Zhao: Isn't it so? Yeah.	
30		韩：4.就讲成功，而且成功	Han: 4.He's not only	4.core 2
31		了辰光长。	successful, but his	staying
32			success has lasted.	power
33		赵：5.嗳，对额。	Zhao: 5.Yes, you're right.	5.agreement
34	→	韩：6.能够坚持辰光长，	Han: 6.Has staying power,	6.repetition
35		噢？	right?	
36	→	赵：7.勿是一朝一夕，	Zhao: 7.Not for a day or two,	7.repetition
37	→	8.伊能够介许多辰光。	8.but for so long. 9.I	8.repetition
38		9.主要勿是讲啥，做老	must say, to run a	9.comparison
39		板就搭买股票老啥，	company is like buying	other
40		10.搭搓麻将一样额，	stocks, 10.like playing	10.comparison
41		七搭跟八搭额人失败	majiang. Seventy or	other
42		额，	eighty percent lose.	
43		韩：（笑）	Han: (laughs)	
44		赵：剩，剩下来十五额人是	Zhao: Another fifteen percent	
45		平平过额，还有额人，	live a mundane life.	
46		百分之五额人是发财	Only five percent make	
47		额。伊能够坚持到现在	a fortune. He's lasted	
48		属于是，	till now, he's...	
49	→	丘：11.百分之五里厢额。	Qiu: 11.In the five percent.	11.repetition
50		赵：百分之五额……	Zhao: ...in the five percent.	
51		（大家笑）	(all laugh)	
52		谭：赵丽媛，第一个，勿好	Tan: Zhao Liyuan, first,	
53		讲成功，第二个呢要归	you can't say it's a	
54		功于学堂里厢。格辰光	success. Second, credit	
55		来拉我眼门前有交关	goes to the school.	
56		人，来势要比我大交	Back then, a lot of	
57		关，后来就，现在就跟	people were ahead of	
58		勿上了……	me. They had powerful	
59			backing. But later...	
60			now they can't keep up	
61			[with me]...	
62		(Tan explains why their	(Tan explains why their	
63		business didn't last.)	business didn't last.)	

Five repetition strategies are used in Excerpt 7.3 in three different ways (for ease of

analysis, the repetition strategies in this excerpt and some other excerpts later are

numbered in the order they appear in the sequence). Zhao's first repetition strategy (C2)

restates the positive assessment of the first core compliment strategy in *exact words*:

Core 1: 赵： 谭立韦属于是少数成功人士啊！ (C1)
Zhao: Tan Liwei belongs to a handful of successful people
particle [a]!
Zhao: Tan Liwei is one of only a handful of success stories!

Repetition 1: 赵： 少数成功人士啊！ (C2)
Zhao: A handful of successful people particle [a]!
Zhao: A handful of success stories!

The next four repetition strategies by Han, Zhao and Qiu restate the second core

compliment strategy and Zhao's comparison strategy in *non-exact words* or by

paraphrase:

Core 2: 韩： ……而且成功了辰光长。 (C4)
Han: ...but has succeeded time long.
Han: ...but his success has lasted.

Repetition 2: 韩： 能够坚持辰光长，噢？ (C6)
Han: Can persist time long, right?
Han: Has staying power, right?

Repetition 3: 赵： 勿是一朝一夕， (C7)
Zhao: Not is one day one night,
Zhao: Not for a day or two,

Repetition 4: 赵： 伊能够介许多辰光。 (C8)
Zhao: he can so much time.
Zhao: but for so long.

Comparison: 赵： 百分之五额…… (C10)
Zhao: five percent's...
Zhao: ...in the five percent.

Repetition 5: 丘： 百分之五里厢额。 (C11)
Qiu: five percent inside's.
Qiu: In the five percent.

Repetition strategies 2 and 5 are considered repetition in *non-exact words*. Repetition

strategy 2 replaces the verb "成功了 has succeeded" in core compliment strategy 2 with

the verb "能够坚持 can persist," but keeps the key positive semantic carrier "辰光长

time long" intact. In repetition strategy 5, the word "里厢 inside" is added to Zhao's

comparison strategy with no change of the key positive semantic carrier "百分之五额 in

the five percent." Both strategies restate the positive assessment in a different form

without clarifying the meaning: "has succeeded for a long time" and "can persist for a

long time" are basically saying the same thing, so are "in the five percent" and "inside the

five percent." However, repetition strategies 3 and 4 are *paraphrases* of the second core

compliment strategy. Instead of saying "has succeeded or can persist for a long time,"

they use different wording "勿是一朝一夕 not for a day or two," "能够介许多辰光 but

for so much time" to spell out/clarify the meaning of "a long time"—"a long time" is "not

a day or two" but "a lot of time."

Excerpts 7.4 and 7.5 show more instances of repetition strategy in *paraphrase*.

Excerpt 7.4 [222] "Teacher Shi is an all-round talent!"

Situation: At a company dinner party honoring Shi [F, 34] and Lu [F, 43], auditors for the
government Bureau of Taxation. Present from the company are manager Yu [F, 32] and
accountant Hong [M, 35]. After talking about the stock market...

01	史审计：我的兴趣最主要勿	Shi:	My interests aren't	
02	来格高头(指股		mainly on that	
03	票)，		(referring to stocks).	
04	郁经理：侬欢喜啥物事？	Yu:	What are your	
05			interests?	
06	史审计：我，我属于大杂	Shi:	Mine are a big mix.	
07	烩!			
08	洪财会：（笑）	Hong:	(chuckles)	
09	史审计：各种名堂全欢喜。	Shi:	I like everything.	
10	陆审计：1.史老师属于全	Lu:	1.Teacher Shi is an	1.core
11	才，		all-round talent.	all-round

12		洪财会：2. 全才！	Hong: 2.All-round talent.	talent
13	→	陆审计：3. 全才！	Lu: 3.All-round talent.	2.agreement
14		郁经理：（笑）	Yu: (chuckles)	3.repetition
15	→	洪财会：〔4. 样样会额。	Hong: [4.Good at everything.	4.repetition
16	→	陆审计：〔5. 全面发展，	Lu: [5.All-round	5.repetition
17	→	6. 全面发展！	development. 6.All-	6.repetition
18			round development.	
19		郁经理：7. 嗯，	Yu: 7.Yeah.	7.agreement
20		陆审计：8. 女中豪杰！	Lu: 8.A super talent among	8.comparison
21		（笑）	women! (laughs)	other
22		郁经理：9. 嗯。来业务高头	Yu: 9.Yeah. Expert in her	9.comment
23		非常精通，噢？	profession, isn't she?	
24		洪财会：10. 办事体……老	Hong: 10.Good at getting	10.comment
25		来三额。	things done.	
26		郁经理：11. 是额呀！12. 所	Yu: 11.That's it. 12.That's	11.agreement
27		以是格能就讲侬走	why I say... you take	12.intensifi-
28		一步我就跟一步	a step, and I'll follow	cation
29		噢？ ……随便到	you in taking a step...	
30		啥地方去全……	wherever you go...	
31		史审计：但我勿像有种人家	Shi: But I'm not like some	
32		讲踏了踏出格一步	people... they take a	
33		也就……	step and they...	
34		(returns to previous	(returns to previous topic)	
35		topic)		

Four repetition strategies are used in Excerpt 7.4 to emphasize the core or other support

strategies on Auditor Shi's all-round talent:

Core: 陆审计：史老师属于全才， (C1)
Auditor Lu: Shi teacher belongs to all-round talent.
Auditor Lu: Teacher Shi is an all-round talent.

Agreement: 洪财会：全才！ (C2)
Accountant Hong: All-round talent.
Accountant Hong: All-round talent.

Repetition 1: 陆审计：全才！ (C3)
Auditor Lu: All-round talent.
Auditor Lu: All-round talent.

Repetition 2: 洪财会：样样会额。 (C4)
Accountant Hong: Everything knows how to do.
Accountant Hong: Good at everything.

Repetition 3:　陆审计：全面发展，　　　　　　　　　(C5)
　　　　　　　Auditor Lu: All aspects development.
　　　　　　　Auditor Lu: All-round development.

Repetition 4:　陆审计：全面发展！　　　　　　　　　(C6)
　　　　　　　Auditor Lu: All aspects development.
　　　　　　　Auditor Lu: All-round development.

Auditor Lu's repetition strategy 1 is a partial restatement of her core compliment strategy

(the positive assessment part) in *exact words*. Her repetition strategy 4 is a complete

restatement of her repetition strategy 3 in *exact words*. However, Accountant Hong's

repetition strategy 2 is a *paraphrase* of his agreement strategy. It uses other words to

spell out/clarify the meaning of "all-round talent" as "good at or knows how to do

everything." Auditor Lu's repetition strategy 3 is also a *paraphrase* of her core

compliment strategy or repetition strategy 1. It rewords "all-round talent" as "all aspects

development," i.e., good at things in all areas.

Excerpt 7.5 shows more instances of repetition strategy in *paraphrase* as well as

in *non-exact words*.

Excerpt 7.5 [218] "Accounting is hot nowadays."

Situation: At a company social dinner in honor of Tao [F] and Xia [F], auditors for the
government Bureau of Taxation. Present from the company are a manager [F], a director
[M] and an accountant [F]. The participants are between 35–40 years old. In the
following part of the conversation, they are admiring the auditors for their position at the
taxation bureau, a job position that is much envied at the time.

01	陶审计：……我呒没我没考	Auditor Tao: ...I didn't go	
02	大学，我呒没考进大学	to college... I went	
03	我就进了税务局。	straight to the taxation	
04		bureau.	
05	经理：1.天才！做财经啊？	Manager: 1.Genius! Doing	1.core 1
06		finance now?	genius
07	陶审计：大学考起来太结棍	Auditor Tao: It's too	
08	了。	difficult to pass the	
09		college entrance exams.	
10	经理：格个是——调进去额	Manager: So... you were	

11		咾？	transferred into the bureau?	
12				
13		陶审计：〔呒没噢，阿	Auditor Tao: [No. I...	
14		拉……		
15		夏审计：〔2.呒没伊直接进	Auditor Xia: [2.No, she went	2.comment
16		财务组额。	straight to the	
17			accounting department.	
18		陶审计：我直接就进去了，	Auditor Tao: I went straight	
19		阿拉是——〔分数坍板	to the department. I	
20		一眼伊拉直接招人，	was... [my grades were a	
21			few points short... they	
22			recruited me directly...	
23		经理： 〔噢——！	Manager: [Oh:::!	
24		(Tao explains how she	(Tao explains how she got the	
25		got the job. Omit 9	job. Omit 9 turns.)	
26		turns)		
27		科长：3.但现在好来！	Director: 3.But now you're in	3.core 2
28			a great position!	great job
29		经理：4.财务么现在好来！	Manager: 4.Accounting is hot	4.agreement
30			(*great*) nowadays!	
31		陶审计：迭个辰光阿拉	Accountant Tao: At that time,	
32		是……	I...	
33		科长：5.现在勿要太好噢！	Director: 5.It's so great	5.intensifi-
34			now, you can't beat it!	cation
35		财会：6.嗳！	Accountant: 6.Yeah.	6.agreement
36		陶审计：格也是人额机会，	Auditor Tao: It was an	
37			opportunity.	
38		经理：对额对额对额，	Manager: Yes, yes, yes.	
39	→	财会：……7.现在老好额！	Accountant: ...7.Now you're	7.repetition
40			in a great position.	
41		科长：〔8.现在比大学毕	Director: [8.Now you're doing	8.comparison
42		业额好来！	better than college	other
43			graduates.	
44		财会：〔9.寻勿着额像俉格	Accountant: [9.You can't find	9.comparison
45		能介额！	a position like yours.	other
46		陶审计：嗳，	Auditor Tao: Yeah.	
47	→	科长：10.大学毕业额分配	Director: 10.College	10.repetition
48		进额还进勿去了！	graduates can't get a job	
49			with your taxation bureau	
50			much as they want to.	
51		经理：11.进勿去额！	Manager: 11.They can't get	11.agreement
52			in.	
53		陶审计：进勿来，现在是阿	Auditor Tao: They can't. They	
54		拉呒没本科文凭勿要想	can't get a job with our	
55		进来了！全要研究	bureau if they don't have	
56		生……	an undergraduate degree.	

57 58			Now we are requiring a graduate degree...	
59 60 61	→	经理：啊？12. 应该讲侬现在格个，侬现在格只工作呢应该……	Manage: Really? 12.Your job now... to have a job like yours sure is...	12.repetition
62 63		财会：……应该讲是勿错了！	Accountant: ...sure is great!	
64 65 66 67 68	→	财会：13. 现在是，像侬格个，再要去找侬格个税务局额工作是老——难额！	Accountant: 13.Nowadays, to get a job like yours... to get a job with your taxation bureau is exceedingly::: difficult!	13.repetition
69 70	→	经理：14. 呒没办法进，	Manager: 14.No way you can get in.	14.repetition
71 72	→	科长：15. 进勿去来！	Director: 15.You can't get in.	15.repetition
73		经理：……（？）	Manager: ...(?)	
74 75	→	科长：16. 伊拉关门来已经。	Director: 16.They've already closed the door.	16.repetition

Seven repetition strategies are used in Excerpt 7.5 to emphasize core compliment strategy 2 or other support compliment strategies on Auditor Tao's great job position with the taxation bureau. Four of the seven repetition strategies restate the core or another support strategy in *non-exact words* and three in *paraphrase*. After the director initiates core compliment strategy 2, he intensifies it. Both strategies are agreed to and repeated by the manager and the accountant:

Core 2: 科长：但现在好来！ (C3)
Director: but now great
Director: But now you're in a great position.

Agreement: 经理：财务么现在好来！ (C4)
Manager: accounting now great
Manager: Accounting is hot nowadays.

Intensification: 科长：现在勿要太好噢！ (C5)
Director: now can't be too great particle [*o*]
Director: It's so great now, you can't beat it!

Agreement: 财会：嗳！ (C6)
Accountant: yeah
Accountant: Yeah.

Repetition 1:　财会：……现在老好额！　　　　　　　　　(C7)
　　　　　　　Accountant: ...now exceedingly great
　　　　　　　Accountant: ...Now you're in a great position.

Repetition 3:　经理：应该讲侬现在格个，侬现在格只工作呢　(C12)
　　　　　　　　　应该…
　　　　　　　财会：应该讲是勿错了！
　　　　　　　Manager: should you now this... you now this job should...
　　　　　　　Accountant: should be pretty good
　　　　　　　Manager: Your job now... to have a job like yours sure is...
　　　　　　　Accountant: ...sure is great!

Both repetition strategies 1 and 3 are repetition in *non-exact words*. In repetition strategy 1, the accountant uses a different intensifier of similar strength "老 (好) 额 exceedingly (great)" to replace the intensifier "勿要太 (好) 噢 can't be too (great)" in the director's intensification strategy (which is agreed to by the accountant first). In repetition strategy 3, the manager and the accountant replace the stative verb "好 great" in their first agreement strategy (C4) and repetition strategy 1 with a synonym of the same strength "勿错 pretty good."

The director and the accountant then use two comparison strategies to further support core strategy 2, both of which are in turn repeated in *paraphrase*:

Comparison:　科长：现在比大学毕业额好来！　　　　　　(C8)
　　　　　　　Director: now compared with college graduates better
　　　　　　　Director: Now you're doing better than college graduates.

Repetition 2:　科长：大学毕业额分配进额还进勿去了！　　(C10)
　　　　　　　Director: college graduates assign job can't get in
　　　　　　　Director: College graduates can't get a job with your
　　　　　　　　　taxation bureau much as they want to.

Comparison:　财会：寻勿着额像侬格能介额！　　　　　　　(C9)
　　　　　　　Accountant: can't find like yours
　　　　　　　Accountant: You can't find a position like yours.

Repetition 4:　財会：现在是，像俉格个，再要去找俉格个　　　(C13)
　　　　　　　　　　税务局额工作是老---难额！
　　　　　　　　　Accountant: now is... like your this... again go look for your
　　　　　　　　　　this taxation bureau job is exceedingly::: difficult!
　　　　　　　　　Accountant: Nowadays, to get a job like yours... to get a job
　　　　　　　　　　with your taxation bureau is exceedingly::: difficult!

In repetition strategy 2, the director rewords the meaning of his comparison strategy "you're doing better than college graduates" as "college graduates can't get the same job [with your taxation bureau] much as they want to." In repetition strategy 4 the accountant rewords the meaning of her comparison strategy "people can't find a position like yours" as "to get a job like yours [with your taxation bureau] is exceedingly difficult."

The director's repetition strategy 2 (reprinted here) is further agreed to and repeated by the manager and by himself in *non-exact words* or in *paraphrase*:

Repetition 2:　科长：大学毕业额分配进额还进勿去了！　　　(C10)
　　　　　　　　　Director: college graduates assign job can't get in
　　　　　　　　　Director: College graduates can't get a job with your
　　　　　　　　　　taxation bureau much as they want to.

Agreement:　　经理：进勿去额！　　　　　　　　　　　　　(C11)
　　　　　　　　　Manager: can't get in
　　　　　　　　　Manager: They can't get in.

Repetition 5:　经理：呒没办法进，　　　　　　　　　　　　(C14)
　　　　　　　　　Manager: no way get in
　　　　　　　　　Manager: No way you can get in.

Repetition 6:　科长：进勿去来！　　　　　　　　　　　　　(C15)
　　　　　　　　　Director: can't get in
　　　　　　　　　Director: You can't get in.

Repetition 7:　科长：伊拉关门来已经。　　　　　　　　　　(C16)
　　　　　　　　　Director: they have closed door already
　　　　　　　　　Director: They've already closed the door.
.

In repetition strategy 5, the manager uses a different negation phrase "呒没办法 (进) no way (to get in)" to replace "(进) 勿 (去) can't (get in)" in her agreement strategy (C11). In repetition strategy 6, the director restates the positive assessment part of his repetition strategy 2 with one word change: the sentence-final particle "了 [le]" is replaced by the sentence-final particle "来 [lai]," both emphasizing the certainty of the verb phrase "进勿去 can't get in." Repetition strategy 7 restates repetition strategy 6 in *paraphrase*: the director rewords the meaning of his repetition strategy 6 "you can't get in" as "they've already closed the door."

As can be seen, each of the four repetition strategies in *non-exact words* (1, 3, 5, and 6) restates a strategy with minor change in form (replacing an intensifier, a stative verb, a negation adverb, or a sentence-final particle with another of similar strength) but keeps the key positive semantic carrier intact ("好 great"; "进 enter"; "进勿去 can't get in") with no meaning clarification. However, each of the three repetition strategies in *paraphrase* (2, 4, and 7) uses different words (rewords "doing better" as "can't get the same [job]"; "can't find" as "to find is exceedingly difficult"; "can't get in" as "already closed the door") to express/clarify the same meaning: how difficult it is to get a job with taxation bureau nowadays and thus emphasizing how great a position the auditors are in.

So far I have described how *repetition* strategy is realized: by restating a compliment strategy (1) in *exact words*, (2) in *non-exact words*, or (3) in *paraphrase*. Functionally, we have also observed how the *repetition* strategy is repeatedly used (e.g., two in Excerpts 7.1 and 7.2, five in Excerpt 7.3, four in Excerpt 7.4, seven in Excerpt 7.5) to strengthen the positive semantic force of a core or another support compliment strategy.

Sometimes the *repetition* strategy is employed to an "excessive" degree such as in

Excerpt 7.6 below.

Excerpt 7.6 [106] "Wow, your apartment is so full of priceless treasures!"

Situation: Mr. Wan [M, 52] and Mrs. Wan [F, 44] are among China's new entrepreneurs. They need advice to get their daughter into a good college. Their friend Miss Hu [F, 43], who holds a government job, connects them to her friend Mr. Xu [M, 48], a professor in a college. After dinner, Mr. and Mrs. Wan invite everyone to their newly-bought apartment.

01		胡：	1.喔唷，蒋丽华佾屋	Hu: 1.Wow, Jiang Lihua	1.core
02			里哪能介许多	(Mrs.Wan's maiden name),	compliment
03			〔无价之宝啦？	how come your house is so	priceless
04				full of [priceless	treasures
05				treasures?	
06		万妻：	〔呒没啥物事呀！阿	Mrs.Wan: [No, there's	
07			拉就，啥，啥个无价	nothing valuable! We	
08			之宝……	just... Priceless	
09				treasures, what, what	
10				nonsense...	
11		胡：	〔2.又是茶叶，3.又	Hu: [2.There's tea,	2.example
12			是名画，4.又是迭	3.there're famous	3.example
13			个……还有啥个名	paintings, and 4.there's	4.example
14			瓷！（笑）	this... this famous	
15				porcelain.(laughs)	
16		万妻：	〔嗳我还，我还有砚	Mrs.Wan: [Look I also... I	
17			台，老好额，……	also have an ink-stone.	
18			（？）	Excellent quality...(?)	
19		胡：	5.喔唷侬样样屋里全	Hu: 5.Wow, everything in your	5.intensifi-
20			是无价之宝！（笑）	house is a priceless	cation
21				treasure. (laughs)	
22		万妻：	呒没啥子，阿拉么呒	Mrs.Wan: Nothing, we really	
23			没啥子……	don't have anything...	
24	→	胡：	6.名画，7.名瓷，	Hu: 6.Famous paintings,	6.repetition
25	→		8.名茶，9.有介许多	7.famous porcelain,	7.repetition
26	→		有名额物事！（笑）	8.famous tea, 9.so much	8.repetition
27	→			famous stuff! (laughs)	9.repetition
28		万妻：	（笑）啥个名茶，	Mrs.Wan: (laughs) Famous tea,	
29			（笑）还名茶来！	what nonsense. (laughs)	
30			（笑）	Famous tea, nonsense!	
31				(laughs)	
32		胡：	10.还有名人！	Hu: 10.Famous people too!	10.example
33		许：	11.还迭个名，茶叶	Xu: 11.Also this famous...	11.agreement
34			是蛮有名额。	the tea is really famous.	
35		胡：	12.嗳，名茶噢？	Hu: 12.Yeah, famous tea	12.agreement

36	→		13.名瓷14.名画，许老师噢？15.阿拉今朝开眼界了今朝。	right? 13.Famous porcelain, 14.famous paintings, right Professor Xu? 15.You've opened our eyes today.	13.repetition
37	→				14.repetition
38					15.intensifi-cation
39					
40					
41		许：	16.嗯。	Xu: 16.Yeah.	16.agreement
42	→	胡：	〔17.侬看伊有得介多（笑）……	Hu: [17.Just look at all the stuff she's got (laughs)...	17.repetition
43					
44					
45		万妻：	〔开眼界了！勿要迭能讲！倷格能介看到〔物事更加多了，阿拉是，阿拉像人家阿乡（笑），倷看到物事勿是更加多啦阿是？	Mrs.Wan: [Opened your eyes! Don't say that. You guys have seen [much more than this. We are...we're like country bumpkins (laughs). You guys have seen much more...	
46					
47					
48					
49					
50					
51					
52		胡：	〔18.是额是额，是开眼界（笑）。	Hu: [18.It's true, true, [you've] indeed opened our eyes (laughs).	18.intensifi-cation
53					
54					
55		胡：	19.阿拉看到额物事全是最好额！	Hu: 19.What we see now is the best.	19.comparison other
56					
57		……(look at the vase lamp, omit 6 turns)		...(look at the vase lamp, omit 6 turns)	
58					
59	→	胡：	20.伊拉屋里厢有三名，名画，名瓷，名茶，	Hu: 20.Their house has three famous things: famous paintings, famous porcelain, famous tea.	20.repetition
60					
61					
62					
63		许：	21.嗳，名茶。	Xu: 21.Yes, famous tea.	21.agreement
64		胡：	22.嗳（笑）。	Hu: 22.Yeah (laughs).	22.agreement
65		万妻：	（笑）	Mrs.Wan: (laughs)	
66		许：	23.还有名词 24.名砚，砚台来还有！嗳！	Xu: 23.Also famous poems and 24.famous inkstone... inkstone also, yeah.	23.example
67					24.example
68					
69		胡：	25.嗳名砚（笑），	Hu: 25.Oh yes, famous inkstone. (laughs)	25.agreement
70					
71		万妻：	（笑）……？	Mrs.Wan:(chuckles)...(?)	
72	→	胡：	26.介许多名额物事！（笑）	Hu: 26.So many famous things! (laughs)	26.repetition
73					
74		(Talk about inkstone, Wuyuan's famous stone product.)		(Talk about inkstone, Wuyuan's famous stone product.)	
75					
76					
77		**（停顿）**		(pause)	
78	→	胡：	27.今朝拨我开眼界了，侬老早……	Hu: 27.You've opened my eyes today. You before...	27.repetition
79					
80		万妻：	（大声说）侬勿要吓人好伐？（笑）	Mrs.Wan: (loudly) Stop exaggerating, would you?	
81					

82			(laughs)	
83		许： 侬吭没来过格搭啊？	Xu: You've never been here	
84			before?	
85		胡： 我来过额，	Hu: Yes, I've been here.	
86		许： 噢噢噢，	Xu: Oh, oh, oh.	
87	→	胡： 28.伊介许多好物事	Hu: 28.So many good things,	28.repetition
88		对伐，〔伊没亮相。	[she's never showed us.	
89		许： 〔噢好物事	Xu: [Oh, she's never showed	
90		嗳，噢吭没亮相，	you all this time.	
91		胡： 29.今朝我是借侬光	Hu: 29.I'm here today to take	29.intensifi-
92	→	噢！〔30.啥个名瓷	advantage of your	cation
93	→	31.名画（笑）。	presence! [30.Famous	30.repetition
94			porcelain, 31.famous	31.repetition
95			paintings (laughs).	
96		万： 〔啥个好物事	Mr.Wan: [What's so	
97		呢！	great?	
98	→	许： 32.名茶，嗳名茶。	Xu: 32.Famous tea, and famous	32.repetition
99			tea.	
100		胡： 33.嗳，就是讲呀。	Hu: 33.Yeah, that's right.	33.agreement
101	→	34.好，许老师阿拉	34.Professor Xu, I'm here	34.repetition
102		今朝借侬光！（笑）	to take advantage of your	
103			presence today! (laughs)	
104		（停顿）	(pause)	
105		万： 侬好像对格方面蛮感	Mr.Wan: You seem to have a	
106		兴趣额，画啊，蛮感	great interest in such	
107		兴趣额。	things, paintings...	
108			great interest.	
109		万妻：我也根本勿晓得胡欣	Mrs.Wan: I never knew Hu	
110		华，会得对格个，感	Xinhua was so interested	
111		兴趣额。	in... in such things...	
112		胡： 啊？我老早就学过额	Hu: What?... I learned to	
113		呀！老早把我撂塌了	paint a long time ago...	
114		呀！（笑）	but then I dropped it.	
115			(laughs)	
116		万妻：噢，我勿晓得侬会得	Mrs.Wan: Oh, I didn't know	
117		感兴趣。	you would have an	
118			interest...	
119		(Pause. Change topic. Xu	(Pause. Change topic. Xu asks	
120		asks how many households	how many households live in	
121		live in the apartment	the apartment building.)	
122		building.)		

In Excerpt 7.6, Mrs. and Mr. Wan's "abundant" "priceless treasures" are so admired by

their guests that six examples (in listings, see analysis on p. 237), four intensification

strategies and one comparison strategy are employed to elaborate and emphasize the core

compliment strategy. These support compliment strategies are in turn emphasized by 15

repetition strategies. In addition, seven agreement strategies are used by the

complimenters to align with each other's position, four of which involve *repetition*.

Like most compliment-response sequences, Hu opens the compliment sequence

with a general summative topic:

Core:	胡：喔唷，蒋丽华俪屋里哪能介许多无价之宝啦？	(C1)
	Hu: Wow, Jiang Lihua, how come your house is so full of priceless treasures?	

To substantiate the general summative topic of "so full of priceless treasures," six

examples are given:

Example 1:	胡：又是茶叶，	(C2)
	Hu: There's tea,	
Example 2:	又是名画，	(C3)
	there're famous paintings,	
Example 3:	又是选个……还有啥个名瓷！（笑）	(C4)
	(and) there's this… this famous porcelain. (laughs)	
Example 4:	胡：还有名人！	(C10)
	Hu: Famous people too!	
Example 5:	许：还有名词	(C23)
	Xu: Also famous poems	
Example 6:	名砚，砚台来还有！嗳！	(C24)
	(and) famous inkstone… inkstone also, yeah.	

These six example strategies are further supported by nine *repetition* strategies (all of

them restate the positive assessment of a strategy in *exact words* or *non-exact words*):

Repetition:	胡：名画，	(C6)
	Hu: Famous paintings,	
Repetition:	名瓷，	(C7)
	famous porcelain,	
Repetition:	名茶，	(C8)
	famous tea,	
Repetition:	胡：名瓷	(C13)
	Hu: Famous porcelain,	

Repetition:	名画，许老师噢？	(C14)
	famous paintings, right Teacher Xu?	
Repetition:	胡：伊拉屋里厢有三名，名画，名瓷，名茶，	(C20)
	Hu: Their house has three famous things: famous paintings, famous porcelain, famous tea.	
Repetition:	胡：啥个名瓷	(C30)
	Hu: Famous porcelain,	
Repetition:	名画（笑）。	(C31)
	famous paintings (laughs).	
Repetition:	许：名茶，嗳名茶。	(C32)
	Xu: Famous tea, and famous tea.	

In addition, these listings and *repetitions* of the examples are punctuated with "summative" strategies—intensifications and (six) *repetitions* of the general core strategy. Some of the "summative" strategies emphasize the impressive quantity (e.g., "样样 everything," "有介许多/有得介多 so many/full of") and the superior quality (e.g., "有名额 famous," "好物事 *good* things," "全是最好额 is the best," "无价 priceless," "宝 treasure") of the house "treasures" (for ease of analysis, the core compliment strategy is reprinted below):

Core:	胡：喔唷，蒋丽华俪屋里哪能介许多无价之宝啦？	(C1)
	Hu: Wow, Jiang Lihua, how come your house is so full of priceless treasures?	
Intensification:	胡：喔唷侬样样屋里全是无价之宝！（笑）	(C5)
	Hu: Wow, everything in your house is a priceless treasure. (laughs)	
Repetition:	有介许多有名额物事！（笑）	(C9)
	so much famous stuff! (laughs)	
Repetition:	胡：侬看伊有得介多（笑）……	(C17)
	Just look at all the (*so much*) stuff she's got (laughs)...	
Comparison:	胡：阿拉看到额物事全是最好额！	(C19)
	Hu: What we see now is the best.	
Repetition:	胡：介许多名额物事！（笑）	(C26)
	Hu: So many famous things! (laughs)	
Repetition:	胡：伊介许多好物事对伐，伊没亮相。	(C28)
	Hu: So many good things, she's never showed us.	

Some of the "summative" strategies emphasize how the "priceless treasures" have impacted the complimenter's positive emotion—the complimenter's "eyes have been opened" ("开眼界") and the complimenter feels lucky to have the chance to see these treasures ("借侬光噢") (see *impact oriented* intensification strategies later in the chapter):

Intensification:	胡：阿拉今朝开眼界了今朝。	(C15)
	Hu: You've opened our eyes today.	
Intensification:	胡：是额是额，是开眼界（笑）。	(C18)
	Hu: It's true, true, [you've] indeed opened our eyes (laughs).	
Repetition:	胡：今朝拨我开眼界了，侬老早……	(C27)
	Hu: You've opened my eyes today. You before...	
Intensification:	胡：今朝我是借侬光噢！	(C29)
	Hu: I'm here today to take advantage of your presence!	
Repetition:	好，许老师阿拉今朝借侬光！（笑）	(C34)
	Teacher Xu, I'm here to take advantage of your presence today! (laughs)	

It is interesting to see that on top of the "excessively" large number of *repetition* strategies used, seven *agreement* strategies are observed in this excerpt, four involving *repetition*. Note how the *agreement-by-repetition* strategies interact with the *repetition* strategies:

Repetition:	胡：**名茶**，	(C8)
	Hu: **famous tea**,	
Agreement:	许：还选个名，**茶叶是蛮有名额**。	(C11)
	Xu: Also this famous... **the tea is really famous**.	
Agreement:	胡：嗳，**名茶**噢？	(C12)
	Hu: Yeah, **famous tea** right?	
Repetition:	胡：伊拉屋里厢有三名，名画，名瓷，**名茶**，	(C20)
	Hu: Their house has three famous things: famous paintings, famous porcelain, **famous tea**.	
Agreement:	许：嗳，**名茶**。	(C21)
	Xu: Yes, **famous tea**.	
Agreement:	胡：嗳（笑）。	(C22)
	Hu: Yeah (laughs).	

Example 6:　　许：**名砚**，砚台来还有！嗳！　　　　　　　　　　(C24)
　　　　　　　Xu: (and) **famous inkstone**… inkstone also, yeah.
Agreement:　胡：嗳**名砚**（笑），　　　　　　　　　　　　　　(C25)
　　　　　　　Hu: Oh yes, **famous inkstone**. (laughs)

The *agreement-by-repetition* strategies undoubtedly add power to the *repetition* strategies.

It is observed that many *agreement* strategies in other sample excerpts are also realized by *repeating* another speaker's compliment strategy. For example, in Excerpt 7.4, accountant Hong *agrees* to auditor Lu's core compliment strategy ("史老师属于全才, Teacher Shi is an all-round talent") by *repeating* the positive assessment ("全才 all-round talent") (C2). In Excerpt 7.5, the manager *aligns* with the director's core compliment strategy 2 ("但现在好来！But now you're in a great position.") and repetition strategy 2 ("大学毕业额分配进额还进勿去了！College graduates can't get a job [with your taxation bureau] much as they want to.") also by *repeating* the positive assessment ("现在好来 now in a great position" and "进勿去额 can't get in" respectively) (C4, C11). The *agreement-by-repetition* strategies join forces with the *repetition* strategies in each excerpt. They build onto each other, acting in a force like a hammer hitting the nail, "*duang, duang, duang...*"[1] nailing/rooting the positive semantic force of a positive assessment such as "黄金地段 golden district" (Excerpt 7.1), "聪明人 smart one" (Excerpt 7.2), "成功人士 success story" (Excerpt 7.3), "全才 all-round talent" (Excerpt 7.4), "现在好来 in a great position" (Excerpt 7.5), or "介许多无价之宝 full of priceless treasures" (Excerpt 7.6) firmly in place, leaving no room for anyone to doubt.

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[1] "Duang" 叆 [duāng], a Chinese neologism that has become a viral meme despite its lack of any defined meaning. It has become a popular hashtag on Sina Weibo with more than 8 million mentions by the start of March 2015. The word is an example of onomatopoeia. Based on the words spoken by Jackie Chan in the shampoo advertisement, *duang* has been defined as meaning "add special effects" in some Chinese sources. (Retrieved from Wikipedia the Free Encyclopedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Duang)

It is also interesting to observe that the "excessive" use of the *repetition* strategy in Excerpt 7.6 follows the complimentee's downplaying, denial or rejection of the compliment strategy issued by the complimenter or the third party. In Excerpt 7.6, six rounds of support compliment strategies, especially *repetition* strategies, are used by Miss Hu and Prof. Xu to affirm their compliments. Each round of support strategies follows immediately after the complimentees' rejection responses. When Mrs. Wan rejects Miss Hu's core compliment strategy on their possession of the "abundant priceless treasures," arguing that "there is nothing valuable" ("呒没啥物事呀！阿拉就，啥，啥个无价之宝……") (lines 6–10), Miss Hu lists three examples and one intensification strategy to substantiate and emphasize her core compliment. Mrs. Wan's second rejection strategy that they "really don't have anything" ("呒没啥子，阿拉么呒没啥子……") (lines 22–23) prompts Miss Hu to issue **four *repetition*** strategies. When Mrs. Wan strongly refutes (with smiling voice) Miss Hu's restatement that the tea is famous ("（笑）啥个名茶，（笑）还名茶来！（笑）") (lines 28–31), eight support compliment strategies follow immediately: one example, **three *repetitions*** and one intensification. In addition, Prof. Xu joins in. They support each other with three agreement strategies, **two** of them involve *repetition*. This round of support compliment strategies is strongly rejected by Mrs. Wan again ("开眼界了！勿要迭能讲！ Opened your eyes! Don't say that."). To strengthen the rejection force, she uses two supporting comparisons and a repetition to lower herself ("阿拉是，阿拉像人家阿乡（笑）， We are...we're like country bumpkins (laughs).") and raise the complimenters ("侬格能介看到物事更加多了， You guys have seen much more than this."; "侬看到物事勿是更加

多啦阿是？ You guys have seen much more...") (lines 45–51). Mrs. Wan's strong rejections meet with ten more support compliment strategies from Miss Hu and Prof. Xu rejecting Mrs. Wan's rejections, among them **three** *repetitions* and **two** *agreement-by-repetitions* on top of the two new examples and other intensification and comparison strategies. Mrs. Wan's rejection escalates too, using stronger words and raised voice: "侬勿要吓人好伐？ （笑） Stop exaggerating, would you? (laughs)" (lines 80–82). Mr. Wan also joins in by then: "啥个好物事呢！ What's so great?" (lines 96–97). However, the Wans' vehement rejections still cannot stop Miss Hu and Prof. Xu from issuing **five more** *repetitions* and one intensification strategy. They hold on to their position by aligning with each other and building onto each other's *repetition* strategies. As we can see, the stronger the rejection, the more affirmations; the more affirmations, the stronger the rejection. The intense "tug-of-war" like interaction between the complimenters and the complimentees resembles that in Excerpt 1.1 ("Jin hasn't changed a bit.").

Although sequentially more occurrences of the *repetition* strategy have been observed to follow the complimentee's negative response (e.g., Excerpts 1.1 and 7.2; Examples 7.2, 7.3, 7.9, 7.10), the use of *repetition* strategy, like the comment and example strategies, does not have to be contingent upon the downplaying, denial or rejection response from the complimentee. In fact, the *repetition* strategy is also observed to be widely used when the complimentee vocally/directly accepts the compliment strategy (see forthcoming Excerpt 7.20, p. 370) or silently/indirectly accepts the compliment strategy (or does not deny/reject the compliment strategy). Excerpt 7.3 ("Tan is one of only a handful of success stories!") serves as an example of the latter. Excerpt 7.7 is another example.

Excerpt 7.7 [164] "His dad is a famous translator."

Situation: At a high school class reunion dinner. Wu [M, 45] asks Li [M, 46] about his father, who was one of the top ten famous translators in China. Xu [M], Ma [F], Zhang [F], Jiang [F], and Chang [F] are all around 45 years old.

01 02 03		吴：李灵山，格么就俫， 嗳，爷老头子现在还 来了写伐啦？	Wu: Li Lingshan... is your old man still writing?	
04 05		李：（停顿）已经到下头 去了（笑）。	Li: (pauses) He kicked the bucket(laughs).	
06		吴：喔唷！	Wu: Oh!	
07 08		马：〔蛮多辰光了好像， 是伐？	Ma: [A long time ago, right?	
09 10 11 12		张：〔上趟报纸上看到过 额，报纸上登过消息 额。	Zhang: [I read it in the newspaper... it was reported in the newspaper.	
13		徐：对。	Xu: Yeah.	
14		吴：〔这是蛮遗憾的。	Wu: [What a pity.	
15		...（omit seven turns）	...(omit seven turns)	
16 17		张：1.李良民嗳，伊拉爸 爸。	Zhang: 1.Li Liangmin, his dad.	1.core expert translator
18		江：噢，伊拉爷？	Jiang: Oh, his dad?	
19 20 21		张：〔1.翻译家。2.翻译 了，就是《牛虻》， 3.《斯巴达克斯》。	Zhang: [1.Master translator. 2.Translated The Gadfly, 3.Spartacus.	2.example 3.example
22		吴：4.《斯巴达克斯》。	Wu: 4.Spartacus.	4.agreement
23 24 → 25 26 27 28		徐：〔5.翻译，《哥达选 集》，6.《牛虻》。 7.《牛虻》看过勿啦？ 介有名额《牛虻》？	Xu: [5.Translated... The Selected Works of Goethe, 6.The Gadfly. 7.Have you read The Gadfly? Such a famous book, The Gadfly.	5.example 6.repetition 7.intensifi- cation
29 30		江：8.啊，格就是伊拉爷 翻啊？	Jiang: 8.What? His dad translated this?	8.intensifi- cation
31 → 32		徐：〔9.嗳，伊拉爷翻额 呀。	Xu: 9.Yeah, his dad translated it.	9.repetition
33 → 34 35 → 36		张：〔10.《斯巴达克斯》 跟《牛虻》全是伊拉 爷翻额，11.翻译家。	Zhang: 10.His dad did both The Gadfly and Spartacus. 11.Master translator.	10.repetition 11.repetition
37 38		徐：12.著名翻译家来！	Xu: 12.Famous master translator.	12.intensifi- cation
39		常：13.是……？啊？	Chang: 13.It's... wow...	13.intensifi-
40		邱：14.很著名的！	Qiu: 14.Very famous.	cation

		Chinese	English	Notes
41		江：侬晓得伐啦？	Jiang: Did you know?	14.agreement
42		常：13.晓得额咾！	Chang: 13.Of course!	
43	→	邱：15.嗳我就是想，伊拉	Qiu: 15.I was just	15.repetition
44		爷老有名，《牛虻》。	thinking, his dad was	
45			very well known...	
46			The Gadfly.	
47		马：16. 嗳，《牛虻》。	Ma: 16.Yeah, The Gadfly.	16.agreement
48		李：《牛虻》现在……	Li: The Gadfly now...	
49	→	吴：17.《斯巴达克斯》！	Wu: 17.And Spartacus,	17.repetition
50		阿是？	right?	
51	→	马：18.《斯巴达克斯》，	Ma: 18.Spartacus, The	18.repetition
52		《牛虻》啥对伐？	Gadfly and so on,	
53			right?	
54	→	徐：19.《哥达选集》。	Xu: 19.And The Selected	19.repetition
55			Works of Goethe.	
56		李：《牛虻》现在不行了，	Li: The Gadfly isn't	
57		《牛虻》你这个属于	popular any longer.	
58		盗版！	Yours is a pirated	
59			edition!	
60		马：盗版啊？	Ma: Pirated edition?	
61		李：现在出的，嗳，原来	Li: Recently published...	
62		他们这个又没有版权	they didn't have	
63		的咾，他就……	copyright back	
64			then... so people...	
65		(Li talks about the	(Li talks about the different	
66		different editions,	editions, copyright, etc. His	
67		copyright, etc. His	father translated the	
68		father translated the	original version.)	
69		original version.)		
70		李：到后来他们一直开玩	Li: They would joke about	
71		笑，他说，他说，现	it... my colleagues in	
72		在这个你，这个，我	the danwei	
73		们几个同事，那个那	(workplace). They'd	
74		个那个，这个就是单	say... one of my	
75		位里的同事他说，现	colleagues says, that	
76		在你爸爸的那个译本	edition of your	
77		吧，变成是绝版了	father's is now out of	
78		（笑）！	print, a rarity	
79			(laughs)!	
80		大家：（笑）	Others: (laugh)	
81		张：嗳，对啊。	Zhang: Yes, you're right.	
82		李：他说有收藏价值！	Li: He says it's now a	
83		（大笑）赶紧去拿出	collector's item.	
84		来估一估……（因为	(laughs out loud) [I	
85		笑，不清楚）	must] hurry up and	
86			take it to be	

| 87 | | evaluated...(Laughter | |
| 88 | | drowns the voices.) | |

Eight *repetition* (and three *agreement-by-repetition*) strategies are used in Excerpt 7.7.

As can be seen none of them is contingent upon the complimentee's negative response.

After Zhang initiates the general core compliment strategy that Li's dad is a "master

translator" ("李良民嗳，伊拉爸爸。翻译家。") (C1) and elaborates it with two

examples of his work ("翻译了，就是《牛虻》，《斯巴达克斯》。 Translated The

Gadfly, Spartacus.") (C2, C3), all the other participants join in the compliments. They

add more example ("翻译，《哥达选集》， Translated... The Selected Works of

Goethe,") (C5), upgrade the core and example strategies using different intensification

forms (e.g., "介有名额《牛虻》？ **Such a famous** book, The Gadfly."; "著名翻译家

来！ **Famous** master translator."; "啊？晓得额咾！ **wow**... **Of course** [I know]") (C7,

C12, C13), align with each other's positions (C4, C14, C16), and build onto each other's

repetitions. Throughout the complimenting process, Li is silent, except for one failed

attempt to start a comment (line 48). From his response at the end we know that he

accepts the compliments, indirectly, by telling the story of how others pirated his father's

work and produced low quality editions, and by quoting his colleagues' compliments that

his father's edition is a "rarity" ("变成是绝版了") (lines 75–79) and a "collector's item"

("有收藏价值") now and may be worth a fortune (lines 82–87). Excerpt 7.7 shows that

the *repetition* strategy does not have to be contingent upon the downplaying, denial or

rejection response from the complimentee. It can follow directly after the

complimenter's or other's compliment strategy or affirmation of the compliment strategy.

It is used when the complimentee silently or indirectly accepts the compliment strategy

(or does not deny/reject the compliment strategy). For example, Zhang's *repetition*
strategy ("《斯巴达克斯》跟《牛虻》全是伊拉爷翻额， His dad did both The Gadfly
and Spartacus.") (C10) follows after Xu's *repetition* strategy ("嗳，伊拉爷翻额呀。
Yeah, his dad translated it.") (C9), which follows after Jiang's intensification strategy
("啊，格就是伊拉爷翻啊？ What? His dad translated this?") (C8), while Qiu's
repetition strategy ("嗳我就是想，伊拉爷老有名，《牛虻》。 I was just thinking, his
dad was very well known... The Gadfly.") (C15) follows after her own agreement
strategy ("很著名的！ Very famous.") (C14).

Excerpt 7.7 also provides another powerful example of how *repetition* strategies
and the *agreement-by-repetition* strategies join forces to strengthen the positive semantic
force of the core and other support compliment strategies:

Examples:	张：	翻译了，就是《牛虻》， 《斯巴达克斯》。	(C2, C3)
		Zhang: Translated The Gadfly, **Spartacus**.	
Agreement:	吴：	《斯巴达克斯》。	(C4)
		Wu: **Spartacus**.	
Repetition:	吴：	《斯巴达克斯》！阿是？	(C17)
		Wu And **Spartacus**, right?	
Repetition:	马：	《斯巴达克斯》，《牛虻》啥对伐？	(C18)
		Ma: **Spartacus,** The Gadfly and so on, right?	
Intensification:	徐：	著名翻译家来！	(C12)
		Xu: **Famous** master translator.	
Agreement:	邱：	很著名的！	(C14)
		Qiu: **Very famous**.	
Repetition:	邱：	嗳我就是想，伊拉爷老有名，《牛虻》。	(C15)
		Qiu: I was just thinking, his dad was **very well known**... **The Gadfly**.	
Agreement:	马：	嗳，《牛虻》。	(C16)
		Ma: Yeah, **The Gadfly**.	
Repetition:	马：	《斯巴达克斯》，《牛虻》啥对伐？	(C18)
		Ma: Spartacus, **The Gadfly** and so on, right?	

The *repetition* strategies and the *agreement-by-repetition* strategies build onto each other, acting in a force that leaves no room for anyone to doubt Li's father's success.

To summarize, the first half of this chapter describes the realization of the support compliment strategy for emphasis—the *repetition* strategy. The *repetition* strategy restates a core compliment strategy or another support compliment strategy initiated by the same speaker to achieve emphasis. It can restate a compliment strategy either completely or partially, in *exact words* (i.e., restating a compliment strategy word for word without any change), in *non-exact words* (i.e., restating a strategy with minor changes in form but retains the same key positive semantic carrier), or in *paraphrase* (i.e., restating the meaning expressed in a compliment strategy in different words). Sequentially, we have observed that the *repetition* strategy frequently joins forces with the *agreement-by-repetition* strategy to strengthen the positive semantic force of a compliment strategy. Sequentially, we have also observed that the *repetition* strategy frequently follows the complimentee's downplaying, denial or rejection of the compliment strategy. However, like the comment and example strategies, the use of the *repetition* strategy does not have to be contingent upon the complimentee's negative response; it is widely used when the complimentee vocally or silently accepts the compliment strategy, or after the complimenter's or other's affirmation of the compliment strategy.

Having described the support compliment strategy for emphasis—the *repetition* strategy, I will now turn to the other support compliment strategy for emphasis—the *intensification* strategy, its linguistic form, and discourse and functional characteristics.

Intensification

Figure 4.1 (p. 110) shows that the support compliment strategy of *intensification* is the third most frequently used strategy among all the support compliment strategies. It is also the most complicated strategy in terms of the variety of forms used for its realization. A total of 681 (20.6% of 3,310) *intensification* strategies have been observed in the 300 compliment-response sequences. In addition, 192 of the 681 *intensification* strategies contain two different *intensification* forms in combination (e.g., an intensifier and a sentence-final particle). If counting the use of each *intensification* form as a separate strategy, the total number of *intensification* strategies reaches 873 (see discussion on combination strategies later). The support compliment strategy of *intensification* upgrades a core compliment strategy or another support compliment strategy by strengthening the positive semantic force of the positive assessment to achieve emphasis. It can be either (1) *attribute oriented*, i.e., intensifying the positive semantic force of the positive assessment of the complimentee, or (2) *impact oriented*, i.e., intensifying the positive impact the complimentee has on the complimenter or other. The *attribute oriented* strategies can be either (a) *complimentee focused*, i.e., emphasizing the positive assessment of the complimentee (e.g., "伊漂亮是漂亮得来。 She was so very beautiful."), or (b) *complimenter focused*, i.e., emphasizing the sincerity of the positive assessment made by the complimenter (e.g., "真额！ [I'm] honest!"). The *impact oriented* strategies can be either (a) *emotion focused*, i.e., emphasizing the positive impact the complimentee has on the complimenter's or other's emotion (e.g., "伊迷得来是…… He was so obsessed [with her]..."), or (b) *action focused*, i.e., emphasizing the

positive impact the complimentee has on the complimenter's or other's action (e.g., "盯

牢子伊…… [He] followed her everywhere..."). (The examples are taken from

compliment-response sequence #36.) A wide variety of lexical and syntactic forms are

used to realize the intensification strategies as summarized in Table 7.1 (the analysis is

based on all 873 intensification forms, whether used alone or in combination, i.e., the use

of each intensification form counts as a separate strategy).

Table 7.1

Taxonomy of Intensification Strategies

Intensification Strategies	Number of Occurrences	Percentage
(1) Attribute Oriented	**750**	**85.9**
(a) Complimentee focused	681	78.0
Using intensifiers	(311)	(45.7)
Using lexical items of high intensity	(118)	(17.3)
Using sentence-initial interjections	(38)	(5.6)
Using sentence-final particles	(130)	(19.1)
Using negation	(25)	(3.7)
Using question	(59)	(8.6)
(b) Complimenter focused	69	7.9
Using words and expressions indicating sincerity		
(2) Impact Oriented	**123**	**14.1**
(a) Emotion focused	56	6.4
Using stative verbs or phrases expressing emotion		
(b) Action focused	67	7.7
Using dynamic verbs or phrases describing action		
Total	**873**	**100.0**

NOTES: N = 873, which includes 489 intensification strategies containing one
intensification form, and 192 intensification strategies containing two intensification
forms in combination. The numbers in the brackets present the distribution of the
substrategies of the complimentee focused strategies.

In the following sections, I will first describe the *attribute oriented* intensification strategies, their linguistic forms, and discourse and functional characteristics, and I will then describe the *impact oriented* intensification strategies.

Attribute Oriented

Table 7.1 shows that 750 (85.9%) of the 873 intensification strategies are *attribute oriented*. As defined in the introductory remarks, *attribute oriented* intensification strategies intensify the positive semantic force of the positive assessment of the complimentee. They can be either (a) *complimentee focused*, or (b) *complimenter focused*.

Complimentee focused. The attribute oriented *complimentee focused* strategies emphasize the positive assessment of the complimentee—how good the complimentee is. Table 7.1 shows that the majority (681 or 78.0%) of the 873 intensification strategies are *complimentee focused*. Table 7.1 also shows that a wide variety of lexical and syntactic forms are used to realize the *complimentee focused* strategy: *intensifiers*, *lexical items of high intensity*, *sentence-initial interjections*, *sentence-final [modal] particles*, *negation*, and *question*. In Chapter V, we have already seen the uses of *intensifiers*, *lexical items of high intensity*, *sentence-initial interjections*, and *sentence-final [modal] particles*. The difference between the uses of these forms in Chapter V and the uses of these forms in this chapter is that in Chapter V, these intensification forms are used "internally," i.e., within/as part of a [core] compliment utterance, to achieve high positive semantic strength of the [core] compliment strategy, whereas here, they are used "externally," i.e., in a separate compliment utterance, to intensify the positive semantic force of a different [core or support] compliment strategy.

Most of the intensification forms are used alone to realize the intensification strategy. However, *intensifiers*, *sentence-initial interjections* and *sentence-final particles* are frequently used in combination with another intensification form to realize the intensification strategy (e.g., *sentence-initial interjection + intensifier; lexical item of high intensity + sentence-final particle...*). When an *intensifier*, a *sentence-initial interjection* or a *sentence-final particle* is used in combination with another intensification form, the combination is counted as one intensification strategy and categorized under the other intensification form. For example, in the intensification strategy "超级大款啦！ A super rich woman indeed! ," a *lexical item of high intensity* ("超级大款 , super rich person") and a *sentence-final particle* ("啦 [la], indeed") are used in combination to reinforce the core compliment strategy. For another example, in the intensification strategy "现在确实是，遍地开花！ Truly now, [your textbooks] are 'blossoming across the country.,'" an *intensifier* ("确实, honestly/truly") and a *lexical item of high intensity* ("遍地开花, blossoming across the country") are used in combination. The combination in each example is counted as one intensification strategy, and coded under the category of "*lexical item of high intensity*." However, there is one exception: when an *intensifier* is used in combination with a *sentence-initial interjection* or a *sentence-final particle*, the combination is categorized under the *intensifiers*. For example, in the intensification strategy "喔唷，介好！ Wow, so good! ," a *sentence-initial interjection* ("喔唷, wow") and an *intensifier* ("介, so") are used in combination, the combination is coded under the category of "*intensifier*." The choice of the category is arbitrary, but there is no basis for choosing one category over the other. The combination is counted as one strategy to simplify coding—to avoid generating and

accounting for a large number of different subcategories. It should be noted however that the more intensification forms are used in one combination, the more strength the intensification strategy carries. Nevertheless, to better understand how the *intensifiers*, *sentence-initial interjections* and *sentence-final particles* are used to achieve emphasis, all the *intensifiers*, *sentence-initial interjections* and *sentence-final particles*, whether used alone or in combination, are included for analysis. In the following sections, I will discuss the use of each intensification form in detail.

   Using intensifiers. As has been described in Chapter V, *intensifiers* are lexical items, especially adverbs or phrases functioning as adverbs, that are used to strengthen the semantic force expressed in a positive assessment. A typical example of intensifiers is "很/蛮, very" in "很/蛮漂亮, very beautiful" where the degree of beauty is reinforced by the use of the *intensifier*. Chinese intensifiers usually intensify and appear before an adjective or a (stative or dynamic) verb, or in some cases before a sentence. Very few of them can appear in a post-adjective/verb position. The following are examples of the most commonly used *intensifiers* observed in the intensification strategies.

Degree adverbs (increasing the degree of positiveness):

   e.g. 蛮, 非常, 老……的/额 (quite, very), 邪气 (very, terribly, exceedingly), 瞎 (very, unbelievably); ……得很, ……得来 (very, so), ……得不得了, ……得勿得了, ……极了, ……死了/煞了 (extremely); 够 (enough); 真, 真真, 真的 (really, truly); 介, 还这么, 格能 (so, such); 几化, 多少, 多 (how, what); 太……了 (too, extremely); 大 (greatly); 特, 特别 (exceptionally, especially); 越来越 (more and more); 最, 最最, 顶, 顶顶 (most, top); 勿要太……噢 (can't be more..., can't beat it); 一点勿, 一点吭没, 一眼也勿, 一点点都勿 (not at all, not a little bit), etc.

Modal adverbs (increasing the degree of certainty):

   e.g., 是 (truly, indeed) (used for emphasis or contrastive emphasis); 真是, 确实, 的确, 实在 (truly, really, indeed); 简直 (simply), 就, 就是 (just, simply, exactly, precisely); 一定, 肯定 (definitely, undoubtedly); 绝对 (absolutely); 当然 (of course); 难怪, 怪不得 (no wonder), etc.

Other adverbs (emphasizing the scope, time, frequency, etc.):

e.g., 都, 全, 全部, 完全 (all, completely, totally); 一致 (unanimously); 只有 (only); 不单单 (not just, not only, not simply); 还, 还是 (still); 本来（就）(originally); 老早（就）(a long time ago); 从来不/勿 (never); 总归 (always), 一直 (always, constantly, continuously); 穷 (vigorously, go all out, to the utmost); 就是, 即使 (even if); 到底 (after all), etc.

Phrases (functioning as adverbs):

e.g., 格能介样子 (in such a way); 呒没格能介 (unprecedentedly, unparalleled, incomparably); 没话可说, 呒没闲话讲额 (beyond words, indescribably, to an unspeakable/ indescribable extent), etc.

Degree adverbs and modal adverbs are the most frequently used *intensifiers* in the data. Degree adverbs are used to increase the degree of positiveness of a positive assessment composed mainly of an adjective or a stative verb. Modal adverbs are used to increase the degree of certainty of a positive assessment composed of either a stative or a dynamic verb. Other types of adverbs are also found to be used as intensifiers to emphasize the scope, time, frequency, etc., of a positive assessment. Except for a few degree adverbs which can be placed at a post-stative verb position (e.g., …… (得) 很 very, …… (得) 来 so, …… (得) 不/勿得了, ……极了 or ……死了/煞了 extremely), the majority of these adverbs are positioned before an adjective or a verb. A total of 311 (45.7%) *intensifiers* are used in the 681 *complimentee focused* intensification strategies. They are used alone or combined with another intensification form (e.g., lexical items of high intensity) to strengthen the positive semantic force of a positive assessment. The following are only a few examples extracted from the compliment-response sequences.

Examples 7.11 to 7.16 illustrate how different degree adverbs are used as *intensifiers* to achieve emphasis.

Core or Other Strategy	Intensification	Core or Other Strategy English Translation	Intensification English Translation
Intensifiers: degree adverbs			
(7.11) 女乘客：教书好，有假期，一年两次，	女乘客：**多**好！	Woman Passenger：Teaching's wonderful. You have vacation... twice a year.	Woman Passenger: **How** wonderful!
(7.12) 张：喔唷，赞额！	张：格字**瞎**赞！	Zhang: Wow, great!	Zhang: The calligraphy is **unbelievably** great!
(7.13) 李：侬一点也呒没变化。	李：余老师侬一**点点都勿**变。	Mrs. Li: You haven't changed a bit.	Mrs. Li: Teacher Yu you haven't changed **even a little, little bit**.
(7.14) 邢：灯交关漂亮么，叶明丽！ 宋：喔唷，高级来！	邢：高级**是**高级**得来**！	Xing: Beautiful lights, Ye Mingli! Song: Wow, classy!	Xing: **So very** classy (*classy so very*)!
(7.15) 莹：姆妈老早活动量也蛮大额噢？（笑） 仙：活动量老大额，就是讲呀！	莹：活动量大**得勿得了**！	Ying: Mom used to be very active, weren't you? (laughs) Xian: Very active, indeed!	Ying: **Extremely** active (*active extremely*)!
(7.16) 女病属 2：伊吃额地方蛮当心额。	医生：吃长素，吃长素么，应该，**勿要太好噢**！	Patient's Spouse 2: He's very careful about his diet.	Doctor: Vegetarian... it's **so** great to be a vegetarian! **You can't beat it**.

Examples 7.11 to 7.13 are instances of degree adverbs in pre-stative verb position ("多好,

how wonderful," "瞎赞, unbelievably great," "一点点都勿变, *haven't even a little, little*

bit changed"). Examples 7.14 and 7.15 are instances of the very few degree adverbs that

can be placed in the post-stative verb position (see word for word translation in italics).

The degree adverb in Example 7.16 "勿要太 (好) 噢, can't be too (good) / so (good), you can't beat it" is a rare newly coined intensifier in Shanghai dialect in the past 20 years or so.

Examples 7.17 to 7.23 illustrate how different modal adverbs are used as *intensifiers* to achieve emphasis.

Core or Other Strategy	Intensification	Core or Other Strategy English Translation	Intensification English Translation
Intensifiers: modal adverbs			
(7.17) 董事长：嗳那声音可以！ 室主任：他有色彩！	工程师：只喉咙**是**好额！	Board Chairman: Your voice is pretty good. Office Manager: It has color.	Engineer: You **indeed** have a good voice! (*Your voice **truly is** good!*)
(7.18) 王编剧：……我，我一生一世碰到现在碰到一个好领导……	王编剧：格**的确**是我额好领导！	Playwright Wang: ... I... in all my life time... only now have I run into a good boss...	Playwright Wang: He **indeed** is my good boss.
(7.19) 院长：我看你非常实干，兢兢业业干工作，所以提拔你。	院长：教务处**就**需要你这样的人。	President: I can see that you're a down-to-earth worker. Cautious and dutiful in your work. That's why you were promoted.	President: That's **exactly** the kind of person the Dean's Office needs. (*Dean's Office **exactly** needs your kind of person.*)
(7.20) 胡：所以，徐老师额伊格只慈善教育提案对伐，下趟好流芳百世额噢！	万妻：**肯定**会额呀！	Hu: So, Prof. Xu's proposal for charity education will give him everlasting fame.	Mrs. Wan: **No doubt** about it! (*Definitely will!*)
(7.21) 林：是健康的颜色嘛！〔笑〕	林：我讲侬到美国是**绝对**健，健康！（笑）	Lin: Of course it's a healthy complexion (tan). (laughs)	Lin: **Absolutely** healthy if you're in America! (laughs)

(7.22) 宋：（笑）洋伐，伊？蛮洋额噢？（笑）	杨：嗳，伊么**当然**！	Song: (laughs) She looks Western-style, doesn't she? She does, doesn't she? (laughs)	Yang: Yeah, she... **of course** [westernized]!
(7.23) 行人：你们的水泥路铺得真好，非常平，也很光滑。 民工：（笑）嘿嘿！这生活我已做了卅多年了，我带的徒弟也已经是"老"师傅了。	行人：哦/噢！**难怪**师傅的生活**的确**漂亮！	Pedestrian: Your cement pavement was so well done. Very level... and smooth. Road Worker: (laughs) Well… well, I've been doing this job for over 30 years. Even my apprentices are now veteran master workers.	Pedestrian: Wow! **No wonder** you do such a **truly** beautiful job!

The modal adverb "是 truly or indeed" in Example 7.17 is a commonly used modal adverb for emphasis or contrastive emphasis. Examples 7.18 to 7.20 are instances of modal adverbs in pre-verb position ("的确是 indeed is," "就需要 exactly needs," "肯定会 definitely will [give]"), while Example 7.21 and 7.22 are instances of modal adverbs in a pre-stative verb position ("绝对健康 absolutely healthy," "当然 [洋] of course [westernized]"). Example 7.23 demonstrates a modal adverb ("难怪 no wonder") that can be used to emphasize the whole sentence. Example 7.23 is also an instance of two *intensifiers* used in combination: "难怪 no wonder" and "的确 truly."

Examples 7.24 to 7.27 below illustrate how other types of adverbs are used as *intensifiers* to emphasize the scope ("全 completely" and "都 all" in Examples 7.24 and 7.25), time ("老早 a long time ago" in Example 7.26), or frequency ("一直 always" in Example 7.27) of the positive assessment. Example 7.28 demonstrates two phrases used as *intensifiers* to achieve emphasis, one functioning as an adverb of manner ("格能介样

子 in such a way") and one functioning as a degree adverb ("呒没闲话讲额格种 beyond words").

Core or Other Strategy	Intensification	Core or Other Strategy English Translation	Intensification English Translation
Intensifiers: other types of adverbs			
(7.24) 助理：邵老师老帮忙额。 店主：邵老师蛮帮忙额，	女店员：全靠她帮忙。 助理：就是帮忙！	Assistant Manager: Teacher Shao is always ready to help. Store Manager: Teacher Shao is so willing to help.	Saleswoman: We owe **all** (*completely owe*) our thanks to her help. Assistant Manager: Helpful indeed!
(7.25) 全陪：很流行啊，你这个教材！ 全陪：（对地陪和旅游团说）她是中国非常有名，有名的老师。	全陪：如果你去**任何**一个，那个外语，外语书店，你**都**会看到她的书，《听力入门》。	National Guide: Very popular, your textbooks! National Guide: (to the local guides and the tour group) She's a very renowned… renowned teacher in China.	National Guide: Go to **any**... eh... foreign language... foreign language bookstore, and you'll **all** see her books "Step by Step."
(7.26) 罗：我听说侬，混得老好额！	罗：（笑）**老早**听到了！	Luo: I heard you're doing very well!	Luo: (laughs) I heard it **a long time ago**!
(7.27) 孟：嗳，格侬还要高级点。	孟：嗳，我**一直**欢喜看侬额物事额，	Meng: You write even better.	Meng: I **always** like to read your stuff.
Intensifiers: phrases functioning as adverbs			
(7.28) 黄：伊，伊伊象个要出版一样额！每一个字全要校对额，	黄：**格能介样子**校对法子！ 王：丁涵菱么**呒没闲话讲额格种**仔细！	Huang: She… she proofreads like she's doing it for publishing. She checks every single word.	Huang: Who would proofread **like she does** (*in such a way*)! Wang: Ding Hanling is meticulous **beyond words**.

Excerpt 7.8 illustrates how degree adverb *intensifiers* are used in a complete

compliment-response sequence to strengthen the positive semantic force of the core

compliment strategy.

Excerpt 7.8 [78] "Wow this girl is spectacular!"

Situation: Hanya [F, 46] and Yi'an [F, 53] are old friends. Yi'an comes over to Hanya's house for a visit. Hanya shows Yi'an a recent photo of her niece, who is an accomplished pianist.

01		寒雅：侬看看好伐？介多	Hanya: Take a look, isn't it	
02		人，最近一张照片，	great? It's the latest	
03		漂亮伐！	picture. So many	
04			people... Isn't she	
05			beautiful!	
06		忆安：1.漂亮！	Yi'an: 1.Beautiful!	1.core 1
07		寒雅：伊伊，弹钢琴得了第	Hanya: She...she won first	beautiful
08		一名，	place in the piano	
09			competition.	
10		忆安：伊啊？	Yi'an: She did?	
11		寒雅：后头人呢就是讲……	Hanya: The man standing	
12		音乐学院一额，有名	behind her... a famous	
13		额教授……	professor from the music	
14			conservatory...	
15	→	忆安：2.格小姑娘现在越来	Yi'an: 2.This girl's becoming	2.intensifi-
16		越漂亮了噢？	more and more beautiful,	cation
17			isn't she?	
18		寒雅：嗳（笑），越来越漂	Hanya: Yeah (laughs), more	
19		亮，〔大变……格种	and more beautiful...	
20		头发……	[big change... her	
21			hair...	
22	→	忆安： 〔3.真额老漂亮	Yi'an: [3.Truly very	3.intensifi-
23		额！4.而且对伐，很	beautiful! 4.And she	cation
24		有，很有气质的，这	has... has character...	4.core 2
25		个，这个孩子！	this... this kid!	has
26		寒雅：格只头发全是一根一	Hanya: The hair was	character
27		根胶水粘上去嗳侬晓	artificially glued in	
28		得伐？！	place... hair by hair.	
29			Can you imagine that?	
30		忆安：嗳格头发，格头发	Yi'an: The hair... the	
31		啊？	hair... really?	
32		寒雅：嗳！做了几个钟头来	Hanya: Yeah. They worked on	
33		侬想想看！（笑）伊	it for hours...just	
34		拉姆妈讲把我听，一	imagine that! (laughs)	

		根一根粘上去额伊讲 （笑）。	Her mom told me... the hair was glued in place hair by hair. Her mom told me so (laughs).	
35				
36				
37				
38				
39	→	忆安：5. 喔唷格额小姑娘是 勿得了！	Yi'an: 5.Wow this girl is spectacular!	5.intensifi- cation
40				
41		寒雅：勿得了噢（笑）？	Hanya: spectacular, isn't she (laughs)?	
42				
43	→	忆安：嗯，6. 漂亮得来！	Yi'an: Um... 6.so very beautiful!	6.intensifi- cation
44				
45		寒雅：（笑）	Hanya: (laughs)	
46		（稍停顿）	(short pause)	
47		忆安：7. 真漂亮！	Yi'an: 7.Really beautiful.	7.repetition
48		寒雅：真漂亮啊？	Hanya: Really beautiful, right?	
49				
50		忆安：8. 真漂亮，嗯。	Yi'an: 8.Really beautiful, yeah.	8.repetition
51				
52		寒雅：也会得化妆……	Hanya: She knows how to apply makeup...	
53		(They look at other		
54		photos.)	(They look at other photos.)	

In Excerpt 7.8, four intensification strategies are used by Yi'an to emphasize her core

compliment strategy 1 on the beautiful look of Hanya's niece in a recent picture. Three of

the four intensification strategies use degree adverb *intensifiers*: "越来越 more and

more" (C2), "真额 truly," "老……额 very" (C3), and "…… (得) 来 so very" (C6), with

the second intensification strategy (C3) using two *intensifiers* in combination ("真额

truly" and "老……额 very"). The *intensifiers* in the first two intensification strategies

(C2, C3) are positioned before the stative verb ("**越来越**漂亮了, **more and more**

beautiful"; "**真额老**漂亮额！ **Truly very** beautiful!"), while the *intensifier* in the fourth

intensification strategy (C6) is positioned after the stative verb ("漂亮**得来**！ *Beautiful*

so very!"). The third intensification strategy (C5) is realized differently. It employs a

sentence-initial interjection ("喔唷 wow") and a *lexical item of high intensity* ("勿得了

spectacular") in combination (see discussions in later sections). Note how forcefully

these *intensifiers* strengthen the positive semantic force of the core compliment "漂亮！

Beautiful! ," especially when combined with the two repetition strategies "真漂亮！

Really beautiful." (C7) and "真漂亮，嗯。Really beautiful, yeah." (C8).

Excerpt 7.9 illustrates how the modal adverb *intensifier* "是 truly or indeed" is

used in a complete compliment-response sequence to strengthen the positive semantic

force of another support strategy.

Excerpt 7.9 [228] "You truly ARE a national treasure."

Situation: Xie [F, 43], an auditor for the government Bureau of Taxation is visiting Cheng
[M, around 50], an experienced technician from a high tech company.

01		谢：……1.那你这个技术权	Xie: ...1.You're a tech	1.core
02		威嗳！	authority/master!	tech
03		程：谢谢谢谢谢谢！	Cheng: Thank you, thank you,	authority
04			thank you!	
05	→	谢：……2. 也是**国宝**嗳！	Xie: ...2.Also a **national**	2.intensifi-
06			**treasure**!	cation
07		程：国宝了，活宝！（笑）	Cheng: A national treasure...	
08		国宝……	no; a national clown!	
09			(laughs) National	
10			treasure...	
11	→	谢：3.（笑）**是**国宝。	Xie: 3.(laughs) You **truly**	3.intensifi-
12			**ARE** a national	cation
13			treasure.	
14		程：活着叫活宝，不是叫国	Cheng: As long as I'm alive,	
15		宝。	I'm a living clown,	
16			not (*am*) a national	
17			treasure.	

Two intensification strategies are used in Excerpt 7.9 to emphasize the core compliment

strategy on Mr. Cheng's technology expertise. Auditor Xie's first intensification strategy

(C2) employs a *lexical item of high intensity* ("国宝 national treasure") and a *sentence-*

final particle ("嗳 [ai] sure") in combination (see discussions in later sections). Her

second one (C3) uses the modal adverb *intensifier* "是 truly" to affirm the positive

assessment of her first intensification strategy ("国宝 national treasure"). It is interesting to note that complimentee Cheng also uses the modal adverb "是 truly" as an *intensifier* in his response (lines 14–15) to strengthen his rejection strategy. He uses it for contrastive emphasis: "活着 [是] 叫活宝，不是叫国宝。*As long as I'm alive, I **truly am** a living clown, **truly not am** a national treasure*." (By the way, "国宝 [guóbǎo] national treasure" and "活宝 [huóbǎo] living clown" both end with the character "宝 [bǎo]" and therefore rhyme.)

So far I have described how different types of *intensifiers* are used to strengthen the positive semantic force of a positive assessment: by increasing the degree of positiveness or degree of certainty of a positive assessment. In the next section I will describe how *lexical items of high intensity* are used to strengthen the positive semantic force of a positive assessment.

Using lexical items of high intensity. As has been described in Chapter V, a *lexical item of high intensity* is a word or phrase that has the same or similar meaning as another but a higher degree of semantic intensity. For example, in Excerpt 7.8, the stative verb "勿得了 spectacular" is used as an intensification strategy to strengthen the positive semantic force of the positive assessment "漂亮 beautiful" because it has a higher degree of "beauty" than "漂亮 beautiful." The same applies to the noun phrase "国宝 national treasure" in Excerpt 7.9. "国宝 National treasure," being recognized at the national level, has a higher degree of eminence than "技术权威 tech authority," an expert recognized at the local level. It is thus used as an intensification strategy to reinforce the positiveness of the positive assessment. A total of 118 (17.3%) *lexical items*

of high intensity are used in the 681 *complimentee focused* intensification strategies. The

most commonly observed *lexical items of high intensity* consist of nouns or noun phrases,

idioms or idiomatic expressions, as well as adjectives, stative verbs and verb phrases.

The following are some examples.

Lexical items of high intensity: nouns or noun phrases

e.g. 女强人 (superwoman), 女将 (A woman general / combat commander), 人精儿 (crème de la crème), 升学指南 (a guide to college admission), 老师 (teacher), 行家, 专家 (expert), 贵人相助 (a God-send), 建创家 (entrepreneur, innovator), 高手 (master of the trade), 法师 (master of the law), 国宝, 国粹全宝 (national treasure), 藏龙 (hidden dragon [a talented person in hiding]), 超级大款 (super-rich woman), 优秀学生 (outstanding student), 有功之臣 (hero), 著名翻译家 (distinguished/ renowned master translator), 金融人才 (financial talent), 勿是一般性额头脑 (no ordinary brain), 要靠额大山 (a tower [*mountain*] of strength), 大名 (great name, great reputation), 范文 (writing model), 大作 (masterpiece), 黄金地段 (golden district), 高级 (high class), 顶级 (superior class), etc.

Lexical items of high intensity: idioms or idiomatic expressions

e.g., 锦上添花 (embroidering flowers on brocade),
流芳百世 (give [him] everlasting fame),
大医精诚 (a great doctor with superior skills and devotion),
一丝不苟 (impeccable in the way he works / leaves no stone unturned),
大显身手 (putting on a talent show),
前途无量 (has an unlimited future / the sky's the limit),
一步到位 (made it in one step),
久经考验 (have a long record of successes/experiences),
苦尽甜来/苦尽甘来 (a bitter beginning, but a sweet ending),
绰绰有余 (more than enough/sufficient),
终身无憾 (have no regrets for your whole life),
遍地开花 (blossoming across the country),
桃李遍天下 (has peaches and plums [students] all over the world),
手掌万贯 (have billions at your discretionary disposal),
事半功倍 (can accomplish twice as much with half the effort),
呒没一样物事勿会的 (There's not a thing she can't do. / The world is her oyster!),
没话好说 (off the charts), etc.

> Lexical items of high intensity: adjectives, stative verbs, verb phrases, etc.
>
> e.g., 不简单 (remarkable, incredible), 不一般 (out of this world), 勿得了, 不得了 (incredible, spectacular), 了勿起, 了不起 (amazing, extraordinary), 高级 (high/top-class, superior), 掌舵 (steer our ship), etc.

As has been observed in Chapter V, formal honorific words are often a component part of noun phrases. For example, honorific nouns "家 expert" (as in "行家 [*trade*] expert," "专家 [*specialized*] expert," "建创家 entrepreneur/innovator," "翻译家 master translator [*translating expert*]"), "师 master" (as in "老师 teacher [*old master*]," "法师 master of the law"), and "手 hand" (as in "高手 master of the trade [*high hand*]") are used to address people with high professional expertise or trade skills. Honorific adjectives such as "贵 noble/distinguished" (as in "贵人 God-send [*noble person*]"), "高 high/profound" (as in "高手 master of the trade [*high hand*]"), and "大 great" (as in "大款 very rich person [*great wealth*]," "大山 a tower of strength [*great mountain*]," "大名 great name/reputation," "大作 masterpiece [*great writing*]") are used to show respect to people or their accomplishments. All these honorific words raise the complimentee to a higher status and thus reinforce the positive semantic force of the positive assessment. Examples 7.29 to 7.34 illustrate how nouns or noun phrases are used as *lexical items of high intensity* to achieve emphasis.

Core or Other Strategy	Intensification	Core or Other Strategy English Translation	Intensification English Translation
Lexical items of high intensity: noun or noun phrases			
(7.29) 院长助理：她是我们 78 级留校的高材生，	院长助理：是人精儿！	Assistant to the Dean: She was tops in the Class of '78, and was retained to teach	Assistant to the Dean: **Crème de la crème**.

		at her Alma Mater after graduation.	
(7.30) 洪财会：来，苏老师！为了今朝指教……	郁经理：侬今朝哎**贵人相助**！ 郁经理：苏**专家**好好叫要陪侬两盅！ 洪财会：苏老师，苏老师是——**建创家**！	Accountant Hong: Come on, Teacher Su. This is to you for your advice today...	Manager Yu: You're a **God-send**. Manager Yu: **Expert** Su, I must keep you company as you drink today. Accountant Hong: Teacher Su… Teacher Su is::: an **entrepreneur**.
(7.31) 夏审计：侬格双手呢是蛮有水平额，侬高水平碰高水平了！	夏审计：……格老侬格搭全是**高手**，全是**法师**，	Auditor Xia: Your hands are so skillful. The two of you, each is as skillful as the other.	Auditor Xia: ...You're all **masters of the trade**, all **masters of the law**.
(7.32) 客 1：侬迭个，侬，侬格搭供得了格种本事真额是，	客 1：像侬厨师蹲了格里厢藏了海真是，啥个地方，**藏龙**！	Guest 1：How… how can you retain such a highly skilled chef?	Guest 1: What a place this must be to hide such a chef ... **Hidden dragon**! [Using phrase "hidden dragon, crouching tiger"]
(7.33) 孙：我来介绍介绍，沈为然，……来拉商务银行。嗳，现在格行业非常重要！	孙：现在是人家要靠额**大山**。	Sun: Let me introduce... Shen Weiran, ...He works at the Commercial Bank. Yeah… that's a very important institution today.	Sun: It's **a tower** (*mountain*) **of strength**—everyone needs its help.
(7.34) 曹：何剑青今朝叫额菜全是，好菜！（笑）	张：何剑青格眼菜全**顶级**了全！	Cao: He Jianqing ordered nothing but the best today. (laughs)	Zhang: Everything He Jianqing ordered is of **superior class**.

As has been discussed in Chapter V, Chinese idioms or idiomatic expressions are

set phrases mostly consisting of four characters. A large number of Chinese idioms are

derived from myths, ballads, stories, classics, poems... of rich historical reference or

literary allusion. Their meanings are therefore often difficult to deduct from the

constituents without the background knowledge of their origin. However, idioms free of

metaphorical nuances also pervade. Chinese idioms are highly succinct, full of rhythm

and cadence, but bear profound cultural, moral or philosophical implications. They are

powerful stylistic or rhetorical devices widely used in classical Chinese as well as written

and spoken vernacular Chinese. Examples 7.35 to 7.40 illustrate how idioms or idiomatic

expressions are used as *lexical items of high intensity* to achieve emphasis. Except for

Example 7.39 (which is an idiomatic expression), all the idioms allude to well-known

classical or modern literary works or originated from historical stories. Example 7.40

shows an idiom which has more than four characters. It originated from stories dating

back to the Tang Dynasty. These examples show how forcefully idioms and idiomatic

expressions reinforce the semantic strength of the positive assessments.

Core or Other Strategy	Intensification	Core or Other Strategy English Translation	Intensification English Translation
Lexical items of high intensity: idioms or idiomatic expressions			
(7.35) 胡：许老师老来三额。现在来拉搞啥个慈善教育对伐？ 许：机会格是。	胡：所以，许老师额伊格只慈善教育提案对伐，下趟好**流芳百世**额噢！	Hu: Prof. Xu is outstanding. He's vigorously promoting charity education now. Xu: I just happened to have an opportunity.	Hu: So, Prof. Xu's proposal for charity education will **give him everlasting fame**.
(7.36) 马教授：在中年干部中我最佩服你，不但工作认真，学习也刻苦！	许老师：赵处长，［工作］**一丝不苟**！	Prof. Ma: Among the middle-aged administrators, I admire you the most. You not only work hard, but you also study hard.	Teacher Xu: Dean Zhao is impeccable in the way he works / **leaves no stone unturned**.

(7.37) 风：绵绵馄饨老好吃额今朝！	为：姆妈今朝**大显身手**！	Feng: (to wife) Mianmian, your wontons are delicious today!	Wei: Mom is **putting on a talent show** today!
(7.38) 经理：全能，全能。	谢：格伊**前途无量**么！	Manager: An all-round talent. An all-round talent.	Xie: She no doubt has an unlimited future ahead of her! / **The sky's the limit!**
(7.39) 余：庄静毅吃勿消。	余：庄静毅格个脑子是**没话好说**[无话可说]。	Yu: Zhuang Jingyi is too much for me.	Yu: Zhuang Jingyi has a brain that's **off the charts**.
(7.40) 马：邹晓杰是学者现在。 李：培养学者的他是！	李：学生**桃李遍天下**，对吧？	Ma: Zou Xiaojie is a scholar now. Li: A scholar who turns out scholars!	Li: He **has peaches and plums [students] all over the world**, doesn't he?

Excerpt 7.10 illustrates how *lexical items of high intensity* are used in a complete

compliment-response sequence to strengthen the positive semantic force of the core

compliment strategy.

Excerpt 7.10 [6] "The sight of her makes the moon lose her glow and the flowers ashamed."

Situation: At a college conference room, before the start of a faculty meeting held by the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs [M, 48]. Prof. Cui [F, 29] is admiring Prof. Guo's [M, 53] beautiful ring. It's a gold ring inlaid with platinum and decorative designs.

| 01
02
03
04
05
06
07
08
09
10
11 | 崔老师：1. 郭老师，您的方戒真漂亮，让我看看好吗？
郭教授：（摘下递给崔老师）我给女儿买了一对铂金钻石耳环，比这［戒指］漂亮多了。
崔老师：一定很贵吧？ | Prof.Cui: 1.Prof. Guo, your ring's really beautiful. Could I have a look?
Prof.Guo: (takes off the ring and hands it to Prof. Cui) I bought a pair of platinum diamond earrings for my daughter, much more beautiful than this [ring].
Prof.Cui: Must be very | 1.core 1 beautiful ring |

12			expensive.	
13		郭教授：一万多块。	Prof.Guo: Over 10,000 yuan.	
14		崔老师：哇！（对坐在她旁	Prof.Cui: Wow! (speaking to	
15		边的教务处长说）	the Associate Dean	
16		2.郭老师的女儿特	sitting next to her)	2.core 2
17		漂亮！3.继承了郭	2.Prof. Guo's daughter is	beautiful
18		老师和他夫人的优	a knock-out beauty	daughter
19	→	点，4.真是沉鱼	(*exceptionally*	3.comment
20	→	5.落雁之容，6.闭	*beautiful*). 3.She's	4.intensifi-
21	→	月7.羞花之貌！	inherited the best of	cation
22	→	（对郭老师说)8.你	both prof. Guo and his	5.intensifi-
23		女儿本来就非常漂	wife. 4.The sight of her	cation
24	→	亮，9.再戴上这耳	makes the fish hide in	6.intensifi-
25		环，更锦上添花，	the depths of the ocean,	cation
26		10.要成仙女啦！	5.and the geese drop from	7.intensifi-
27			the sky; and 6.makes the	cation
28			moon lose her glow and	8.intensifi-
29			7.the flowers ashamed.	cation
30			(to Prof. Guo）8.Your	9.intensifi-
31			daughter is very	cation
32			beautiful just as she is.	10.camparison
33			9.With this pair of	to other
34			earrings, it's like	
35			"embroidering flowers on	
36			brocade." 10.She's about	
37			to be as beautiful as an	
38			angel!	
39		郭教授：（非常高兴，微	Prof.Guo: (smiles, very	
40		笑）	pleased)	

In Excerpt 7.10, six intensification strategies and a comparison strategy are used by Prof. Cui to emphasize her core compliment strategy 2 on the exceptional beauty of Prof. Guo's daughter. Except for the fifth intensification strategy ("你女儿本来就非常漂亮, Your daughter is very beautiful just as she is.") (C8) which uses an intensifier (a combination of two adverbs) "本来就 originally/just as is," the other five intensification strategies are composed of *lexical items of high intensity*—idioms. The idioms in the first four intensification strategies "沉鱼," "落雁," "闭月," and "羞花" (C4–C7), allude to the Four Great Beauties in ancient China: Xi Shi (西施), Wang Zhaojun (王昭君), Diao

Chan (貂蝉), and Yang Guifei (杨贵妃). They were said to be so beautiful that seeing

the reflection of Xi Shi (西施), fish would forget how to swim and "sink to the depths of

water" ("沉鱼"); that spotting Wang Zhaojun (王昭君), geese in flight would fall from

the sky ("落雁"); that sighting Diao Chan's (貂蝉) face, the moon would lose her glow

and shy away in embarrassment ("闭月"); and that spying Yang Guifei (杨贵妃), the

flowers would feel ashamed ("羞花"). The four idioms have only eight characters in

total, but the images they present are so vivid and expressive that they powerfully

enhance the "knock-out" beauty of Prof. Guo's daughter. However, their meaning is

unintelligible from the constituents without knowing the stories behind them. The last

intensification strategy uses another idiom "锦上添花 embroidering flowers on brocade"

("to gild the lily") (C9). It has its origin in well-known poems of Huang Tingjian (黄庭

坚) and Wang Anshi (王安石) dating back to Song Dynasty. With only four characters,

the idiom expressively adds more force to the already very positive assessment of the

beauty of Prof. Guo's daughter.

 Using sentence-initial interjections. As has been described in Chapter V,

sentence-initial interjections or "*exclamative particles*" in compliments are a type of

function word used to express a speaker's moods, that is, positive emotions, such as

approval, admiration, or agreement, to reinforce the positive tone expressed in a positive

assessment. *Sentence-initial interjections* are not grammatically related to any other part

of the sentence. They may form complete utterances on their own (e.g., "喔唷！Wow!"),

or function as part of a larger sentence. When they form a part of a larger sentence, they

usually appear at the beginning (e.g., "喔唷，介好！Wow, so good!").

As has been mentioned earlier (p. 284), *sentence-initial interjections* are frequently used in combination with another intensification form to realize the intensification strategy (e.g., *sentence-initial interjection + intensifier*). When a *sentence-initial interjection* is used in combination with another intensification form, the combination is counted as one intensification strategy, and arbitrarily categorized under the other intensification form. For example,

Core or Other Strategy	Intensification	Core or Other Strategy English Translation	Intensification English Translation
(7.41) 男 3： 挺俏的！ （笑） 男 2： 嗳！ 歌手：今朝水平摆 出来了噢？ 乔：今朝头发也卷 起来了！	乔：**喔唷！嗲煞 了**！	Man3: Quite sexy! (laughs) Man2: Yeah. Singer: I was able to come out with my best, wasn't I? Qiao: You came out with your hair permed.	Qiao: **Wow**, **so** sexy!

In Example 7.41, the intensification strategy "喔唷，嗲煞了！ Wow, so sexy!" uses a *sentence-initial interjection* ("喔唷, Wow") and an *intensifier* ("煞了, so/extremely") in combination to reinforce the positive tone of the positive assessment of the core compliment "挺俏的！ Quite sexy!" The combination is counted as one intensification strategy, and coded under the category of "*intensifier.*" However, to better understand how the *sentence-initial interjections* are used to achieve emphasis, all the *sentence-initial interjections*, whether used alone or in combination, are included for analysis.

A total of 38 *sentence-initial interjections* (5.6% of 681 complimentee focused intensification strategies) are identified in the data, 24 of them stand alone, and 14 are used in combination with another intensification form. The following are examples of

the most commonly used *sentence-initial interjections* observed in the intensification

strategies.

Sentence-initial interjections:

　　e.g. 噢 [ō], 哇 [wā], 喔唷 [ōyō], 喔唷唷唷 [ōyōyōyō], 哎哟 [āiyō], 啊哟 [āyō], 不得了 [bùdéliǎo], 勿得了 [wùdéliǎo] ("oh," "wow," "my goodness," "oh my"), etc.

　　Examples 7.42 to 7.45 illustrate how *sentence-initial interjections* are used as

intensification strategies to reinforce the positive tone expressed in a positive assessment.

Core or Other Strategy	Intensification	Core or Other Strategy English Translation	Intensification English Translation
(7.42) 彭：侬格搭黄金地段一平方是，要八，八千到一万。	曹：啊？**勿得了** [wùdéliǎo]！ 曹：**喔唷**[ōyō]！	Peng: This place of yours is in the "golden district"... and each square meter is... eight... eight to ten thousand.	Cao: What? **My goodness**! Cao: **Wow**!
(7.43) 潘：喔唷，蛮好！ 张：喔唷，赞的！	张：**喔唷唷唷** [ōyōyōyō]！	Pan: Wow, very good! Zhang: Wow, great!	Zhang: **Wow...wow**!
(7.44) 男导游：这部，这部书现在还在用， 领队：还在用啊？（笑）	女导游：**哎哟** [āiyō]，用噢！现在。	Male Guide: This series of books... this series of books is still in use. Tour Leader: Still in use? (laughs)	Female Guide: **Oh yeah**! Still in use now indeed.
(7.45) 男接待：他的画都卖完了，全部卖光了，就剩这个筐子空了都！	女游客：（对画家说）**啊哟** [āyō]你的画都卖完了！	Host: His paintings are all sold out. Completely sold out. Only this basket is left... all empty.	Female Tourist: (to the artist) **Wow**! Your paintings are all sold out!

In Examples 7.42 and 7.43, *sentence-initial interjections* are used alone, while in

Examples 7.44 and 7.45 they appear at the beginning of a larger sentence. Example 7.44

is also an instance of two intensification forms used in combination: a *sentence-initial interjection* "哎哟 [āiyō], oh yeah" and a *sentence-final particle* "噢, indeed." To intensify a positive assessment already containing a *sentence-initial interjection* (e.g., "喔唷 [ōyō], wow"), double or multiple *sentence-initial interjections* (e.g., "喔唷唷唷 [ōyōyōyō], wow...wow") are used as in Example 7.43. The strong emotion of admiration expressed in these *sentence-initial interjections* has definitely reinforced the positive tone of the positive assessment of the complimentee's high-scale residential area, great calligraphy (Example 7.43), popular textbook series, or beautiful paintings.

Excerpt 7.11 illustrates how the *sentence-initial interjections* are used in a complete compliment-response sequence to strengthen the positive semantic force of the core or other support strategies.

Excerpt 7.11 [219] "Wow! It couldn't be better!"

Situation: At a company social dinner honoring Tao [F] and Xia [F], auditors for the government Bureau of Taxation. Present from the company are a manager [F], a male accountant and a female accountant. They are between 35–40 years old. In this part of the conversation, Auditor Tao is talking about how she got her present job, and her operation for vision correction.

01	陶审计：我去的辰光，我做	Auditor Tao: When I first	
02	做好做额，但是我	went, I had no trouble	
03	眼睛勿好，人家看	doing the work, but my	
04	勿上我。	vision was bad, and	
05		nobody thought much of	
06		me.	
07	女财会：〔1.侬一眼也看勿	Female Accountant: 1.It	1.core 1
08	出额！	doesn't show at all!	successful
09	经理：〔2.啊？眼睛勿好	Manager: 2.What? Your vision	eye surgery
10	啊？！	was bad?!	2.intensifi-
11	陶审计：我八百多度近视眼	Auditor Tao: My near vision	cation
12	嗳，	was over 800 degrees.	
13	经理：喔唷是！（笑）	Manager: Oh my! (laughs)	
14	夏审计：开过了呀，	Auditor Xia: So she got	
15		surgery.	

16		经理：	开过啦？	Manager: You've had surgery?	
17		男财会：	啊？	Male Accountant: You did?	
18		夏审计：	嗳。	Auditor Xia: She did.	
19		陶审计：	我就是激光，激塌	Auditor Tao: I had laser	
20			了呀。	surgery. They "lasered"	
21				it away.	
22			……	...	
23	→	女财会：	〔3.喔唷！一眼也	Female Accountant: [3.Wow!	3.intensifi-
24			看勿出额！	It doesn't show at all!	cation
25		经理：	〔4.侬弄了老好	Manager: [4.They	4.intensifi-
26			呕！	did such a good job.	cation
27		陶审计：	两只眼睛我开了一	Auditor Tao: My two eyes took	
28			个多月头，	over a month.	
29		夏审计：	嗳，	Auditor Xia: Yeah.	
30		男财会：	5.噢，格侬开了老	Male Accountant: 5.Oh, they	5.agreement
31			好额唠！	sure did a good job!	
32		夏审计：	6.嗳，是开了蛮	Auditor Xia: 6.Yeah, they did	6.agreement
33			好。	a good job indeed.	
34		陶审计：	一点零一点两，	Auditor Tao: [Now my vision	
35				is] 1.0 and 1.2.	
36	→	男财会：	7.噢格是——！	Male Accountant: 7. Wow this	7.intensifi-
37				is so::: [great]!	cation
38	→	经理：	〔8.喔唷……	Manager: [8.Wow...	8.intensifi-
39		女财会：	〔9.勿要太好噢！	Female Accountant: [9.It	cation
40			（笑）	couldn't be better!	9.intensifi-
41				(laughs)	cation
42		夏审计：	10.开了蛮好。	Auditor Xia: 10.They did	10.repetition
43				quite a good job.	
44		陶审计：	我格辰光近视眼老	Auditor Tao: I was so near-	
45			深额，格人家……	sighted then that they...	
46			勿要呀！……	didn't want me!...	
47		(Auditor Tao explains		(Auditor Tao explains that	
48		that she was		she was disqualified for	
49		disqualified for college		college admission because of	
50		admission because of her		her vision.)	
51		vision.)			

In Excerpt 7.11, six intensification strategies are used to intensify the core compliment

strategy on Auditor Tao's successful eye surgery ("侬一眼也看勿出额！It doesn't show

at all!") (C1). Three of the intensification strategies use *sentence-initial interjections*, of

which two appear at the beginning of a larger sentence ("喔唷！一眼也看勿出额！

Wow! It doesn't show at all!"; "噢格是——！ **Wow** this is so::: [great]!") (C3, C7), and

one is used alone ("喔唷······ Wow...") (C8). The other three intensification strategies

are in other intensification forms: a question ("啊？眼睛勿好啊？！ What? Your vision

was bad?!") (C2), a sentence-final particle ("老好呕 [ou], **such** a good job") (C4) (see

discussions in later sections), and a degree adverb intensifier ("勿要太好噢, **couldn't be**

better") (C9). In addition, two agreement with intensification strategies are employed

using a sentence-final particle ("老好额咾 [lao], **sure** did a good job") (C5) and a modal

adverb intensifier ("是开了蛮好, did a good job **indeed**") (C6). Together, these

strategies reinforce the core compliment strategy in such a force that they leave no room

for anyone to doubt the success of Auditor Tao's eye surgery.

Using sentence-final particles. As has been described in Chapter V, *sentence-
final particles* or "*modal particles*" in compliments are another type of function word

used to express a speaker's moods, that is, positive emotions, such as approval,

admiration, or strong affirmation to reinforce the positive tone expressed in a positive

assessment. Unlike sentence-initial interjections, *sentence-final particles* cannot stand

alone, but are attached to the end (or in some cases the middle) of a sentence. There are

many ways to express modality, but Chinese tends to use *sentence-final particles* for

modality, and these *modal particles* have no equivalent in English. What can be

expressed by the *sentence-final particles* in Chinese must be described by words, multi-

word parenthetical expressions, word order changes, or intonation changes in English.

Excerpt 7.12 shows an example of this.

Excerpt 7.12 [247] "Of course it's another promotion!"

Situation: A big reunion was held to commemorate the 30th anniversary of sending Shanghai "educated young people" (students) to farms in Northeast China. After the gathering, Gao [M, 43], who works in a real estate agency now, walks out of the conference building. He bumps into an acquaintance Xiang [F, around 40], who is getting into the car.

01		项：认得伐？	Xiang: Recognize me?	
02		高：认得！侬是……项家	Gao:　Of course! You are...	
03		慧！1.高升了，2.又升	Xiang Jiahui.	1.core
04		上去了！	1.Promoted. 2.Promoted	promotion
05			again!	2.repetition
06		项：哪能高升了？（笑）	Xiang: How could I have	
07			gotten another	
08			promotion? (laughs)	
09		高：3.哪能哴没高升？4.又	Gao:　3.How could you have	3.intensifi-
10	→	高升了，5.又高升了	not gotten another	cation
11		**嘛**！	promotion? 4.Another	4.repetition
12			promotion. 5.**Of course**	5.intensifi-
13			it's another	cation
14			promotion!	
15		项：哪能高升了？（笑）	Xiang: How could I have	
16			gotten another	
17			promotion? (laughs)	
18		(gets into the car)	(gets into the car)	

In Excerpt 7.12, Gao emphasizes his core compliment strategy "高升了, Promoted." (C1)

four times by repetition or by intensification. He first uses a repetition strategy ("又升上

去了！Promoted again!") (C2) to reinforce his core compliment strategy. When these

two strategies are rejected by Xiang (line 6), Gao issues three more emphasis strategies in

a row to reaffirm his positive assessment: an intensification strategy of question ("哪能哴

没高升？How could you have not gotten another promotion?") (C3) to question Xiang's

rejection strategy (see section on *question* later); a second repetition strategy ("又高升了,

Another promotion / *again higher risen*.") (C4) to restate his first repetition strategy; and

a second intensification strategy ("又高升了嘛！Of course it's another promotion /

again higher risen particle [*ma*]!") (C5) to reinforce his second repetition strategy. Note, the second intensification (C5) is achieved by attaching a *sentence-final particle* "嘛 [ma]" (indicating obviousness) to the end of his second repetition strategy (C4) to express the mood of strong affirmation (see literal translations in boldface for C4 and C5 in the preceding sentence). Note also, while Chinese can use a modal adverb such as "当然 of course" as an alternative to express the same mood, English has no other choice but to resort to words such as "of course" to express the same mood.

Excerpt 7.12 has demonstrated an instance of how a *sentence-final particle* is used by itself as an intensification strategy. However, like the sentence-initial interjections, *sentence-final particles* are also frequently used in combination with another intensification form to realize the intensification strategy (e.g., *lexical item of high intensity + sentence-final particle*). When a *sentence-final particle* is used in combination with another intensification form, the combination is counted as one intensification strategy, and arbitrarily categorized under the other intensification form (see discussions earlier on p. 284). For example,

Core or Other Strategy	Intensification	Core or Other Strategy English Translation	Intensification English Translation
(7.46) 赵：哇！六八四十八，合人民币五十万。	赵：超级大款啦[la]！	Zhao: Wow! Six times eight is forty-eight... equals RMB 500,000 yuan.	Zhao: A super rich woman **indeed**!

In Example 7.46, the intensification strategy "超级大款啦！A super rich woman indeed!" uses a *lexical item of high intensity* ("超级大款, super rich person") and a *sentence-final particle* ("啦 [la], indeed") in combination to reinforce the positive tone of the positive assessment on Zhao's friend's admirable income. The combination is

counted as one intensification strategy, and coded under the category of "*lexical item of high intensity*." However, to better understand how the *sentence-final particles* are used to achieve emphasis, all the *sentence-final particles*, whether used alone or in combination, are included for analysis.

There are abundant *sentence-final particles* in Chinese. These particles in Chinese dialects are quite varied and distinct; they are not easily interchangeable. From the data corpus a total of 130 *sentence-final particles* are identified (19.1% of 681 complimentee focused intensification strategies); only 10 of them are used alone; 120 are used in combination with another intensification form. The following are examples of the most commonly used *sentence-final particles* observed in the intensification strategies.

Sentence-final particles:

e.g. 啊 [a], 啦 [la], 呕 [ou], 嗳/哎 [ai], 噢/哦 [o], 呀 [ya], 来 [lai], 咾 [lao], 嘛 [ma], 么 [me], 呢 [ne] ("what" or "how" [in exclamation], "so," "sure," "indeed," "certainly," "definitely," "of course"), etc.

Like degree adverbs or modal adverbs (see section on *intensifiers*) which are used to increase the degree of positiveness or degree of certainty of a positive assessment, these *sentence-final particles* function to express a speaker's strong emotion of admiration or affirmation, reinforcing the positiveness or certainty of a positive assessment. Examples 7.47 to 7.53 illustrate how different *sentence-final particles* are used as intensification strategies to reinforce the positive tone expressed in a positive assessment.

Core or Other Strategy	Intensification	Core or Other Strategy English Translation	Intensification English Translation
(7.47) 吴：侬格经验是挟气重要啊！	张：行家**啊**[a]！	Wu: Your advice on this is exceedingly important!	Zhang: **What** an expert!

(7.48) 林：侬，侬尼日利亚寄来额照片老，俊的（笑）。 林：就老，就老，老坦额，好象一副眼镜挂了前头。	林：老灵呕[ou]！	Lin: You, you look very... very handsome in the picture you sent from Nigeria (laughs). Lin: Very... very... really open. I remember you seemed to have a pair of glasses hanging in front.	Lin: **SO** cool!
(7.49) 阮：侬格件衣裳蛮好看额！ 孟：袖子长——！长呀，啊？	阮：孟津华侬格件衣裳老好看嗳[ai]！	Ruan: This blouse of yours is beautiful. Meng: The sleeves are long... too long, aren't they?	Ruan: Meng Jinhua, this blouse of yours is very beautiful. **It sure is!**
(7.50) 日亮：伊拉，伊拉蛮好噢。阿拉区里厢伊拉，一块牌子了！	日亮：嗳，拔佴集管局好噢[o]有格能介只合唱团！	Riliang: They... they've got a great choir. They've made a name for themselves in our district.	Riliang: Yeah, the Collective Business Management Bureau is **certainly** very lucky to have such a choir.
(7.51) 邻居顾：佴姆妈也勿容易噢，全为了小人，才能全浪费塌了，	邻居顾：佴姆妈老有才能额呀[ya]！	Neighbor Mrs. Gu: Your mother is very special. She sure is. She gave her all to her children. All her talent was wasted.	Neighbor Mrs. Gu: Your mother is **indeed** very talented!
(7.52) 张：李俍民嗳，伊拉爸爸。翻译家。	徐：著名翻译家来[lai]！	Zhang: Li Liangmin, his dad. Master translator.	Xu: Famous master translator **indeed**!
(7.53) 康：……我搭阿拉囡五讲，我讲林阿姨讲格只我讲是顶健康额颜色。	林：是健康额颜色嘛[ma]！〔笑〕	Kang: ...I said to my daughter... I said Aunt Lin says this is the most healthy complexion.	Lin: **Of course** it's a healthy complexion (tan)! (laughs)

The *sentence-final particles* in Examples 7.47 ("啊 [a] what") and 7.48 ("呕 [ou] so")

express the speaker's strong admiration, while those in Examples 7.49 to 7.53 ("嗳 [ai]

sure," "噢 [o] certainly," "呀 [ya] indeed," "来 [lai] indeed," "嘛 [ma] of course")

express the speaker's strong affirmation of the positive assessment. Except for Example

7.50 which uses a *sentence-final particle* ("噢 [o] certainly") alone, the *sentence-final*

particles in all the other examples are used in combination with another intensification

form: *lexical item of high intensity* "行家 expert" (Example 7.47) or "著名 famous"

(Example 7.52), degree adverb *intensifier* "老 very" (Examples 7.48, 7.49, 7.51), and

modal adverb *intensifier* "是 truly/indeed" (Example 7.53). All these *sentence-final*

particles, especially when combined with other intensification forms, have expressively

strengthened the positive tone of the positive assessments of the core or other support

compliment strategies.

Excerpt 7.13 illustrates in a complete compliment-response sequence how the

sentence-final particles are used by complimenter Qin to affirm her core compliment

strategy, and interestingly by complimentee Ye to strengthen her rejection strategies.

Excerpt 7.13 [285] "This color is definitely NOT too light! Not light at all!"

Situation: Qin [F, 60], Xing [F, 55] and Ye [F, 57] are college professors and good
friends. Ye has just finished remodeling and decorating her new apartment. Qin and Xing
come for a visit. They are looking at Ye's son Hui's [M, 27] room.

01	秦：1.墙的颜色蛮好看的，	Qin: 1.The color of the wall	1.core
02	你妈嫌太浅了。	is very pretty. Your mom	pretty wall
03		complains it's too	color
04		light.	
05	辉：嗯，太浅，浅了么看起	Hui: Yeah, too light. Light	
06	来，看起来……	colors look... look...	
07	叶：浅了……伊拉，伊拉太	Ye: Too light... They... **all**	
08	［要]好看**呀**……里厢全	**they think of** is how it	

09		涂白额，侬讲，里厢涂	looks... It's all	
10		白额……	painted white inside,	
11			don't you see... all	
12			white inside.	
13	→	秦：2.这个颜色又不浅**咾**！	Qin: 2.This color is	2.intensifi-
14	→	3.这一点都不浅**嘛**！	**definitely** not too	cation
15			light! 3.Not light **at**	3.intensifi-
16			**all**!	cation
17		叶：嗳，你，看是好看的	Ye: Yeah... granted, it **does**	
18		**呀**！不经久的**咾**！	look good. But it	
19			**definitely** won't last.	
20		邢：4.勿浅额，5.勿浅！	Xing:4.It's not too light.	4.agreement
21		6.勿浅！	5.Not light! 6.Not	5.repetition
22			light!	6.repetition
23	→	秦：7.叫我看起来还深了点	Qin: 7.To me it's **rather** a	7.intensifi-
24		**呢**！	little too dark!	cation
25		叶：喔唷！	Ye: Oh!/Wow!	
26		秦：8.真的！	Qin: 8.True!	8.intensifi-
27		叶：快点快点，跑出来！	Ye: Hurry, hurry... come	cation
28			out here!	
29		(The room is hot because	(The room is hot because it's	
30		it's not air-	not air-conditioned.)	
31		conditioned.)		

To support her core compliment strategy that the color of Ye's son's room is very pretty ("墙的颜色蛮好看的，") (C1) and not "too light" as Ye complains ("你妈嫌太浅了。") (lines 2–4), Qin uses four intensification strategies, three of which contain a *sentence-final particle*:

Intensification 1: 这个颜色又不浅**咾[lao]**！ (C2)
        This color is **definitely** not too light!

Intensification 2: 这一点都不浅**嘛[ma]**！ (C3)
        Not light **at all!**

Intensification 3: 叫我看起来还深了点**呢[ne]**！ (C7)
        To me it's **rather** a little too dark!

All three *sentence-final particles* are used in combination with another intensification

form: two *negations* "不浅 not too light" (C2) and "还深了点 a little too dark" (C7) (see

next section on *negation*), and a degree adverb *intensifier* "一点都不 not...at all" (C3). All three *sentence-final particles* express strong affirmation. Apart from expressing strong affirmation "definitely," the first two *sentence-final particles* "咾 [lao]" and "嘛 [ma]" imply the complimenter's attitudinal/evaluative mood "it is obvious." The third *sentence-final particle* 呢 [ne] carries a tone of exaggeration.

　　It is interesting to note that the complimentee Ye also uses (three) *sentence-final particles* to express her mood of disapproval of her son's color choice to strengthen her rejection arguments. She first uses the *sentence-final particle* "呀 [ya]" (line 8) to turn a plain statement "they think **too much** about how it looks" ("伊拉**太 [要] 好看**") to a "loaded" statement "**all** they think of is how it looks" ("伊拉太 [要] 好看**呀**") (lines 7–9), which brings out her mood of disapproval. She then uses the *sentence-final particles* "呀 [ya]" and "咾 [lao]" (line 18) to emphasize her contrastive argument "Yeah... granted, it **does** look good. But it **definitely** won't last" ("嗳，你，看是好看的**呀**！不经久的 **咾**！") (lines 17–19), which also brings out her negative evaluation: yes, I do acknowledge your point, but I am definitely against it.

　　Even more interestingly, the interaction between the complimenter and the complimentee presents another picture of interactional "tug-of-war" (see Excerpts 1.1, 7.2 and 7.6), only this time the "tug-of-war" is achieved by the use of *sentence-final particles*, not *repetitions*. The complimenter and the complimentee both use the *sentence-final particles* to affirm their own position and reject the other's position. The rejections and the affirmations challenge each other and escalate. Joined by the proof of sincerity strategy from Qin ("真的！True!") (C8), and the agreement ("勿浅额，It's not

too light.") (C4) and repetition strategies ("勿浅！勿浅！ Not light! Not light!") (C5, C6) from Xing, the compliment force and rejection force become stronger and stronger.

Using negation. *Negation* strengthens the positive semantic force of a positive assessment by denying or rejecting the complimentee's downplaying, denial or rejection of a compliment strategy. Unlike most other support compliment strategies, the use of *negation* is contingent upon the complimentee's response to a compliment strategy, specifically, the complimentee's negative response to a compliment strategy. In other words, sequentially, *negation* necessarily follows the complimentee's downplaying, denial or rejection of a compliment strategy. *Negation* is realized mainly by using negation adverbs or (idiomatic) expressions. Occasionally, antonyms are used. For example, in Excerpt 7.13 in the preceding section, two *negation* strategies are used by Qin to emphasize her core compliment strategy. The *negation* in Qin's first intensification strategy ("这个颜色又不浅唠 [lao]！ This color is definitely not too light!") (C2) is realized by using a negation adverb "不 not," while the *negation* in her third intensification strategy ("叫我看起来还深了点呢 [ne]！ To me it's rather a little too dark!") (C7) is realized by using an antonym "深 dark." Both *negation* strategies follow and reject Ye's rejection strategies that the color is "too light" ("浅了") (line 7) and that it "definitely won't last" even if it looks good ("看是好看的呀！不经久的唠！") (lines 17–19). A total of 25 *negation* strategies (3.7% of 681 complimentee focused intensification strategies) are identified in the intensification strategies. The following are examples of the most commonly used *negation* forms.

Negation adverbs:
e.g. 不, 没, 呒没, 勿, 勿是 (no, not); 不要, 勿要 (don't), etc.

Negation (idiomatic) expressions:
e.g., 勿要瞎讲, 勿要瞎七搭八 (don't talk nonsense, stop the nonsense); 不要客气了 (don't be so modest); 勿要吓人噢 (don't frighten me / don't exaggerate); 帮帮忙噢 (give me a break), 好来 (stop it), etc.

Examples 7.54 to 7.58 illustrate how *negation* is used as an intensification strategy to

achieve emphasis.

Core or Other Strategy	Intensification	Core or Other Strategy English Translation	Intensification English Translation
(7.54) 沈伯母：……我所以讲呢，俪兄妹倒全是读书人！ 云云：读书人有啥用场啦？（笑）读书人有啥用场！全戆搭搭额！（笑）	沈伯母：**呒没啊，**	Aunt Shen: ...That's why I say... you and your brothers are all scholarly/educated people. Yun Yun: What of it if you're educated? (laughs) What use is an educated person? All nerdy and clumsy. (laughs)	Aunt Shen: That's **not true**, though.
(7.55) 黄：写额信勿要太漂亮噢！ 王：嗳！ 丁：写额信呢就是讲只会瞎嚼呀！	王：**勿是瞎嚼**。	Huang: You write beautiful letters. No doubt about it. Wang: Yeah. Ding: My letters... nothing but tongue-wagging.	Wang: It's **not just tongue-wagging**.
(7.56) 池：听说你荣升院长了，干得不错吧，你还是蛮有自己一套想法的。		Chi: I hear you've received the honor of being promoted to Dean of the Language School. You must be doing well. You have your	

张：我是量力而行，做不出大事体的，只是跑龙套。	池：**不要客气了**。	own idea about things. Zhang: I just do my best. I can't accomplish great things. So I play my two-bit supporting role.	Chi: **Don't be so modest**.
(7.57) 常：何剑青勿老。 何：勿老啊？拔俖看起来。我戴老光眼镜来，还勿老来！（笑）	常：（笑）**俖勿要吓人噢**！	Chang: He Jianqing doesn't look old. He: Not old? I'm wearing bifocals… and you still say I don't look old! (laughs)	Chang: (laughs) **Don't try to scare us**! / **Don't exaggerate**!
(7.58) 秦：那天晚上开车，冒着雪，冒雪进城。 曾：喔唷，冒雪（笑）！本生讲要送伊拉到屋里额，也呒没送到伊拉屋里厢（笑）。	秦：**好来**，已经快送到门口了！	Qin: That night she braved the snow... drove us in the snow back to town. Zeng: Oh, braved the snow (laughs). I promised to drive them to their house, but I didn't (laughs).	Qin: **Stop it**. You almost drove us to the door!

In Examples 7.54 and 7.55 *negation* is realized by using a negation adverb "呒没 not" or "勿是 not," while in the other three examples, by using negation (idiomatic) expressions "不要客气了, don't be so modest," "勿要吓人噢, don't try to scare us / don't exaggerate," or "好来, stop it." Sequentially, all these *negation* strategies follow the complimentee's downplaying (Example 7.56), denial or rejection (Examples 54, 55, 57, 58) of the compliment strategy.

Excerpt 7.14 illustrates how the *negation* strategies are used in a complete compliment-response sequence by complimenters Yang and her mother to affirm their compliment strategies.

Excerpt 7.14 [8] "Stop talking nonsense! Your hair's not white at all!"

Situation: Yang [F, 48] and Qiong [F, 55] are former colleagues (college teachers) who haven't seen each other for two years. Qiong is at Yang's home for a visit. Yang's mom [F, 78] drops by to say hello.

01		阳母：1. 阮老师还是介年	Yang's Mom: 1.Teacher Ruan	1.core
02		轻，2.一点也勿变。	looks as young as ever.	young look
03			2.You haven't changed a	2.comment
04			bit.	
05		琼：还一点勿变了，老了	Qiong: Haven't changed a bit?	
06		噢！	I'm getting so old!	
07		阳：3.是一点也勿变！	Yang: 3.You really haven't	3.intensifi-
08			changed a bit.	cation
09		阳母：4.一点也勿变。	Yang's Mom: 4.You haven't	4.repetition
10			changed a bit.	
11		琼：姆妈眼睛勿好，看勿清	Qiong: Mom, your eyes are	
12		爽了！（笑）侬看，老	failing you. You can't	
13		得来头发也白了！	see clearly. (laughs) You	
14			see, I'm so old my hair's	
15			turning white.	
16	→	阳母：5.勿白！	Yang's Mom: 5.Not white!	5.intensifi-
17	→	阳：6.（笑）勿要瞎七搭	Yang: 6.Stop talking	cation
18		八，7.勿白额噢！	nonsense! 7.Not white at	6.intensifi-
19			all!	cation
20		琼：你们这只灯暗，看勿出	Qiong: Your lamp is dim... so	7.intensifi-
21		呀！	you can't tell.	cation
22		阳：8.年年格能介样子，真	Yang: 8.You look the same	8.intensifi-
23		额！（笑）	year after year. Honest!	cation
24			(laughs)	
25		琼：喔唷，老得来一塌糊	Qiong: Oh my... I'm all a	
26		涂，自己看看也吓死	mess. It scares me to	
27		来！	look at myself.	
28	→	阳：9.（笑）自己，勿吓	Yang: 9.(laughs) Yourself...	9.intensifi-
29		额。	not scary.	cation
30		琼：……我还是蛮兴奋额，	Qiong: ...I was quite excited	
31		我搭阿拉囡五讲，我礼	[to get your call]. I	
32		拜，礼拜五要去看阳阳	told my daughter, I'm	
33		了，总归好像有	going to see Yang Yang on	
34		something to look	Friday... yes, on Friday.	
35		forward to...	Now I have *something to*	
36			*look forward to...* [in	
37			English]	
38		阳：（笑）	Yang: (laughs)	
39		琼：（笑）阿拉囡五讲，格	Qiong: (laughs) My daughter	
40		侬还吰没老，伊讲。	said, this shows you're	

41		not old... she said.	
42	阳：还吭没……10.格侬是	Yang: Not old... 10.you're	10.intensifi-
43	勿老咾！	indeed not old!	cation
44	琼：老噢！	Qiong: I AM old!	
45	阳：11.看上去老啥个老！	Yang: 11.Old? What nonsense!	11.intensifi-
46	12.阿拉姆妈总归讲，	12.My mom always says,	cation
47	小阮每趟来看哪能一样	how come Xiao Ruan looks	12.quote
48	额啦！伊讲（笑）。	the same every time she	
49		comes... she says	
50		(laughs).	
51	琼：所以讲姆妈眼睛勿灵	Qiong: That's why I say your	
52	呀！（笑）	mom's eyes are failing	
53		her. (laughs)	
54	阳母：（笑）	Yang's Mom: (laughs)	
55	阳：13.（笑）阿拉姆妈眼	Yang: 13.(laughs) My mom's	13.intensifi-
56	睛勿灵啊？！（笑）	eyes are failing her?!	cation
57	14.阿拉姆妈眼睛蛮灵	(laughs) 14.My mom's eyes	14.repetition
58	噢！阿拉姆妈好像……	are fine! My mom seems...	
59	琼：俪姆妈比上趟好。……	Qiong: Your mom looks better	
60		than last time I saw	
61		her...	
62	(They go on talking	(They go on talking about	
63	about Yang's mom's	Yang's mom's health.)	
64	health.)		

In Excerpt 7.14, Yang's mother's core compliment and support comment on Qiong's young appearance that she "looks as young as ever" ("还是介年轻") (C1) and "haven't changed a bit" ("一点也勿变") (C2) are strongly rejected by Qiong. Her core rejection strategy "还一点勿变了，老了噢！ Haven't changed a bit? I'm getting so old!" (lines 5–6) is followed by two major support strategies arguing that because Yang's mother's eyes are failing her ("姆妈眼睛勿好，看勿清爽了！") and the lamp is dim ("你们这只灯暗，看勿出呀！"), they can't see that Qiong's "hair's turning white" ("老得来头发也白了！") (Chinese lines 12–13; English lines 14–15) and that her face is "all a mess" ("老得来一塌糊涂") and scary ("自己看看也吓死来") (lines 25–27). To affirm their compliment strategies, Yang and her mother issue a series of nine intensification

strategies. Four of the nine intensification strategies reinforce the positiveness of their positive assessments, using the modal adverb intensifier "是 really/indeed" ("是一点也勿变！You **really** haven't changed a bit!"; "格侬是勿老咾！you're **indeed** not old!") (C3, C10), one sentence-final particle "噢 [o]" ("勿白额噢 **[o]**！Not white **at all**!") (C7), one complimenter focused "sincerity" strategy "真额 honest" ("年年格能介样子，真额！You look the same year after year. **Honest**!") (C8) (see *complimenter focused* "*sincerity*" strategy in a later section). Five of the nine intensification strategies reject Qiong's rejections of their compliment strategies, using either *negation* ("勿白！**Not white**!"; "勿要瞎七搭八，**Stop talking nonsense**!"; "自己，勿吓额。Yourself... **not scary**.") (C5, C6, C9) or *question* ("看上去老啥个老！Old? What nonsense!"; "阿拉姆妈眼睛勿灵啊？！My mom's eyes are failing her?!") (C11, C13) (see next section on *question*). The three *negation* strategies are realized by using negation adverb "勿 not," or negation (idiomatic) expression "勿要瞎七搭八，stop talking nonsense." Sequentially, each *negation* follows directly after the complimentee's rejection of the compliment strategy: Yang's mom's *negation* strategy ("勿白！Not white!") (C5) and Yang's *negation* strategy ("勿要瞎七搭八，Stop talking nonsense!") (C6) reject Qiong's rejection response ("侬看，老得来头发也白了！You see, I'm so old my hair's turning white."); and Yang's *negation* strategy ("自己，勿吓额。Yourself... not scary.") (C9) rejects Qiong's rejection response ("自己看看也吓死来！It scares me to look at myself."). Note, two *question* strategies also follow directly after the complimentee's rejection of the compliment strategy, which will be discussed in the next section. The

negation strategies, combined with other intensification strategies, forcefully strengthen the positive semantic force of the compliments on Qiong's young appearance. Sequentially, the repeated rejections and affirmations by the complimentee and the complimenters in Excerpt 7.14 present another example of the interactional "tug-of-war."

   Using question. *Question* is another intensification form used to strengthen the positive semantic force of a positive assessment. *Question* can be used not only to question the complimentee's downplaying, denial or rejection of a compliment strategy, but also to question the complimentee's, complimenter's, or other's assertion of a compliment strategy. In the former case, the use of *question*, like *negation*, is contingent upon the complimentee's response, specifically, the complimentee's negative response to a compliment strategy. In the latter case, however, *question* does not necessarily follow the complimentee's response to a compliment strategy; it can directly follow the complimenter's compliment strategy or other's affirmation of the compliment strategy, just like most other support compliment strategies. For instance, in Example 7.59 below, Riliang's *question* "还呒没出息？！ How can you say they're not really doing well?!" is contingent upon the complimentee, his friend Ziyun's rejection of his compliment "有啥额出息！ Not really doing well." However, in Example 7.60, the auditor's *question* "全能啊？！ All-rounded?!" directly follows the complimenter, the manager's compliment of the director's daughter "全能， All-rounded."

Core or Other Strategy	Intensification	Core or Other Strategy English Translation	Intensification English Translation
(7.59) 日亮：……格额侬两额小人全比较，有出息啊！啊？		Riliang: ...All your children are doing quite well, aren't they?	

紫云：有啥额出息！	日亮：还吪没出息？！	Ziyun: **Not really doing well.**	Riliang: **How can you say they're not really doing well?!**
(7.60) 经理：**全能，全能。**	审计：**全能啊？！** 介来三啊！ 审计：**格么格额囡五哪能教出来额啦？** 教了介来三啦！	Manager: **All-rounded. All-rounded.**	Auditor: **All-rounded?!** So capable! Auditor: **How did he raise a daughter**... to be so capable?
经理：…（？）讲伊老漂亮额！老好看额！	审计：格伊前途无量么！	Manager: They all say she's very beautiful! Very beautiful!	Auditor: She no doubt has an unlimited future ahead of her!

Almost all the *questions* identified in the data are rhetorical questions which are asked to emphasize a point rather than to elicit an answer. They can be stated as a proper question such as a wh-question (e.g., "格么格额囡五哪能教出来额啦？ How did he raise a daughter?"), or a yes/no question with a question particle (e.g., "全能**啊**？！ [Is she] all-rounded?!") (Example 7.60), or posed declaratively without the question particle (e.g., "还吪没出息？！ [How can you say they're] not doing well?!") (Example 7.59). The effectiveness of the rhetorical questions very often comes from their dramatic quality. Apart from the emphatic tone (marked by a question mark and an exclamation mark "?!"), another common way observed in the data to achieve the dramatic effect is by posing an interjection such as "啊[á]? What?" before the question to express disbelief or strong excitement. For example,

Core or Other Strategy	Intensification	Core or Other Strategy English Translation	Intensification English Translation
(7.61) 徐：所以我们这个行长，行长是很，很朴素的！（笑）		Xu: So this bank manager... manager of ours... is very, very modest! (laughs)	

| 曹：（笑）杜柏山阿是，阿是人家要帮侬开车侬勿要人家开阿是？ | | Cao: (laughs) Du Baishan, I hear you were offered a chauffeur but you refused. Is that true? | |
| 杜：格勿是，自己开开便当点。 | 马：**啊[á]**侬自己开啊，车子平常？ | Du: That's not it. It's simpler to do your own driving. | Ma: **What?** You drive yourself... everyday? |

Now how do we tell an intensification *question* from an information-seeking question, especially when the *question* is used to question the complimentee's, complimenter's, or other's assertion of a compliment strategy? For instance, how do we know in Example 7.60 the auditor's *question* "全能啊？！ All-rounded?!" is not a real question seeking an answer? Apart from the emphatic tone, most of the intensification *questions* in the data do not have a relevant information-giving "answer" as the second pair part, but have other positive compliment strategies preceding, following, or as a component part of the *question*. In Example 7.60, the auditor follows her *question* immediately with another intensification strategy ("介来三啊！ So capable!") without waiting for an answer. There is also no answer for her second question ("格么格额囡五哪能教出来额啦？ How did he raise a daughter?"), but an immediate positive comment ("教了介来三啦！ [*Raised*] to be so capable!") and more compliments from the manager and the auditor herself on the daughter's beautiful appearance and talent ("讲伊老漂亮额！ They all say she's very beautiful!"; "老好看额！ Very beautiful!"; "格伊前途无量么！ She no doubt has an unlimited future ahead of her!").

A total of 59 (8.6%) *questions* are identified in the 681 *complimentee focused* intensification strategies. The following are examples of the most commonly used *question* forms in the data.

Rhetorical questions stated as a wh-question:

 e.g., 啥人讲额？(Who says so?)
 搞啥物事侬！(What are you talking about?)
 格哪能会呢？(How can that be?)
 哪能叫简单法子？(How can you call that simple?)
 还要哪能！(What more do you want?)
 介好的记性还要多少记性！(Such good memory…how much more memory do
  you want?)
 哪能介便宜啦？(How come it's so cheap?)
 啥地方来介大个囡五？(Where did such a big daughter come from?), etc.

Rhetorical questions stated as a yes/no question with a question particle:

 e.g., 格还旧**啊**？(This is old?)
 还老**啊**？(You say it [shrimp]'s tough?)
 格还勿灵**啊**？！(Is this what you call bad?)
 真**啊**？！(Really?!)
 伊介来三**啊**？(She's so capable?)
 义务做**啊**？！(All voluntary?!)
 你上电视**啦**？！(You've been on TV?!)
 心相好伐**噢**？(How can she have such enthusiasm?)
 为人民服务**对伐**？(Serve the people, right?), etc.

Rhetorical questions posed declaratively without a question particle:

 e.g., 你自己画的？(You painted them yourself?)
 还呒没出息？！(How can you say they're not really doing well?!)
 还说没吃饱噢！(You still say we didn't have enough to eat?!)
 一日到夜来教书还勿动脑筋来！(You're teaching day in, day out. How can you
  not use your brains!)
 看上去老啥个老！(Old? What nonsense!), etc.

Rhetorical questions headed with a sentence-initial interjection expressing disbelief or strong excitement:

 e.g., 啊 [á]？！(What?!)
 啊 [á]？眼睛勿好啊？！(What? Your vision was bad?!)
 啊 [á]？格就是伊拉爷翻啊？(What? His dad translated this?)
 啊 [á]？！工作照那么漂亮啊？(What?! Your ID picture is so beautiful?)
 噢 [ō]！《外来妹》是倷弟弟拍啊？噢！(Oh! Your brother shot [the movie]
  "Girls From Out Of Town"? Wow!)
 喔唷 [ōyō]！一眼虾搭鸡！还要讲！(What? ONLY some shrimp and chicken!
  How can you still say that!), etc.

It is observed from the data that when *question* is used to question the complimentee's downplaying, denial or rejection of a compliment strategy, more wh-questions, yes/no questions with the intensifier "还" ("you call this...," "you still say...," "how can you say...") in them, or questions posed declaratively without a question particle but with the same intensifier "还" in them, tend to be used. When *question* is used to question the complimentee's, complimenter's, or other's assertion of a compliment strategy, more yes/no questions with a question particle, or questions with a sentence-initial interjection before them tend to be used. Examples 7.62 to 7.67 illustrate how different forms of *questions* are used as intensification strategies to question/reject the complimentee's downplaying, denial or rejection of a compliment strategy.

Core or Other Strategy	Intensification	Core or Other Strategy English translation	Intensification English translation
Questions: question the complimentee's downplaying, denial or rejection of a compliment			
(7.62) 倩：嗳，侬封信写得老灵额！学生子全看了…… 宁：学生子也看了？！啊呀瞎写额呀！	倩：啥人讲额？老灵额！	Qian: Hey, that letter of yours was so well written! All my students read it. Ning: Your students read it too? Oh my! But it was such a mess!	Qian: Who says so? Great writing!
(7.63) 群：我来拉，我格辰光，读书读了蛮呆额噢？ 梅：勿呆额！！ 群：我勿呆啊格辰光？ 梅：侬么是——班里厢额聪明人嗳！	梅：搞啥物事侬！	Qun: I was… back then… in school... I was very stupid. Mei: You weren't stupid! Qun: I wasn't stupid back then? Mei: You WERE one of the smart ones in the class.	Mei: What are you talking about?

(7.64) 叶：早上头落起来就拖，拖拖，擦！我迭个人多少醒醒啦！ 宋：（笑）介清爽！	宋：还要弄啥啦！	Ye: As soon as I got up this morning, I was mopping and scrubbing. You know how messy I am. Song: (laughs) Everything's spotless!	Song: What do you need to clean for?
(7.65) 领队：啊呀！你英语说得很好！ 导游：噢……我我其实……没有你那个……自信！我就……	领队：你怎么会是没自信这么好英语说得！	Tour Leader: Wow! You speak English so well. Tour Guide: Oh... I actually... don't have... your self-confidence. I only...	Tour Leader: How come you don't have self-confidence... you speak English so well?
(7.66) 万妻：阿拉窗子是……（笑） 范：好噢——！（笑） 万妻：啥物事也呒没。（笑）	许：格是呒没啊？	Mrs. Wan: Our windows are... (laughs) Fan: Wonderful! (laughs) Mrs. Wan: ... bare of all accessories and decorations. (laughs)	Prof. Xu: You call this bare?
(7.67) 胡：侬，侬今朝格一种招待是阿拉老惭愧额！ 万：……（笑）没啥物事！ 万妻：没啥额招待，就是来啥……	范：（笑）没啥招待，招待得来简直是——（笑） 胡：还没啥招待啥来！	Hu: Your... your level of hospitality puts me to shame. Mr. Wan: ... (laughs) I didn't do much of anything. Mrs. Wan: No hospitality to speak of… just...	Fan: (laughs) No hospitality? Such a level of hospitality… (laughs) Hu: How can you say you showed no hospitality!

Sequentially, all the *questions* in these examples are contingent upon the complimentee's

negative response—downplaying, denial or rejection to a compliment strategy. In terms

of question forms, the *questions* in Examples 7.62 to 7.65 are wh-questions; the *question* in Example 7.66 is a yes/no question with a question particle "啊 [a]" attached to the end, whereas that in Example 7.67 is a question posed declaratively without a question particle but with the intensifier "还" ("how can you say...") in it. All these *questions* are coded as intensification *questions* rather than real information-seeking questions, because none of them has a relevant information-giving "answer" as the second pair part, but has other positive strategies preceding, following, or as a component part of the *question*. Qian's *question* ("啥人讲额？ Who says so?") in Example 7.62 has a repetition strategy ("**老灵额！ Great writing!**") right after it restating the positive assessment. Examples 7.63 and 7.64 each has a compliment strategy right before the *question* ("**侬么是——班里厢额聪明人嗳！**搞啥物事侬！ **You WERE one of the smart ones in the class.** What are you talking about?"; "**介清爽！**还要弄啥啦！ **Everything's spotless!** What do you need to clean for?"). Example 7.65 is an instance of a positive comment as a component part of the *question* ("你怎么会是没自信**这么好英语说得！** How come you don't have self-confidence... **[when] you speak English so well**?"). Miss Hu's declarative *question* in Example 7.67 ("还没啥招待啥来！ How can you say you showed no hospitality!") is also preceded by an intensification strategy ("没啥招待，**招待得来简直是——** No hospitality? **Such a level of hospitality**…,") which itself is a *question* followed by a compliment strategy. We can see all the *questions* in these examples are not asked to elicit an answer, but asked to emphasize a compliment strategy already made.

Examples 7.68 to 7.73 illustrate how different forms of *questions* are used as intensification strategies to question the complimentee's, complimenter's, or other's assertion of a compliment strategy.

Core or Other Strategy	Intensification	Core or Other Strategy English translation	Intensification English translation
Questions: question the complimentee's, complimenter's, or other's assertion of a compliment strategy			
(7.68) 梅：伊拉额囡五对伐，真额是小姑娘了…… 群：啥地方来介大个囡五啊？ （笑）	梅：我对伐勿大相信，侬看牢伊……（笑）**啥地方来介大个囡五（笑）？**	Mei: Her daughter has really grown into a young lady now... Qun: Where did such a big daughter come from? (laughs)	Mei: I just can't quite believe it. You saw her [grow up]... (laughs) **Where did such a big daughter come from** (laughs)?
(7.69) 女游客：你们这边，画家很多！ 男店主：嗯，我画的！我画的（笑）。 男店主：呶，这边还有很多。	女游客：**你自己画的？！**	Woman Tourist: You have lots of artists here! Male Store Owner: Um... I painted them myself. I painted them myself (laughs). Male Store Owner: Look, there are more here.	Woman Tourist: **You painted them yourself?!**
(7.70) 女病属 1：陈医生打好了交关人了。 女病属 1：啥个啦，呶，伊昨日子一个头到外滩去！ 女病属 1：棒头也勿拿。	女病属 2：**真啊？！**	Patient 1's Spouse: Dr. Chen has cured lots of patients. Patient 1's Spouse: You know what? He went to The Bund all alone yesterday! Patient 1's Spouse: Didn't even take his stick.	Patient 2's Spouse: **Really?!**

(7.71) 许：老巴东多做眼事体。 （大家笑） 胡：全是义务做噢！ 万妻：嗳。	范：**义务做啊？！** 胡：伊拉真额老勿容易，义务做噢！	Xu: An old dog tries to do more things. (all laugh) Hu: It's all voluntary (uncompensated)! Mrs. Wan: Yeah.	Fan: **All voluntary?!** Hu: They're really extraordinary! All voluntary!
(7.72) 经理：伊对伐，伊现在呒没毕业噢，到处要伊来， 经理：到处［叫伊］去上课呕！ 女财会：校长也帮伊介绍额！	审计：**伊介来三啊？** 审计：喔唷介来三额小姑娘！ 审计：**啊？校长也会得帮伊介绍啊？** 格伊下趟肯定到美国去读书额。	Manager: She... she has not graduated yet, but everyone wants to hire her. Manager: Everyone's asking her to teach. Female Account: Even the principal is recommending her.	Auditor: **She's so capable?** Auditor: Wow, such a capable girl! Auditor: **What? Even the principal goes out of his way to recommend her?** She'll no doubt continue her studies in America.
(7.73) 珂：乃末阿拉弟弟么还比较好，拍电视还拍得比较好。 杰：伊老来三额么！ 珂：（笑）我朋友是蹲了美国已经看到伊额啥个《外来妹》，	杰：**噢！《外来妹》是俹弟弟拍啊？** 噢！《外来妹》得过奖噢！	Ke: My younger brother's doing quite well... doing quite well shooting TV series. Jie: He's so talented! Ke: (laughs) My friend has already seen his "Girls From Out Of Town" in America.	Jie: **Oh! Your brother shot "Girls From Out Of Town?"** Wow! "Girls From Out Of Town" has won an award!

Sequentially, only the *questions* in Examples 7.69 and 7.73 follow the complimentee's [acceptance/self-praise] response to a compliment strategy. The other *questions* either directly follow the complimenter's compliment strategy (Examples 7.68, 7.70, 7.72) or other's affirmation of the compliment strategy (Examples 7.71, 7.72). With regard to

question forms, only Example 7.68 is a wh-question. All the *questions* in the other examples are posed either declaratively without a question particle (Example 6.69), or as a yes/no question with a question particle "啊 [a]" attached to the end of the question (Examples 7.70 to 7.72), or as a question with a sentence-initial interjection "啊 [á]？ What?" or "噢 [ō] ！ Oh!/Wow! " before it (Examples 7.72, 7.73).

All these *questions* are coded as intensification *questions* rather than real information-seeking questions because none of them has a relevant information-giving "answer" as the second pair part, but has either the complimentee's acceptance/self-compliment following the *question*, or the complimenter's or other's positive strategies preceding or following the *question*. In Example 7.68, the complimenter Mei's *question* ("啥地方来介大个囡五？ Where did such a big daughter come from?") is followed by the complimentee Qun's agreement-by-repetition strategy ("啥地方来介大个囡五啊？ （笑） Where did such a big daughter come from? (laughs)") (a common acceptance strategy observed in the data) rather than an information-giving answer telling where her daughter came from. In Example 7.69, the complimentee Store Owner does not answer the Tourist's *question* ("你自己画的？！ You painted them yourself?!") but continues with more self-complimenting ("哎，这边还有很多。 Look, there are more [paintings by me] here."). In Example 7.68, the complimenter Mei's *question* has her own intensification strategy right before it ("**我对伐勿大相信，**啥地方来介大个囡五？ **I just can't quite believe it.** Where did such a big daughter come from?"). In Examples 7.70 to 7.73, each *question* has one or more compliment strategies right after it by the

complimenter him/herself or by another person without waiting for an answer from the

complimentee:

(Example 7.70)
女病属 2：　　　　真啊？！
Patient 2's Spouse: Really?!
女病属 1：　　　　**棒头也勿拿。**
Patient 1's Spouse: **Didn't even take his stick.**"

(Example 7.72)
审计：　伊介来三啊？
Auditor: She's so capable?
经理：　**到处［叫伊］去上课呕！**
Manager: **Everyone's asking her to teach.**
审计：　**喔唷介来三额小姑娘！**
Auditor:　**Wow, such a capable girl!**".

审计：　啊？校长也会得帮伊介绍啊？**格伊下趟肯定到美国去读书额。**
Auditor: What? Even the principal goes out of his way to recommend her?
　　　　She'll no doubt continue her studies in America.

(Example 7.73)
杰：噢！《外来妹》是俪弟弟拍啊？**噢！《外来妹》得过奖嗳！**
Jie: Oh! Your brother shot "Girls From Out Of Town?" **Wow! "Girls From Out
　　　Of Town" has won an award!**

In Example 7.71, Fan questions Hu's compliment strategy even if Hu's compliment has

already been confirmed by Mrs. Wan. In addition, Fan's *question* is followed by more

compliments from Hu without waiting for an answer from the complimentee Prof. Xu.

胡：　　　全是义务做噢！
Hu:　　　It's all voluntary (uncompensated)!
万妻：　　**嗳。**
Mrs. Wan: **Yeah.**
范：　　　义务做啊？！
Fan:　　　All voluntary?!
胡：　　　**伊拉真额老勿容易，义务做噢！**
Hu:　　　**They're really extraordinary! All voluntary!**

We can see all the *questions* in Examples 7.68 to 7.73 are not asked to elicit an answer,

but asked to emphasize a compliment strategy already made.

Excerpt 7.15 illustrates in a complete compliment-response sequence how the

questions are used as intensification strategies to deny or reject the complimentee's

denial or rejection of the compliment strategies.

Excerpt 7.15 [275] "ONLY some shrimp and chicken! How can you say that!"

Situation: Ying [F, 47], Xue [F, 46] and Yan [F, 42] were college classmates and good friends. Ying and Xue are invited by Yan and her husband Min [M, 45] to dinner at their house. Min is a great cook. The food is excellent, as is the couple's hospitality. Xue can't cook, so she is especially appreciative.

01 02 03	雪：1.砚，这顿饭我不会 忘记的！（笑）	Xue: 1.Yan, I will never forget this meal! (laughs)	1.core 1 delicious food
04	大家：（大笑）	Everyone: (laughs out loud)	
05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12	雪：2.回去就要馋啦！ （笑）3.做这种大锅 饭，想啊呀！那顿饭真 好吃！	Xue: 2.When I go home, the thought of your cooking will make my mouth water. (laughs) 3.While cooking my "big-pot cafeteria food," I'll be thinking wow, that dinner was so good!	2.intensifi- cation 3.comparison self
13 14	大家：（大笑） （民端上西瓜）	Everyone: (laughs out loud) (Min serves watermelon.)	
15 16 17 18	雪：4.砚，我今天吃到这儿 了已经（指喉咙）！ （笑）	Xue: 4.Yan, I've had too much today... I'm up to here (points to her throat)! (laughs)	4.intensifi- cation
19 20 21	砚：不要紧额，西瓜多吃一 歇歇就消化了。	Yan: That's alright. Watermelon is digested in no time.	
22 23 24	雪：5.比那个瓜，比那个 吃面条还厉害！ （笑）	Xue: 5.More substantial than the melon...than the noodles! (laughs)	5.comparison other
25 26 27	砚：（笑）实际上今天量不 大的呀！	Yan: (laughs) Actually, the portions weren't big at all today!	
28 29	民：今朝呒没啥物事咾！	Min: There wasn't much of anything today.	
30 31	雪：6.大额噢！——	Xue: 6.The portions certainly WERE big:::!	6.intensifi- cation
32 33	砚：今天量不大。	Yan: The portions weren't big today.	

34		民：今天量不大。	Min: The portions weren't big today.	
35				
36	→	雪：7.还不大啊？！	Xue: 7.You call that not big?!	7.intensifi-cation
37				
38		砚：粮食都没的嘛！	Yan: No staple grain at all.	
39		雪：〔8.啊呀，姜欣民，谢谢你啊！这么好！	Xue: [8.Oh, Jiang Xinmin, thank you so much! It was so good!	8.core 2 great cook
40				
41				
42		英：〔……9.手艺学着了！	Ying:[...9.I've learned some cooking skills [from you]!	9.intensifi-cation
43				
44				
45		民：手艺有伐啦？（笑）	Min: I have some cooking skills, don't I? (laughs)	
46				
47				
48		雪：10.留下了美好的记忆！	Xue: 10.It has left me with beautiful memories.	10.intensifi-cation
49				
50		大家：（大笑）	Everyone: (laughs out loud)	
51		雪：〔11.以后要馋死掉了！	Xue: [11.I'll be missing your cooking so so much!	11.intensifi-cation
52				
53		砚：〔我就觉得你们没吃饱！	Yan: [I just feel you didn't have enough to eat.	
54				
55	→	雪：12.还说没吃饱噢！13.都吃到这里了！（笑）	Xue: 12.You still say we didn't have enough to eat?! 13.I'm up to here! (laughs)	12.intensifi-cation 13.repetition
56				
57				
58				
59		英：（笑）	Ying:(laughs)	
60		雪：14.还没吃饱！（笑）	Xue: 14.You still say we didn't have enough to eat! (laughs)	14.repetition
61				
62				
63		砚：本来还想下馄饨噢，就去买……	Yan: We had planned to serve some dumplings... so we bought...	
64				
65				
66		雪：15.你们准备了那么多嗳！	Xue: 15.You prepared so much food!	15.comment
67				
68	→	英：16.砚还说不要准备来！	Ying:16.How can Yan still say (*Yan was still saying*) there wasn't much to do by way of preparation!	16.intensifi-cation
69				
70				
71				
72		雪：〔17.还有腌笃鲜！	Xue: [17.There was also the [elaborate] soup—"fresh and salted pork with bamboo shoots!"	17.example
73				
74				
75				
76		民：〔就，就是一眼虾搭鸡！还有啥物事啦？	Min: [Only... only some shrimp and chicken. What else did we prepare?	
77				
78				
79	→	雪：〔18.喔唷！一眼虾搭	Xue: 18.What? ONLY some	18.intensifi-

80		鸡！还要讲！（笑）	shrimp and chicken! How	cation
81			can you say that!	
82			(laughs)	
83		民：一眼虾搭鸡呀，不过我	Min: Only some shrimp and	
84		觉得呢格能介吃吃也够	chicken... But I figured	
85		了我觉得。	that would be enough	
86			food for us... Yeah, I	
87			figured...	
88		雪：19.够——！	Xue: 19.Yes, plenty:::!	19.repetition
89		民：对伐？噢？	Min: Right? Don't you think?	
90		雪：20.而且老好吃额！	Xue: 20.Yes, and delicious!	20.comment
91		砚：我就觉得后面么应该有	Yan: I felt we should serve	
92		点那个，有点点心比如	some dessert... like	
93		说，小包子啊……	miniature steamed	
94			buns...	
95		雪：21.这种对吧就是，其	Xue: 21.Your menu was	21.comment
96		实这种是最实惠的！	perfect. No frills.	
97		22.最好！23.最好吃对	22.The best. 23.The most	22.intensifi-
98		吧，24.不过就是化很	delicious! 24.But it	cation
99		多精力！	took a lot of work.	23.intensifi-
100		英：25.精力嗳。	Ying:25.Lots of work, yeah.	cation
101		民：〔……吭没，觉也吭没	Min: [...It was alright. I	24.comment
102		觉着啥……	didn't feel it was a lot	25.agreement
103			of work.	
104		砚：〔没噢！没化什么精	Yan: [Oh, no. It wasn't a lot	
105		力！	of work.	
106		雪：（笑）	Xue: (laughs)	
107		民：勿是，阿拉平常难	Min: You see... we seldom	
108		（板），平时也太随便	have a chance... we're	
109		了，难板格能介弄一趟	usually too casual. You	
110		呢这也是，有点像……	gave us an	
111			opportunity... it's	
112			like...	
113		砚：有点趣，玩玩！	Yan: It's fun. Having some	
114			fun!	
115		雪，英：（笑）	Xue and Ying: (laugh)	
116		(The host Min and	(The host Min and hostess Yan	
117		hostess Yan explain that	explain that they didn't go	
118		they didn't go out of	out of their way. They often	
119		their way. They often	eat like this.)	
120		eat like this.)		

In Excerpt 7.15, Xue and Ying are so impressed by and appreciative of Yan and Min's

delicious food, great cooking skills and hospitality that a series of 12 intensification

strategies along with 11 other support compliment strategies are used to emphasize the core and other support compliment strategies. Three of the 12 intensification strategies increase the degree of positiveness of their positive assessments using the degree adverb intensifiers "死掉了 *extremely*/so so much" ("以后要馋**死掉了**！ I'll be missing your cooking **so so much**!") (C11) and "最 *most*" ("**最**好！ The **best**"; "**最**好吃对吧， The **most** delicious!") (C22, C23). Four of the 12 intensification strategies are *impact oriented* strategies, strengthening the positive semantic force of the positive assessments by emphasizing the positive impact the complimentee has on the complimenter's or other's *emotion*: that Xue will be missing Yan and Min's cooking ("回去就要馋啦") (C2) and that their delicious food has left Xue with "beautiful memories" ("留下了美好的记忆！") (C10); or by emphasizing the positive impact the complimentee has on the complimenter's or other's *action*: that the food is so delicious that Xue has had too much ("我今天吃到这儿了已经（指喉咙）！") (C4) and Ying has learned some cooking skills from Min ("手艺学着了！") (C9) (see sections on *impact oriented* strategies later).

Xue's (*impact oriented action focused*) intensification strategy that she "had too much today" and the food is up to her throat ("我今天吃到这儿了已经（指喉咙）！") (C4), and her comparison strategy that the food is "more substantial than the noodles" ("比那个吃面条还厉害") (C5) trigger off a series of denial and rejection responses by the complimentees Yan and Min, their main arguments being that "the portions weren't big at all today" ("实际上今天量不大的呀！") (lines 25–27) and that "there wasn't much of anything today" ("今朝呒没啥物事咾！") (lines 28–29). Yan and Min's denials and rejections in turn trigger off a series of strategies by the complimenters Xue

and Ying arguing for the contrary, among them a *negation* strategy and four *question* strategies. All these five intensification strategies deny and reject the complimentees' denials and rejections of the compliment strategies. The *negation* strategy is realized by using an antonym "大 big" ("大额噢！ —— The portions certainly WERE big:::!") (C6). The *questions* are posed either as a yes/no question with a question particle "啊 [a]" attached to the end ("还不大**啊**？！ You call that not big?!") (C7), or declaratively without a question particle ("还说没吃饱噢！ You still say we didn't have enough to eat?!"; "砚还说不要准备来！ How can Yan still say [*Yan was still saying*] there wasn't much to do by way of preparation!") (C12, C16), or with an interjection before the question ("**喔唷！**一眼虾搭鸡！还要讲！ **What?** ONLY some shrimp and chicken! How can you say that!") (C18). All four *questions* have the intensifier "还" ("you call that...," "you still say...," "How can Yan still say...," "how can you say...") in them, strengthening the denial or rejection force of each *question*.

Sequentially, the negation strategy and all the *questions* are contingent upon the complimentee's negative response to a compliment strategy, i.e., they follow directly after the complimentee's denial or rejection of a compliment strategy:

砚： （笑）实际上今天量不大的呀！
Yan: **(laughs) Actually, the portions weren't big at all today!**
民： 今朝呒没啥物事咾！
Min: **There wasn't much of anything today.**
雪： 大额噢！ ——   (C6)
Xue: The portions certainly WERE big:::!

砚： 今天量不大。
Yan: **The portions weren't big today.**
民： 今天量不大。
Min: **The portions weren't big today.**

雪： 还不大啊？！ (C7)
Xue: You call that not big?!

砚： **我就觉得你们没吃饱！**
Yan: **I just feel you didn't have enough to eat.**
雪： 还说没吃饱噢！ (C12)
Xue: You still say we didn't have enough to eat?!

砚： **本来还想下馄饨噢，就去买……**
Yan: **We had planned to serve some dumplings... so we bought...**
雪： **你们准备了那么多嗳！**
Xue: **You prepared so much food!**
英： 砚还说不要准备来！ (C16)
Ying: How can Yan still say there wasn't much to do by way of
preparation!

民： **就，就是一眼虾搭鸡！还有啥物事啦？**
Min: **Only... only some shrimp and chicken. What else did we prepare?**
雪： 喔唷！一眼虾搭鸡！还要讲！（笑） (C18)
Xue: What? ONLY some shrimp and chicken! How can you
say that! (laughs)

All these *questions* are coded as intensification *questions* rather than real

information-seeking questions because none of them has a relevant information-giving

"answer" as the second pair part, but has either the complimentee's denial/rejection

following the *question*, or the complimenter's positive strategies preceding or following

the *question*. Before Xue's first *question* ("还不大啊？！ You call that not big?!") she

has two intensification strategies emphasizing that she had too much and the food is up to

her throat ("我今天吃到这儿了已经（指喉咙）！") (C4), and "the portions certainly

WERE big:::!" ("大额噢！——") (C6). Therefore she is certainly not looking for an

answer to her *question*. Xue's second *question* ("还说没吃饱噢！ You still say we

didn't have enough to eat?!") has a repetition strategy ("都吃到这里了！ I'm up to

here!") (C13) right after it restating the positive assessment that she had too much food.

Ying's *question* ("砚还说不要准备来！ How can Yan still say there wasn't much to do by way of preparation!") has a positive comment ("你们准备了那么多嗳！ You prepared so much food!"—referring to the dumplings they have prepared) (C15) right before the *question* and an example ("还有腌笃鲜！ There was also the [elaborate] soup—'fresh and salted pork with bamboo shoots!'") (C17) right after the *question*, both by Xue. Xue's last *question* ("喔唷！ 一眼虾搭鸡！还要讲！ What? ONLY some shrimp and chicken! How can you say that!") is reaffirmed by a repetition strategy and a comment strategy restating that there is plenty of food ("够——！ Yes, plenty:::!") (C19) and that the food is delicious ("而且老好吃额！ Yes, and delicious!") (C20). We can see all the *questions* in Excerpt 7.15 are asked not to elicit an answer but to emphasize a compliment strategy already made. These rhetorical *questions* forcefully deny and reject the complimentees' denials and rejections to the compliments, dramatically reinforcing the positive semantic force of the core and other support strategies.

Again, we observe an interactional "tug-of-war," achieved by using negation and *questions*, in Excerpt 7.15 (see Excerpts 1.1, 7.2, 7.6, 7.12, 7.13, 7.14).

To summarize, this part of the *Intensification Strategy* describes the *attribute oriented* strategies, in particular, *complimentee focused* strategies, which emphasize the positive assessment of the complimentee. The *complimentee focused* strategies are realized by six major intensification forms (substrategies) including *intensifiers*, *lexical items of high intensity*, *sentence-initial interjections*, *sentence-final particles*, *negation*, and *question*, each of them is in turn realized by a wide variety of lexical and syntactic forms. Some of these *complimentee focused* strategies such as *negation* and *question* are more contingent upon the complimentee's response; most are not. All these

complimentee focused strategies effectively strengthen the positive semantic force of the positive assessment of the complimentee.

As defined in the introductory remarks to the *Intensification Strategy*, *attribute oriented* strategies can be either *complimentee focused* or *complimenter focused*. In the following section, I will describe the *complimenter focused* strategy.

Complimenter focused. Unlike the attribute oriented *complimentee focused* strategies which strengthen the positive semantic force of a compliment by emphasizing the positive assessment of the complimentee—how good the complimentee is, the attribute oriented *complimenter focused* strategy strengthens the positive semantic force of a compliment by emphasizing the truth and sincerity of the positive assessment made by the complimenter—how honest and sincere the complimenter is in making the compliment. The *complimenter focused sincerity* strategy is realized by using words and expressions indicating sincerity such as the following:

Words and expressions indicating sincerity:

　　e.g. 真的/额, 是的/额 (really, true, honest); 说实在的 (to be honest, seriously), 确实 (truly, indeed); 凭良心讲, 是真心的, 从心底里 (from my heart, it's sincere); 勿骗侬额 (not kidding), 不吹牛的 (not exaggerating); 勿搭人家讲额 (I don't say it to others), 勿好人家在场的时候讲 (shouldn't say it when others are present), etc.

Sequentially, it is within reason to assume that a *complimenter focused sincerity* strategy should be contingent upon the complimentee's negative response to a compliment strategy. In other words, the complimenter feels the need to prove his/her sincerity when the compliment is downplayed, denied or rejected. Data indicate that the *complimenter focused sincerity* strategy does occur frequently after the complimentee's downplaying, denial or rejection of a compliment strategy. However, it also occurs frequently after the

complimentee's acceptance of a compliment strategy, or directly after the complimenter's or other's assertion of a compliment strategy, just as most other support compliment strategies do. (Is it because the norm expects the complimenter to be sincere, the complimentee to be humble and to reject a compliment, and therefore, the complimenter anticipates a rejection? See analysis and discussion later in this Chapter.)

Table 7.1 shows that 69 (7.9%) of the 873 intensification strategies are *complimenter focused sincerity* strategies. The following are some examples of how they are used to achieve emphasis. Examples 7.74 to 7.77 illustrate how the *complimenter focused sincerity* strategy is used when the complimentee downplays, denies or rejects a compliment strategy. Examples 7.78 to 7.81 illustrate how the *complimenter focused sincerity* strategy is used after the complimentee's, complimenter's or other's assertion of a compliment strategy.

Core or Other Strategy	Intensification	Core or Other Strategy English translation	Intensification English translation
Complimenter focused sincerity strategy: following the complimentee's downplaying, denial or rejection of a compliment strategy			
(7.74) 倩：宁宁，你那封信写得老好的啊！ 宁：**瞎七搭八**！	倩：嗳，**真额**，**真额**。	Qian: Ningning, that letter you wrote was just wonderful! Ning: **Nonsense**.	Qian: **Honest**. **Honest**.
(7.75) 杨领队：是的，很能说。这样一路上说，够辛苦的！ 石地陪：**小意思**。	杨领队：（笑）小意思，**真的**很能说！	Tour Leader Yang: Yeah, he's eloquent indeed. Talking the whole way, very demanding. Local Guide Shi: **It's nothing**.	Tour Leader Yang: (laughs) Nothing... You're **really** eloquent.

(7.76) 孙：一个人还是， 　　蛮聪明额！ 朱：马马虎虎—— 　　（笑）。	孙：**是额呀，朱 佩莲！**	Sun: You're also quite 　　smart. Zhu: **Just so-so:::** （laughs）.	Sun: **But you are**, Zhu Peilian!
(7.77) 吴：鲁波，你家的 　　房子搞得比小吴 　　阿姨家还要好 　　看！（笑） 鲁波：**格勿会额。**	吴：**呒没，真额！ 勿骗侬额！**	Wu: Lu Bo, you made 　　your place more 　　beautiful than Aunt 　　Xiao Wu's. (laughs) Lu Bo: **That's not possible**.	Wu: No, **honest**! **I'm not kidding you**!

Complimenter focused sincerity strategy: following the complimentee's, complimenter's, or other's assertion of a compliment strategy

(7.78) 杨领队：你讲得很 　　　　好。 石地陪：**谢谢。**	杨领队：讲得**真 的**很好，噢？	Tour Leader Yang: 　　You did great. Shi: **Thank you**.	Tour Leader Yang: You did **really** great, (to national guide) don't you think?
(7.79) 张：我就是呒没写 　　下来，写下来还 　　可以。格种…… 孟：嗳，**我一直欢 喜看侬额物事 额，**	孟：**格不是讲 额，真额！**	Zhang: I didn't write it 　　down. If I had 　　written it down, it'd 　　be pretty good. This 　　type of... Meng: Yeah... **I've always liked to read your stuff**.	Meng: **I'm not just saying it**. It's true!
(7.80) 孙厂长：你什么时 　　　　候介绍，我的**歌 喉很好**，嗯？ 小郑（副厂长）： 　　嗯，（笑） 董事长：**他跟我讲 的**，小郑噢？	董事长：不，一点 都不吹牛啊！	Factory Manager Sun: 　　When did you tell 　　people I **had a good voice**? Xiao Zheng (Deputy 　　Factory Manager): 　　Well… (laughs) Board Chairman: **He told me**, am I right, Xiao Zheng?	Board Chairman: No, **no exaggeration at all**.

(7.81) 王编剧：我搭侬讲吴局长啊，下头额群众啊，能够碰到个好领导勿容易，		Playwright Wang: Let me tell you, Bureau Chief Wu... people at the grass roots are lucky (it is *not easy*) to come across a leader as good as you are.	
施编剧：嗳，**格额是勿容易！**	王编剧：**真额勿容易！**	Playwright Shi: **Yeah, it is not easy!**	Playwright Wang: **Truly not easy**!

Different words and expressions indicating sincerity are used in the intensification strategies in these examples to realize the *complimenter focused sincerity* strategy (see words in boldface). Sequentially, the *sincerity* strategies in Examples 7.74 to 7.77 follow the complimentee's negative response to a compliment strategy: denial or rejection ("瞎七搭八！ Nonsense."; "格勿会额。 That's not possible."), or downplaying ("小意思。 It's nothing."; "马马虎虎——。 Just so-so:::."). However, the *sincerity* strategies in Examples 7.78 to 7.81 follow the complimentee's acceptance response ("谢谢。 Thank you."), or complimenter's or other's assertion of a compliment strategy ("我一直欢喜看侬额物事额， I've always liked to read your stuff."; "他跟我讲的 [你的歌喉很好]， He told me [you had a good voice],"; "嗳，格额是勿容易！ Yeah, it is not easy!").

Excerpt 7.16 illustrates how the *complimenter focused sincerity* strategy is used in a complete compliment-response sequence by Prof. Ding (mainly) to emphasize her compliments to her friend Prof. Huang on Huang's being almost perfect. Please note, Excerpt 7.16 is a shortened version of the original compliment sequence, which has 65 compliment relevant turns with one core and 50 support compliment strategies. Ding's core compliment that Huang is "almost perfect" ("她比较 *perfect*") is a huge compliment

considering not only the use of the high intensity lexical word "perfect" but also Ding's known character as a true and sincere person who does not compliment easily. The huge compliment is greatly unexpected and rejected by Prof. Huang and disagreed with by the third party, Prof. Wang. (It must be pointed out however, Wang also admires Huang greatly. Her disagreement is more out of concern about Huang's health than a real disagreement. Throughout the conversation, Wang tries to persuade Huang to slow down and take care of her health problems.) In order to prove that Huang is indeed "almost perfect," Ding presents six major *comment* strategies to substantiate her core compliment stating that Huang's "mind is unbelievable" ("伊格个脑筋对伐啦，伊真额是［勿得了］，") (C7), that "she always has herself under control" ("伊老能够克制额。") (C10), that "she can accomplish something" ("而且自己又能够做出，做出点事体来额，") (C14), that she has her "heart in the right place" ("侬么，人么是好额，") (C42), that she is "stubborn for the principle" ("侬格个艮么是看大额事体上，顾原则艮呀！"), and that her mind "is all full of big issues" with no room for trifles ("哪能介掼得塌的，脑子里全是格种介，介大额事体……") (the last two *comments* are omitted from the excerpt). The core and the six *comment* strategies are further elaborated and emphasized by three additional *comments*, five *examples*, three *repetition* strategies, and 13 *comparison* strategies comparing Huang to Ding herself and others (see *comparison* strategies in the next chapter). On top of these support strategies, 19 *intensification* strategies are used, four of them *negation* strategies and 14 *complimenter focused sincerity* strategies, almost all of which follow Huang's downplaying, denial or rejection of Ding's compliment strategies.

Excerpt 7.16 [82] "She's almost *perfect*, to speak from my heart."

Situation: Huang [F, 54] and Ding [F, 55] are visiting Wang [F, 46]. They are all college professors and good friends. The following part of the conversation shifts from Huang's critique of Wang's pursuit of perfection to Ding's admiration for Huang being almost perfect.

01		丁：1. 伊呒没物事好去斗。	Ding: 1.But she's impeccable.	1.core
02		王：伊哪能呒没物事好斗	Wang: How can she have	perfect
03		啦，伊？	nothing we can critique?	
04			She?	
05		丁：1. 她比较 perfect，	Ding: 1.She's almost *perfect*	
06	→	2. 凭良心讲。	[in English], 2.to speak	2.intensifi-
07			from my heart.	cation
08		黄：啊唷！	Huang: Wow!	
09		王：（笑）	Wang: (laughs)	
10	→	丁：3. 真额，真额，真额。	Ding: 3.Really, really,	3.intensifi-
11	→	4. 我是心底里是佩服伊	really. 4.I admire her	cation
12		额，5. 但是我自家做勿	from the bottom of my	4.intensifi-
13		到。	heart. 5.But I can't do	cation
14			it myself.	5.comparison
15		黄：〔啊唷！格种恭维吓人	Huang: [Wow/Oh my! This kind	self
16		额……	of flattery is scary...	
17		王：〔我觉着伊一点也勿	Wang: [I think she's not a	
18		perfect额，伊。	bit *perfect* [in	
19			English]... she.	
20		黄：真额，一点也勿	Huang: True, not a bit	
21		perfect。	*perfect* [in English].	
22		丁：6. 没没没，格是……	Ding: 6.No, no, no. You	6.intensifi-
23		〔7. 伊格个脑筋对伐	know... [7.Her mind...	cation
24		啦，伊真额是，8. 一桩	unbelievable. 8.Something	7.comment
25		事体，第二天，就是	comes up... the second	8.example
26		讲，就像……伊一句闲	day... and she's... for	
27		话还是蛮对额……	example... and she's	
28			right about it.	
29		王：〔9. 伊，伊……脑筋是	Wang: [9.She... she...	9.comment
30		额，身体勿来三额。	she's intellectually	
31			[brilliant], but	
32			physically pathetic.	
33		黄：身体来三额！	Huang: My health is fine.	
34		丁：身体是另外桩事体。	Ding: Your health is	
35			something else.	
36		王：格么好来！	Wang: So...	
37		丁：10. 伊有一点，伊有一	Ding: 10.There's one thing...	10.comment
38		点蛮对额，就是讲伊老	there's one thing about	
39		能够克制额。11. 像我	her... that is... she	11.comparison

40		格种人，讲格一点么就	always has herself under	self
41		是呒没修养，对伐，我	control. 11.A person like	
42		格是，我自家晓得。	me... to put it bluntly,	
43		12.伊就是老能够克制	I have no breeding,	12.repetition
44		额。13.老能够，老稳	right? I... I know	13.comment
45		笃笃，稳笃笃额，格么	myself. 12.But she can	
46		也就……	always control herself.	
47			13.She's calm...	
48			unflappable...	
49		王：老稳笃笃，稳笃笃么身	Wang: Yeah, always in	
50		体完蛋了！	control... always in	
51			control until she (her	
52			health) breaks down.	
53		丁：14.而且自家呢，嗳，	Ding: 14.And she can... in	14.comment
54		而且自家又能够做出，	addition she can	
55		做出点事体来额，对	accomplish something. As	
56		伐。格么我是，15.来	for me... 15.in my eyes	15.repetition
57		我眽眼睛里看上去	she's *perfect* [in	
58		perfect。16.格是阿拉	English]. 16.Among our	16.comparison
59		点同学里，当然，当然	old schoolmates, of	other
60		全是……	course... of course	
61			all...	
62		黄：（笑）啊嗐，老吓人	Huang: (laughs) Wow, it's	
63		额！	scary!	
64	→	丁：〔17.真额真额。	Ding: [17.Honestly!	17.intensifi-
65			Honestly!	cation
66		黄：〔伊就当了我额面格能	Huang: [How can she say this	
67		介样子……	to my face.	
68		丁：18.没没没没	Ding: 18.No, no, no, no	18.intensifi-
69		（笑）……	(laughs)...	cation
70		王：（笑）	Wang: (laughs)	
71	→	丁：19.格，格侬看我平常	Ding: 19.You know... Do I	19.intensifi-
72	→	讲伐？〔20.我平常勿	normally say this?	cation
73	→	搭人家讲额。21.真	[20.I never say this to	20.intensifi-
74		额，真额。	others. 21.Honestly,	cation
75			honestly.	21.intensifi-
76	→	王： 〔22.格说明，	Wang: [22.From that you can	cation
77		侬看…… 格是讲出真	tell... It comes from her	22.intensifi-
78		心了。	heart.	cation
79		黄：〔阿拉讲话是真心额，	Huang: [I'm also sincere. I'm	
80		阿拉讲是……	saying...	
81		丁：〔格是，格是，格	Ding: [That's true. That's	
82	→	是……23.而且勿好来	true. 23.And you can't	23.intensifi-
83		每个人来，来场额辰光	say that to everyone...	cation
84		好格能样讲侬，侬讲对	in front of everyone, can	
85		伐啦？	you?	

86	→	王：〔24.格是真心额——	Wang: [24.She's speaking from her heart:::	24.intensifi- cation
87				
88		黄：〔是额——，是真心额	Huang: [Yes:::, she's	
89		呀，我晓得伊是真心额	speaking from her	
90		呀。	heart... I know she's	
91			speaking from her heart.	
92		丁：25.像阿拉，嗳，阿拉	Ding: 25.Like our... uh...	25.repetition
93		格点老同学，其他老同	these old schoolmates of	
94		学中我也勿好去，我也	ours... other old	
95	→	勿去讲伊额。26.真	schoolmates... I can't go	26.intensifi-
96		额，勿讲额。但是	to them... I don't go to	cation
97		我……	them to talk about her	
98			(Huang). 26.Honest, I	
99			don't. But I...	
100		黄：〔阿拉丁涵菱，勿是，	Huang: [My friend Ding	
101		侬晓得伐啦……	Hanling... Did you know	
102			that...	
103		丁：〔……阿拉格点老同学	Ding: [...Of all our old	
104		当中呢，我搭侬讲，	schoolmates... I'll tell	
105		27.阿拉格点老同学当	you this... 27.of all our	27.comparison
106		中对伐，我也全是有各	old schoolmates, I admire	other
107		人各人额佩服伊拉额地	them each for something.	
108	→	方，28.真额。	28.Honestly.	28.intensifi-
109		王：〔27.（笑）伊么比较	Wang: [27.But she (Huang) is	cation
110		perfect。	more *perfect* [in	
111			English].	
112		丁：〔29.罗雅琴就是，罗	Ding: [29.Luo Yaqin for	29.comparison
113		雅琴就是泼辣，对伐，	example... Luo Yaqin is	other
114		但是有辰光也蛮懦弱	bold and daring, isn't	
115		额，有辰光，但是泼辣	she? But sometimes she's	
116		起来也蛮泼辣额噢。	timid... cowardly...	
117			sometimes. But when she's	
118			daring she can be daring.	
119		王：（笑）	Wang: (laughs)	
120		丁：30.格么像何淑清唔啥	Ding: 30.Like He Shuqing...	30.comparison
121		全泼辣，伊拉全，31.	she's also daring.	other
122		邓文心也是蛮肯做，	They're all... 31.Deng	31.comparison
123		32.全蛮好，全有各人	Wenxin is a hard worker.	other
124		各人额特点，格么但是	32.They're all great.	32.comparison
125		比较完美额还是伊（指	They each have their	other
126		黄）。	merits. But the one	
127			closer to perfection is	
128			her (Huang).	
129		黄：啊唷！（笑）	Huang: Wow! (laughs)	
130		王：（笑）	Wang: (laughs)	
131	→	丁：33.真额，真额，真	Ding: 33.Honestly, honestly,	33.intensifi-

132		额。	honestly.	cation
133		黄：勿要吓煞人噢！侬勿要	Huang: Don't scare me to	
134		吓煞人噢！	death! Don't scare me to	
135			death!	
136		丁：〔我本来……嗳，嗳，	Ding: [I used to... hey,	
137		我本来……	hey... I used to...	
138		(omit 6 compliments, 9	(omit 6 compliments, 9 turns,	
139		turns, some of them very	some of them very long)	
140		long)		
141		黄：小丁勿讲假闲话额，讲	Huang: Xiao Ding doesn't lie.	
142		额闲话么全是真额。	She always tells the	
143			truth.	
144		王：对额。	Wang: That's true.	
145	→	丁：40.真额，凭良心讲。	Ding: 40.That's true. I speak	40.intensifi-
146			from my heart.	cation
147		黄：但是呢，呒没介好！	Huang: However, I'm not that	
148			good.	
149		丁：41.没没没没，没瞎	Ding: 41.No, no, no, no. I'm	41.intensifi-
150		讲。	not making it up.	cation
151		王：42.侬么，人么是好	Wang: 42.You (to Huang)...	42.comment
152		额，就是讲么……	you have your heart in	
153			the right place,	
154			however...	
155		(They continue to	(They continue to exchange	
156		exchange compliments.	compliments. Omit the	
157		Omit the remaining 18	remaining 18 turns, 9 more	
158		turns, 9 more	compliments.)	
159		compliments.)		

There are four rounds of *complimenter focused sincerity* strategies used in Excerpt 7.16. The first round is given right after Ding's core compliment strategy, and after Huang's "prelude" to rejection—a sentence-initial interjection "啊唷！ Wow/Oh my!" expressing disbelief. Probably because Ding's core compliment strategy has not been fully rejected yet, the three *sincerity* strategies used by Ding consist of *sincerity* expressions expressing "honesty" ("真额 really/honestly") (C3) and "heart" ("凭良心讲 to speak from my heart," "心底里 from the bottom of my heart") (C2, C4):

Core:	丁：	伊呒没物事好去斗。她比较 perfect，	(C1)
	Ding:	But she's impeccable. She's almost *perfect* [in English],	
Intensification:	丁：	凭良心讲。	(C2)
	Ding:	to speak from my heart.	
Response:	黄：	啊唷！	(Line 8)
	Huang:	Wow/Oh my!	
Intensification:	丁：	真额，真额，真额。	(C3)
	Ding:	Really, really, really.	
Intensification:	丁：	我是心底里是佩服伊额，	(C4)
	Ding:	I admire her from the bottom of my heart.	
Comparison:	丁：	但是我自己做勿到。	(C5)
	Ding:	But I can't do it myself.	

When Ding's core compliment is fully and strongly rejected by Huang as being "scary" ("格种恭维吓人额……") (line 15) and by Wang as being not true ("一点也勿 perfect 额， not a bit *perfect*") (line 17), Ding presents a *negation* strategy ("没没没， No, no, no.") (C6) to reject Huang and Wang's rejections, followed by a series of nine support strategies: five *comments* (C7, C9, C10, C13, C14), one *example* (C8), one *repetition* (C12) and two *comparison* (C11, C16) strategies to substantiate and prove the sincerity of her core compliment. After the nine support strategies, Ding restates her core compliment strategy that in her eyes Huang is "*perfect*" ("来我呃眼睛里看上去 perfect。") (C15).

The second round of *complimenter focused sincerity* strategies are given after Ding's *repetition* of her core compliment strategy is strongly rejected by Huang. This time, Huang states that Ding's compliment is not only "scary" ("（笑）啊唷，老吓人额！ (laughs) Wow, it's scary!") (line 62) but also is said "to her (*my*) face" ("伊就当了我额面格能介样子……") (line 66), which implicates a negative "flattery" intention. To these more serious "sincerity questioning" rejections, Ding again presents a *negation*

strategy ("没没没没（笑）…… No, no, no, no (laughs)...") (C18) to reject Huang's

rejections, and seven *sincerity* strategies to prove her "honesty" ("真额 really/honestly")

(C17, C21, C26) and her "integrity" that she doesn't compliment easily and never

compliments/flatters in public:

Repetition:	丁：	来我哎眼睛里看上去 perfect。	(C15)
	Ding:	in my eyes she's *perfect* [in English].	
Response:	黄：	（笑）啊唷，老吓人额！	(Line 62)
	Huang:	(laughs) Wow, it's scary!	
Intensification:	丁：	真额真额。	(C17)
	Ding:	Honestly! Honestly!	
Response:	黄：	伊就当了我额面格能介样子……	(Line 66)
	Huang:	How can she say this to my face.	
Intensification:	丁：	没没没没（笑）……	(C18)
	Ding:	No, no, no, no (laughs)...	
Intensification:	丁：	格，格侬看我平常讲伐？	(C19)
	Ding:	You know... Do I normally say this?	
Intensification:	丁：	我平常勿搭人家讲额。	(C20)
	Ding:	I never say this to others.	
Intensification:	丁：	真额，真额。	(C21)
	Ding:	Honestly, honestly.	
Intensification:	丁：	而且勿好来每个人来，来场额辰光好格能样讲侬，侬讲对伐啦？	(C23)
	Ding:	And you can't say that to everyone... in front of everyone, can you?	
Intensification:	丁：	像阿拉，嗳，阿拉格点老同学，其他老同学中我也勿好去，我也勿去讲伊额。	(C25)
	Ding:	Like our... uh... these old schoolmates of ours... other old schoolmates... I can't go to them... I don't go to them to talk about her (Huang).	
Intensification:	丁：	真额，勿讲额。	(C26)
	Ding:	Honest, I don't.	

It is interesting to note that after this series of justifications of sincerity by Ding, the third

party, Wang, backs down from her earlier rejection position and supports Ding by

affirming her *sincerity* of intention that Ding's compliment "comes from her heart" (C22),

and "she's speaking from her heart:::" (C24). Huang also backs down, expressing that

she is "also sincere" (line 79) and acknowledging that Ding is "speaking from her heart"

(line 88):

Intensification:	王：	格说明，侬看······ 格是讲出真心了。	(C22)
	Wang:	From that you can tell... It comes from her heart.	
Response:	黄：	阿拉讲话是真心额，阿拉讲是······	(Line 79)
	Huang:	I'm also sincere. I'm saying...	
Intensification:	王：	格是真心额——	(C24)
	Wang:	She's speaking from her heart:::	
Response:	黄：	是额——，是真心额呀，我晓得伊是 真心额呀。	(Line 88)
	Huang:	Yes:::, she's speaking from her heart... I know she's speaking from her heart.	

The third round of *complimenter focused sincerity* strategies is issued after Huang's

acknowledgement of Ding's sincerity and during Ding's comparing Huang with other old

schoolmates. Probably because of the mentioning of their old schoolmates (C25), Ding

goes on to *compare* Huang with their old schoolmates, a general comparison first which

once more brings up Huang's "perfection" (C27), and three old schoolmates in

particular—Luo Yaqin (C29), He Shuqing (C30) and Deng Wenxin (C31), all teaching in

the same university. After these comparisons, Ding again summarizes that compared to

these old schoolmates, Huang is the closer to perfection (C32). The restatements of

"perfection" again trigger off strong rejections from Huang who considers it "scary" (line

133), prefaced again with a *sentence-initial interjection* "啊唷！ Wow!" (line 129):

Comparison:	丁：	阿拉格点老同学当中对伐，我也全是 有各人各人额佩服伊拉额地方，	(C27)
	王：	（笑）伊么比较 perfect。	
	Ding:	of all our old schoolmates, I admire them each for something.	
	Wang:	But she (Huang) is more *perfect* [in English].	

Intensification:	丁：	真额。	(C28)
	Ding:	Honestly.	

(Ding *compares* Huang with Luo Yaqin, He Shuqing and Deng Wenxin.)

Comparison:	丁：	全蛮好，全有各人各人额特点，格么 但是比较完美额还是伊（指黄）。	(C32)
	Ding:	They're all great. They each have their merits. But the one closer to perfection is her (Huang).	
Response:	黄：	啊唷！（笑）	(Line 129)
	Huang:	Wow! (laughs)	
Intensification:	丁：	真额，真额，真额。	(C33)
	Ding:	Honestly, honestly, honestly.	
Response:	黄：	勿要吓煞人噢！侬勿要吓煞人噢！	(Line 133)
	Huang:	Don't scare me to death! Don't scare me to death!	

(Four more *comparison* strategies, one more *example* strategy and one *agreement* strategy follow. These six strategies are omitted in the excerpt.)

Although only two *complimenter focused sincerity* strategies (C28, C33) are used in this round of compliment strategies, the sincerity is expressed by the use of nine *comparison* strategies, five before Huang's rejections (C27, C29–C32), four (omitted) after Huang's rejections. These nine *comparison* strategies provide more evidence to support Ding's core compliment strategy and the restatements of the core compliment strategy that Huang is comparatively the perfect one (C27, C32).

After three rounds of intensive "proving of *sincerity*," Huang backs down further with another acknowledgement that "Ding doesn't lie. She always tells the truth" (line 141) and a downplaying strategy that she's "not that good" (line 147). Ding does not rest her case. She uses another *sincerity* strategy to emphasize she is "speaking from her heart" (C40) and a *negation* strategy (C41) to reject Huang's downplaying response.

Response:	黄：	小丁勿讲假闲话额，讲的闲话么全是 真额。	(Line 141)
		Huang: Xiao Ding doesn't lie. She always tells the truth.	
Intensification:	丁：	真额，凭良心讲。	(C40)
		Ding: That's true. I speak from my heart.	
Response:	黄：	但是呢，呒没介好！	(Line 147)
		Huang: However, I'm not that good.	
Intensification:	丁：	没没没没，没瞎讲。	(C41)
		Ding: No, no, no, no. I'm not making it up.	

Joined by Wang, ten more support compliment strategies (nine of them omitted) follow Ding's *negation* strategy (C41) before the compliment sequence concludes. Again very few—in fact only one *complimenter focused sincerity* strategy (C40) is used in this round of compliments, the *sincerity* is expressed by the use of ten other support compliment strategies (omitted)—four *comments*, three *examples*, one *comparison* and two *intensification* strategies. These strategies provide evidence to reject Huang's downplaying and support Ding's core compliment strategy.

Sequentially, Excerpt 7.16 presents another case of interactional "tug-of-war" between the complimenters and the complimentee. This time the "tug-of-war" is achieved by the use of *questioning/challenging the sincerity* response strategies and *proving the sincerity* compliment strategies.

A couple of important observations have emerged from Excerpt 7.16:

(1) While we have observed intensive rejections of compliments in many excerpts and examples so far (e.g., Excerpts 1.1, 7.2, 7.6, 7.12, 7.13, 7.14, 7.15), this is the first time we see the complimentee directly/explicitly challenge the complimenter's sincerity of her compliments: e.g., "啊唷！格种恭维吓人额……Wow/Oh my! This kind of flattery is scary…" (lines 15–16); "（笑）啊唷，老吓人额！ (laughs) Wow, it's

scary!" (lines 62–63); "伊就当了我额面格能介样子…… How can she say this to my face." (lines 66–67); "啊唷！（笑） Wow! (laughs)" (line 129), "勿要吓煞人噢！侬勿要吓煞人噢！ Don't scare me to death! Don't scare me to death!" (Lines 133–135).

(2) We have also observed that when the complimenter's *sincerity* is challenged, the complimenter not only uses straightforward *sincerity* strategies to openly declare the *sincerity* of her assessment, but also uses other extensive and elaborate support strategies to prove the honesty and integrity of her assessment (e.g., using 36 other support strategies in Excerpt 7.16: nine *comment* strategies, five *examples*, three *repetition* strategies, 13 *comparison* strategies, etc.).

(3) Sequentially, the first round of *sincerity* strategies is positioned differently from the other three rounds. While the other three rounds of *sincerity* strategies mostly follow the complimentee's strong rejection or downplaying of a compliment strategy, the first round is given right after Ding's core compliment strategy and Huang's "prelude" to rejection ("啊唷！ Wow/Oh my!") expressing disbelief, but before the full rejections from Huang and Wang (lines 15–21). While it is understandable to use a *sincerity* (or other support) strategy after the complimentee's rejection of a compliment strategy, the use of a *sincerity* (or other support) strategy immediately after a compliment strategy is telling—it seems as if the complimenter is anticipating and preempting a rejection or a challenge of sincerity from the complimentee. This has been observed in other examples too. For instance, in Example 7.79 (p. 340), Meng follows her compliment ("我一直欢喜看侬额物事额， I've always liked to read your stuff.") with an immediate sincerity strategy ("格不是讲额，真额！ I'm not just saying it. It's true!").

(4) It is further observed that all four rounds of *complimenter focused sincerity* strategies are employed after the complimenter's use or complimentee's rejection of a strategy (the core or a repetition of it) that is of high positive semantic intensity—Huang's being almost perfect. This has been observed in many other examples too. For instance, in Example 7.81 (p. 341), Playwright Wang's compliment strategy which is followed by a sincerity strategy ("真额勿容易！ Truly not easy!") is of high semantic intensity ("我搭侬讲吴局长啊，下头额群众啊，能够碰到个好领导勿容易， Let me tell you, Bureau Chief Wu... people at the grass roots are lucky (it is *not easy*) to come across a leader as good as you are.").

The same has been observed in many other compliment-response sequences that involve the use of strong rejections. For example, in Excerpt 7.6 ("Wow, your apartment is so full of priceless treasures!" p. 267), the six rounds of rejection strategies used by the Wans all follow the compliment strategies of high positive semantic intensity: that the Wans' house is "so full of priceless treasures" ("喔唷，蒋丽华俹屋里哪能介许多无价之宝啦？") (C1), that "(Wow,) everything" in their house "is a priceless treasure" ("喔唷侬样样屋里全是无价之宝！") (C5), that they have "so much famous stuff" ("有介许多有名额物事！") (C9), "Just look at all the (*so much*) stuff she's got..." ("侬看伊有得介多……") (C17), that the Wans have "opened their (*our*) eyes," "opened Miss Hu's (*my*) eyes" today ("阿拉今朝开眼界了今朝。" "今朝拨我开眼界了，") (C15, C27), that she's lucky to "take advantage of Prof. Xu's (*your*) presence" and see "so many good things she (Mrs. Wan) has never showed us" before ("伊介许多好物事对伐，伊没亮相。" "今朝我是借侬光噢！") (C28, C29).

(5) Of particular interest in the "sincerity-challenging" and "sincerity-proving" tug-of-war in Excerpt 7.16 are the "turning points" when the complimentee changes from the early rejection stance to acknowledging the "heart" and "sincerity" of the complimenter's assessment: e.g., "格说明，侬看…… 格是讲出真心了。 From that you can tell... It comes from her heart." (C22), "格是真心额—— She's speaking from her heart:::" (C24), "是额——，是真心额呀，我晓得伊是真心额呀。 Yes:::, she's speaking from her heart... I know she's speaking from her heart." (Line 88), "小丁勿讲假闲话额，讲的闲话么全是真额。 Xiao Ding doesn't lie. She always tells the truth." (Line 141).

The "turning point" has been observed in some other (tug-of-war) excerpts too. For example, in Excerpt 1.1 ("Jin hasn't changed a bit." p. 1), the complimentee changes from vehement rejections to mitigated acceptance by using a confirmation question "老伐啦？ [Am I] old?" (line 18) first, followed by accounts, [the reasons for their staying young are] because their living condition is much better than the complimenter's ("到底是国外辛苦呀，对伐， After all, life is much harder overseas, right?") (lines 24–25), they "pay a lot of attention to health care" ("阿拉平常蛮注意保养额，"), he does not smoke and drink ("我现在烟酒勿碰额。"), and they "travel during the vacation" to relax ("有条件额……假期里去旅游一趟。"). In Excerpt 7.15 ("Only some shrimp and chicken! How can you say that!" p. 331), the complimentee Min also changes from firm rejections that "the portions weren't big at all today" ("实际上今天量不大的呀！") (lines 25–27) and that "there wasn't much of anything today" ("今朝呒没啥物事咾！") (lines 28–29) to acknowledging that the food they have served "would be enough food

for us..." ("不过我觉得呢格能介吃吃也够了我觉得。") (lines 83–87). The turning

points in both excerpts come after series of intensive compliments or rejections of

complimentees' rejections: seven in Excerpt 1.1, and 18 in Excerpt 7.15 including 11

negations and questions as well as examples and comments providing proof and

arguments that Min and Yan have "prepared so much food" ("你们准备了那么多嗳！")

(C15) and the portions certainly "WERE big..." ("大额噢！——") (C6). It seems as if

the complimenter's persistence in each excerpt has convinced the complimentee to accept

the compliment.

All the above observations—the complimentee's explicit challenge of the

complimenter's sincerity of assessment, the complimenter's use of the straightforward

sincerity strategy as well as elaborate and extensive other support strategies to openly

declare and rigorously prove the *sincerity* of his/her assessment, the sequential placement

of the *sincerity* (or other support) strategy not only after a rejection but also immediately

after a compliment strategy, especially after a compliment strategy of high semantic

intensity, and the turning point in the "sincerity-challenging" and "sincerity-proving" tug-

of-war when the complimentee changes from the early rejection to acknowledging the

"heart" and "sincerity" of the complimenter's assessment—make explicit otherwise

implicit so far the importance of *sincerity* underlining Chinese complimenting behavior.

It shows that *sincerity* is "at the back of the mind" of both the complimenter and the

complimentee when they engage in the complimenting speech action. It shows that both

the complimenter and the complimentee are closely monitoring/evaluating and constantly

negotiating to achieve the credibility/validity of the compliment. When a compliment is

general and "high-sounding" (i.e., of very high intensity), it sounds "unreal." When the

complimenter provides "evidence" to bring the compliment "down to earth," and when the complimentee senses the "realness," the credibility/validity of the assessment is established, and the compliment is accepted directly or indirectly (the turning point).

In the first half of the *Intensification Strategy*, I have described *attribute oriented* intensification strategies, their linguistic form, and discourse and functional characteristics. In the second half, I will describe *impact oriented* intensification strategies, their linguistic form, and discourse and functional characteristics.

Impact Oriented

Table 7.1 shows that 123 (14.1%) of the 873 intensification strategies are *impact oriented*. As defined in the introductory remarks, while *attribute oriented* strategies intensify the positive semantic force of the positive assessment of the complimentee, focusing either on the complimentee's positive attribute itself or on the complimenter's sincerity of the assessment, *impact oriented* strategies intensify the positive impact the complimentee has on the complimenter or other. They can be either (a) *emotion focused*, or (b) *action focused*. Like the *complimenter focused sincerity* strategy, all the *impact oriented* strategies are complimenter focused.

Emotion focused. The impact oriented *emotion focused* intensification strategy strengthens the positive semantic force of a positive assessment by emphasizing the positive impact the complimentee has on the complimenter's or other's *emotion*. In other words, instead of emphasizing how good the complimentee is, it focuses on the complimenter's or other's positive feeling evoked by the complimentee's goodness, e.g., fascinated, moved, impressed, inspired, encouraged, thrilled... or even rendered speechless. For example, in Excerpt 7.15 ("ONLY some shrimp and chicken! How can

you say that!" p. 331), two of Xue's intensification strategies are *emotion focused*. Instead of intensifying how good Min's cooking is, they emphasize how Xue has been positively impacted emotionally by Min's excellent cooking: it "has left her with beautiful memories" ("留下了美好的记忆！") (C10), and she will be "missing Min's cooking so so much" ("以后要馋死掉了！") (C11). Since the focus is on the complimenter's or other's *emotion*, first person focus or third person focus is normally employed. The e*motion focused* strategy is realized by using mainly stative verbs or phrases (i.e., verbs or phrases that describe a state of being), specifically stative verbs or phrases expressing *emotion* such as the following:

Stative verbs or phrases expressing emotion:

> e.g. 喜欢 (like, love), 佩服 (admire), 敬佩 (respect), 感动 (touched, moved), 激动 (excited), 印象深刻, 有印象 (impressed), 高兴, 开心 (happy), 欢喜 (thrilled), 眼热 (envy, envious), 迷 (obsessed, attracted to, infatuated with, fascinated by), 开眼界 (eyes are opened), 领教 (it's a treat), 记得 (remember), 不会忘记, 不能够忘记 (won't / can't forget), 勿敢相信 (can't believe), 勿敢想象 (can't imagine), 少不了你 (can't do without you), 有福气, 运道好 (lucky, fortunate), 勿谈了, 勿讲了, 呒没闲话讲 (speechless, have no words), etc.

Table 7.1 shows that 56 (6.4%) of the 873 intensification strategies are *emotion focused*. Examples 7.82 to 7.88 illustrate how the *emotion focused* strategy is used to strengthen the positive semantic force of a positive assessment.

Core or Other Strategy	Intensification	Core or Other Strategy English Translation	Intensification English Translation
(7.82) 梅：有劲有劲！ 　长得介高了！ 梅：（笑）一歇歇 　介大了，	梅：简直**勿敢相信**！ 梅：**勿敢相信**！ 　简直**勿敢想象**！	Mei: Very interesting. Very interesting! She's grown so tall! Mei: (laughs) She's grown up so fast.	Mei: I simply **can't believe** it! Mei: I **can't believe** it! I simply **can't imagine**!

(7.83) 戴：这套书编得真棒，	戴：我到现在对这书的**印象**还**很深刻**。	Dai: This series of textbooks is really well-written.	Dai: I still **have a deep impression** of them to this day.
(7.84) 砚：那天我们在看照片，看到你那两张老灵的照片，	砚：结果廖东海看到了噢，他**激动**得不得了！	Yan: We were looking at pictures the other day and saw two great pictures of you...	Yan: What happened was... Liao Donghai saw the picture and got terribly **excited**.
(7.85) 邻居刘：侬看，环境介好，后头全是树，草地。格房子介新，	邻居刘：我**眼热**也眼热煞了。	Neighbor Ms. Liu: You see, the environment is so great. Back there... it's all trees and lawns. The house is so new.	Neighbor Ms. Liu: I'm so so **envious**.
(7.86) 史审计：嗳，阿拉卢老师人生经历多了！	史审计：**太晚认得侬了**！（笑）	Auditor Shi: Yeah... our Teacher Lu is rich in life's experiences.	Auditor Shi: **Wish I'd known you earlier**! (laughs)
(7.87) 夏审计：偌高水平碰高水平了！	夏审计：……拔阿拉开**开眼界**了！（笑）	Auditor Xia: The two of you, each is as skillful as the other.	Auditor Xia: ...You've **opened our eyes**! (laughs) (*Our eyes have been opened!*)
(7.88) 经理：囡五是，从小到大一直得额，拿奖学金额！暑假里厢打工也好一个月头拿两千多……姆妈也吭没介许多！	经理：阿拉**勿讲**了！	Manager: His daughter was always a scholarship winner... from childhood on... She works during summer vacation... makes over two thousand yuan a month... Even her mom doesn't make that much.	Manager: **What can I say**? / I'm **speechless**!

First person focus "我 I" or "阿拉 I/we" is employed (or implied) in almost all the

intensification strategies in Examples 7.82 to 7.88. The intensification strategies focus on

the complimenter's or other's (Example 7.84) positive *emotion* evoked by the

complimentee's goodness. Mei is greatly "amazed" ("勿敢相信," "勿敢想象") by Qun's daughter grown into a mature and beautiful young lady; local guide Dai is deeply "impressed" ("印象很深刻") by the tour leader's successful textbook series; Liao Donghai is terribly "excited" ("激动") at the sight of his former teacher's beautiful picture; Ms. Liu is "envious" ("眼热") of her neighbor Mrs. Gu's daughter's new house and beautiful location; Auditor Shi is so impressed by Auditor Lu's rich experience that she deeply "regrets" she had not known her colleague earlier ("太晚认得侬了"); Auditor Xia's eyes have been opened by the accountants' skills ("开开眼界了"); and the company manager is rendered "speechless" ("勿讲了") by the director's daughter's excellence. Note most of the verbs used are stative verbs describing a state of emotion: "勿敢相信 can't believe," "勿敢想象 can't imagine," "对……印象很深刻 have a deep impression," "激动 excited," "眼热 envious," "太晚认得侬了 Wish I'd known you earlier," "开眼界 eyes have been opened," and "勿讲了 speechless." The description of the complimenter's or other's positive *emotion* in each example adds personal touches to the positive assessment, greatly strengthening the positive semantic force of the compliment.

Excerpt 7.17 illustrates how the impact oriented *emotion focused* strategy is used in a complete compliment-response sequence to achieve emphasis.

Excerpt 7.17 [113] "Wow! I'm thrilled to death!"

Situation: At a small get-together. Weiqi's [F, 36] friends Liping [F, 46] and Wenjuan [F, 43] collect stamps. They love foreign stamps. Weiqi has brought them some foreign commemorative stamps.

01		玮琦："花"拨侬。格套呢？	Weiqi: You take the "flowers." What about this set?	
02				
03				
04		莉萍：也拨伊也拨伊，算了！	Liping: Let her have this. Let her have this. That's fine.	
05				
06				
07		文娟：1.喔唷！太好了！	Wenjuan: 1.Wow! Great! 2.I'm so terribly happy!	1.core great gift stamps
08	→	2.我开心死了！		
09		玮琦：（笑）呶，格两套拨侬了，格两套阿拉送拨莉萍了。（对莉萍说）格两套侬看看，我自己也呒没看过。	Weiqi: (laughs) Here, these two sets go to you. I'll give these two sets to Liping. (to Liping) You take a look at these two sets. I haven't looked at them either.	2.intensification
10				
11				
12				
13				
14				
15				
16				
17	→	文娟：3.哎玮琦，真喜欢！	Wenjuan: 3.Oh, Weiqi. I'm thrilled!	3.intensification
18	→	4.喜欢死了！	4.I'm thrilled to death!	4.intensification
19				
20				
21		玮琦：嗳，〔阿拉格套拨侬。	Weiqi: Well, [this set goes to you.	
22				
23	→	文娟：　〔5.阿拉囡五欢喜煞了！	Wenjuan:　[5.My daughter will be thrilled to death!	5.intensification
24				
25				
26		玮琦：真啊？噢俉囡五集邮啊？	Weiqi: Really? Oh, your daughter collects stamps?	
27				
28				

Four intensification strategies are used by Wenjuan in this short excerpt to strengthen the positive semantic force of her core compliment strategy on Weiqi's great gift of stamps. Instead of intensifying how good the stamps are, all four intensification strategies focus on how much the amazing stamps have impacted the complimentee's emotion: they have aroused an intense feeling of happiness ("我开心死了！ I'm so terribly happy!") (C2) and excitement ("真喜欢！ I'm thrilled!" "喜欢死了！ I'm thrilled to death!") (C3, C4) in her heart, and will inspire the same excitement in her daughter's heart ("阿拉囡五欢喜煞了！ My daughter will be thrilled to death!") (C5). Expressing how much the

complimenter likes the stamps, how happy and thrilled she is, and how happy and thrilled

her daughter will be seeing and receiving the stamps, adds personal touches to the core

compliment strategy, making the stamps even more desirable. First person focus "我 I"

or third person focus "阿拉囡五 my daughter" is employed or implied. The verbs used

are stative verbs describing a state of emotion: "开心 happy" and "喜欢/欢喜

like/thrilled."

　　　　Excerpt 7.18 illustrates how the impact oriented *emotion focused* strategy is used

in another complete compliment-response sequence to achieve emphasis.

Excerpt 7.18 [12] "I'm deeply touched, deeply touched by your letters."

Situation: Yang [F, 46], Qiong [F, 53] and Jing [F, 56] used to teach English in the same
university. Since Yang left Shanghai, she writes a year-end letter in English to her friends
every year to share news and thoughts. Qiong [F] loves her letters. The three friends are at
Jing's home for a reunion.

01 02 03 04 05	琼：1.阳阳，侬格信写得是真好啦！2.我全拿伊做范文啦！	Qiong: Yangyang, your letters are so well written. 2.I've adopted all of them as writing models [for students].	1.core well-written letters 2.intensifi- cation
06 07 08	阳：（笑）范文，勿要搞了！（笑）……	Yang: (laughs) Models, you must be mistaken! (chuckles)...	
09 10	琼：3.我全藏了海，	Qiong: 3.I've filed all of them.	3.intensifi- cation
11	阳：（笑）	Yang: (chuckles)	
12 13	琼：4.拿人家写拨我，老灵额信对伐，	Qiong: 4.Letters written to me, great letters...	4.comment
14	阳：嗳，	Yang: Yeah?	
15 16	琼：我全格能介藏，一沓！	Qiong: ...I've filed all of them. A pile.	
17	阳：是伐？（笑）	Yang: Really? (laughs)	
18 19 20 21 22	琼：5.有辰光，有辰光屋里厢一个人也呒没全跑出去了啦，〔我就拿出来看看，6.真灵啊，我觉着全！	Qiong: 5.Sometimes... sometimes when there's nobody at home, when they've all gone out, [I take the letters	5.Intensifi- cation 6.intensifi- cation

23			out and read them.	
24			6.So beautifully	
25			written, all of them!	
26		阳: 〔就看看白相	Yang: [Read and enjoy them	
27		相（笑）……我也，我	(laughs)... I also...	
28		也积起来，拿人家交关	I also collect them. I	
29		信全藏了海，	file away lots of	
30			letters people write	
31			me.	
32		琼: 嗳,	Qiong: Yeah.	
33		阳: 人家假使，寄拨我信	Yang: If people write to	
34		全……	me...	
35	→	琼: ……7.看了很感动很感	Qiong: ...7.I'm deeply	7.intensifi-
36		动的！	touched, deeply	cation
37			touched by them.	
38		阳: 有啥感动啦，噢？何静	Yang: What's there to be	
39		噢？	moving? Right, He	
40			Jing?	
41		琼: 8.感动伐？何静？	Qiong: 8.Aren't they moving,	8.repetition
42			He Jing?	
43		静: （Talking to	Jing: (Talking to others)	
44		others）		

In Excerpt 7.18, Qiong is so impressed by Yang's beautifully written English letters that a series of five intensification strategies along with a repetition of the intensification strategy are used to emphasize her core compliment strategy. Except for one intensification strategy which is *attribute oriented*, increasing the degree of positiveness of the positive assessment by using a combination of an intensifier "真 really/so" and a sentence-final particle "啊 [a], so" ("真灵啊，我觉着全！ So beautifully written, all of them!") (C6), four other intensification strategies are all *impact oriented*. Three *impact oriented* strategies are *action focused*, i.e., emphasizing the positive impact the complimentee has on the complimenter's or other's action—what the complimenter or other does/would do as a result of his/her admiration for the complimentee's goodness (C2, C3, C5) (see analysis in the next section on the *action focused* strategy). The last *impact oriented* strategy is *emotion focused*, describing how Yang's beautiful letters have

inspired a positive feeling in Qiong's heart: she is deeply touched by them ("看了很感动很感动的！") (C7), which is repeated ("感动伐？ Aren't they moving?") (C8) when Yang rejects her intensification strategy. Expressing how deeply touched the complimenter, Qiong, is and describing her "fan acts" or "star-chasing acts" (i.e., acts of strong admiration; see next section) definitely add personal touches to the core compliment strategy, making the letters even more desirable to read.

Action focused. The impact oriented *action focused* intensification strategy strengthens the positive semantic force of a positive assessment by emphasizing the positive impact the complimentee has on the complimenter's or other's *action*. In other words, instead of emphasizing how good the complimentee is, it focuses on what the complimenter or other does or would do ("fan acts" or "star-chasing acts") as a result of his/her admiration for the complimentee's goodness, e.g., chases after the complimentee, follows the complimentee's lead, eats more complimentee's cooking, etc. For example, in Excerpt 7.4 ("Teacher Shi is an all-round talent!" p. 259), Manager Yu uses an *action focused* strategy ("所以是格能就讲侬走一步我就跟一步噢？ ……随便到啥地方去全…… That's why I say... you take a step, and I'll follow you in taking a step... wherever you go...") (C12) to intensify the core and other support compliment strategies on Auditor Shi's all-round talent. In Excerpt 7.18 in the preceding section (p. 361), three of Qiong's intensification strategies are also *action focused*. Instead of intensifying how well-written Yang's letters are, they emphasize what Yang's beautiful letters have inspired Qiong to do: adopting Yang's letters as writing models for students ("我全拿伊做范文啦！") (C2), filing all the letters ("我全藏来海") (C3), and taking them out and reading them when everyone's out ("我就拿出来看看") (C5). Since the focus is on the

complimenter's or other's action, first person focus or third person focus is normally

employed. The a*ction focused* strategy is realized by using mainly dynamic verbs or

phrases (i.e., verbs or phrases that describe an action), such as the following:

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Dynamic verbs or phrases describing action:
   e.g. 拖了我逃 (drag me to elope), 跟牢侬跑, 追 (pursue, chase after),
        再吃一只 (eat one more), 胃口又来了 (appetite comes again),
        盯着你的照片 (stared at your picture), 穷看穷看 (looked and looked),
        穷讲, 直说 (talked and talked, kept exclaiming),
        全看来海，哄来海 (everyone's watching, thronged around her),
        往你那边挤着听 (squeeze into your group to listen to you.),
        听得来是 (all ears), 全买格只花头 (all buy this flower pattern),
        欢喜伊 (love her), 帮伊介绍 (recommend her), 挖了跑 (steal him away),
        再叫伊弄 (ask him to do it again), 交拨伊, 承包 (send / farm out to him),
        要来额 (come along), 听你安排 (do whatever you say),
        来跟侬学 (come and learn from you), 跟侬走 (follow your lead),
        跟侬去见识见识 (tag along to broaden my horizons), etc.

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Table 7.1 shows that 67 (7.7%) of the 873 intensification strategies are *action focused*.

Examples 7.89 to 7.95 illustrate how the *action focused* strategy is used to strengthen the

positive semantic force of a positive assessment.

Core or Other Strategy	Intensification	Core or Other Strategy English Translation	Intensification English Translation
(7.89) 林：结果后头格个 taxi driver，盯牢子，就拨我迷牢了，	林：伊迷得来是……（笑）	Lin: Later... in the end... that *taxi driver* followed me everywhere. He became obsessed with me…	Lin: He was so obsessed… (laughs)
林：后来伊讲刚刚我接到一个啥个中国人噢，伊漂亮是漂亮得来像电影明星。	林：**穷讲，穷讲，讲得来是，**	Lin: Later she said... he (the taxi driver) had just had a Chinese lady in his taxi… she was so very beautiful, as beautiful as a movie star.	Lin: He (the taxi driver) **kept talking and talking and talking**.

(7.90) 客 2：喔唷——！ 老灵呕——！ 男主人：啥额侬，是要吃塌伊噢！只有一点点，吃光噢！	客 2：再吃一只，老灵呕！ 客 2：噢，你不用讲的，**我会吃的**（笑）！	Guest 2: Wow... delicious...! (shrimp dish) Host: Of course... you must eat all of it! There are only a few. Finish it all!	Guest 2: **I'll eat one more**... delicious! Guest 2: Oh, you don't need to urge me. **I'll help myself** (laughs)!
(7.91) 段教授：翁老师，你爱人的病怎么样了？ 翁老师：（教务处办公室干部）谢谢段老！您多费心了！	翁老师：［您的药］吃了第一剂病好了大半，第二剂就全好了。**第三剂我留她下次再服**！	Prof. Duan: Teacher Weng, how's your wife doing? Teacher Weng (employee at the dean's office): Thank you, Professor Duan, for going to so much trouble to help her.	Teacher Weng: She was more than half way recovered after taking the first dose [of the medicine you prescribed]. She was completely recovered after the second dose. **I'm saving the third dose for next time**!
(7.92) 女售货员 1：弹得蛮好呕！ 女售货员 2：暖格手式瞎好噢？ 女售货员 4：暖，看伊小倒蛮来三噢？ 女孩母亲：（笑）	女售货员 1：喔唷，全**看了海**，要买钢琴了要。 女售货员 2：（笑）阿是啊？全**过去了**，乃阿拉生意呒没来！（笑） 女售货员 2：介许多人**哄了海**！（笑）	Salesgirl 1: She plays [the piano] quite well! Salesgirl 2: Yeah, the way she holds her hands is so beautiful, isn't it? Salesgirl 4: Yeah… She looks so young, but she plays so well, doesn't she? Girl's Mom: (smiles)	Salesgirl 1: Wow… everyone's **watching her play**. They're **going to buy a piano** now. Salesgirl 2: (laughs) Isn't that true? Everyone's **gone over there**, **and we're left with no business**. (laughs) Salesgirl 2: So many people are **thronged around her**! (laughs)

(7.93) 客 1：俉迭个，俉，俉格搭供得了格种本事真额是，	客 1：人家快点要**挖了跑了**！假使我是伊个我就**挖伊跑了**！（笑）	Guest 1：How… how can you retain such a highly skilled chef?	Guest 1: People will try to **steal him away from you**. If it were me I'd **steal him away from you**. (laughs)
(7.94) 厂长：严主任很上道！我全国这么多省的牙病指导所我还没碰到这样的人……	副厂长：**谁都没有找**！我们两个人啊，谁都没有找！昨天下大雨…… 厂长：我，是我，是我说的，**找到严主任，听他安排**。	Factory Manager: Director Yan is a standup guy! I've worked with so many provincial tooth disease control centers nationwide, but I've never met a person like you...	Deputy Factory Manager: **We didn't go to anyone else**! The two of us... we didn't go to anyone else! There was a downpour yesterday... Factory Manager: I... I said, go... **go to Director Yan. We'll do whatever he says**.
(7.95) 史审计：格，格（笑），勿出一根香烟……格俉来三额！	陆审计：格阿拉**跟了侬去见识见识**好伐？ 洪财会：（笑）**见识见识**……	Auditor Shi: Well... well... (laughs), without paying the price of a cigarette... then you ARE good.	Auditor Lu: Could I **tag along... just to broaden my horizon**? Accountant Hong: (laughs) **Just to broaden my horizon**...

First person focus "我 I," "我们 we" or "阿拉 I/we," or third person focus "伊 he," "全 everyone" or "人家 people" are employed (or implied) in the intensification strategies in Examples 7.89 to 7.95. The intensification strategies focus on the complimenter's or other's positive *action* ("fan acts") as a result of their admiration for the complimentee's goodness. The taxi driver couldn't stop talking about his passenger's beauty ("穷讲，穷讲，讲得来是，"). Guest 2 couldn't help serving herself the delicious shrimp ("再吃一只， I'll eat one more..."; "你不用讲的，我会吃的！ you don't need to urge me. I'll

help myself!"). Teacher Weng is "saving" Prof. Duan's "magic" Chinese herbal remedy for future use ("第三剂我留她下次再服！"). The girl plays the piano so well that the customers have abandoned the salesgirls in the other departments ("乃阿拉生意呒没来！"), all gone over to the piano department ("全过去了"), "thronged around" her ("哄了海") and "watching" her play ("全看了海"), seeming like all "going to buy a piano" ("要买钢琴了要。"). The chef cooks with such high skill that everyone would try to "steal him away" ("要挖了跑了," "挖伊跑了"). Director Yan is such a standup guy that the factory managers would only "go to him" and "do whatever he says" ("谁都没有找！" "找到严主任，听他安排。"). The auditors and Accountant Hong admire the manager's public relations skills so much that they beg her to let them "tag along" and "broaden their horizon" ("跟了侬去见识见识"). Note all the verbs used are dynamic verbs describing an action: "讲 talk," "吃 eat," "留 save," "过去 go over to," "看 watch," "哄 throng around," "要买 going to buy," "挖跑 steal away," "找到 go to," "听安排 do as told," "跟去 tag along," and "见识 broaden horizon/experience and learn." The description of the complimenter's or other's "star chasing" *action* in each example vividly animate the positive assessment, greatly strengthening the positive semantic force of the compliment.

Excerpt 7.19 illustrates how the impact oriented *action focused* strategy is used in a complete compliment-response sequence to achieve emphasis.

Excerpt 7.19 [145] "A mob of foreign men would be running after you!"

Situation: At a high school class reunion dinner to honor Shao [F], who has just returned to Shanghai from abroad for a visit. In this part of the conversation, they are discussing how Chinese and Westerners value beauty differently. Guan [F], Miao [F], Ke [F], Jiang [F], and Cai [M] are all around 45 years old.

01 02	关：1.邵云云一点也勿老！	Guan: 1.Shao Yunyun hasn't aged at all!	1.core 1 young look
03 04	邵：勿老啊？老噢！	Shao: I haven't aged? I'm so old!	
05 06 07 08 09	关：2.邵云云蹲了西方人伊搭，人家肯定当伊大概只有廿几岁。	Guan: 2.Shao Yunyun over there in the eyes of the Westerners... they must think she's only twenty something.	2.comparison other
10 11 12 13	苗：〔3.嗳伊拉讲伊是格额格额，中国美女！4.中国美女！	Miao: [3.Hey, they say she's a... a... Chinese beauty! 4.A Chinese beauty!	3.core 2 beautiful 4.repetition
14 15	邵：〔西方人两样额。	Shao: [People in the West are different.	
16	关：嗳。	Guan: Yeah.	
17 18 19 20	邵：（笑苗说的话）5.㑚跑到西方全是美女了！（笑）	Shao: (laughs at Miao's story) 5.If you go to the West, you will all be beauties! (laughs)	5.core 3 beautiful
21	（大家笑）	(Everyone laughs)	
22 23	关：东方人对伐啦，帮伊拉两样额。	Guan: People in the East... are different from them.	
24	柯：（笑）	Ke: (laughs)	
25 26	蔡：6.伊拉，皮肤格搭全一块块额（？）……	Cai: 6.Their skin... all stained(?)...	6.comparison other
27 28	柯：……7.嗳，皮肤老粗额！	Ke: ...7.Yeah, their skin's very coarse.	7.comparison other
29	蔡：8.嗳。	Cai: 8.Yeah.	8.agreement
30 31 32 33 34	苗：9.格额，像关小波㑚去了绝对是美女！10.格一眼勿吹牛额！	Miao: 9.Uh... like Guan Xiaobo, if you went over there you'd absolutely be a beauty! 10.No exaggeration at all.	9.example 10.intensifi- cation
35 36 37	关：喔唷！（大家笑，一起说话。）	Guan: Oh! (Everyone laughs, talking at the same time)	
38 39	柯：〔不过我搭侬讲……（？）	Ke: [But let me tell you this...(?)	

40	→	邵：〔11.我搭侬讲，后	Shao:[11.Let me tell you... a	11.intensifi-
41		头，一群外国人要跟牢	mob of foreign men would	cation
42		侬跑来！	be running after you!	
43		（大家笑）	(Everyone laughs)	
44	→	邵：12.追侬来！	Shao: 12.Chasing you around	12.intensifi-
45			everywhere!	cation
46		苗：13.嗳，（笑）追侬	Miao: 13.Yeah, (laughs)	13.agreement
47		来！（笑）	chasing you around	
48			everywhere! (laughs)	
49		（大家笑）	(Everyone laughs)	
50		邵：14.江冬芹去了也是美	Shao: 14.If Jiang Dongqin	14.example
51		女，江冬芹！（笑）	were to go over there	
52			you'd be a beauty too,	
53			Jiang Dongqin! (laughs)	
54		（大家笑）	(Everyone laughs)	
55		蔡：15.有辰光看看，外国	Cai: 15.Sometimes I look at	15.comparison
56		人旁边，一额额格种介	the girls hanging out	other
57		小姑娘，老难看，老难	with the foreigners...	
58		看额对伐啦！	those girls... so	
59			ugly... so very ugly!	
60		大家：16.嗳！（大家说	Everyone: 16.Yeah.	16.agreement
61		话）	(everyone's talking)	
62		苗：〔但是外国人感觉老好	Miao: [But the foreigners	
63		额阿是啊？17.东方美	think they're great,	17.repetition
64		女！（笑）	don't they? 17.Asian	
65			beauty! (laughs)	
66		邵：〔嗳，伊拉，伊拉对	Shao: [Yeah. They... they see	
67		伐，看侬两样额！	you differently!	
68		(Ke tells a story about	(Ke tells a story about the	
69		the foreign specialists	foreign specialists in her	
70		in her company.)	company.)	

In Excerpt 7.19, after Shao Yunyun is complimented as a Chinese beauty (C3), Shao

returns the same compliment to all the girls present ("侬跑到西方全是美女了！ If you

go to the West, you will all be beauties!") (C5). Miao, who has also been abroad, singles

out Guan Xiaobo as an "absolute beauty" ("侬去了绝对是美女！") (C9) by Western

standards. To strengthen Miao's example strategy, three intensification strategies are

used. The first one is an *attribute oriented* sincerity strategy emphasizing that Miao is

"not exaggerating at all" ("格一眼勿吹牛额!") (C10). The other two are *impact oriented*

action focused strategies, describing what Guan's beauty would impact the foreign men to do: a mob of them "would be running after her (*you*)" ("后头，一群外国人要跟牢侬跑来！") (C11) and "chasing her (*you*) around everywhere" ("追侬来！") (C12), which is agreed with and repeated by Miao ("嗳，追侬来！ Yeah, chasing you around everywhere!") (C13). The dynamic verb and verb phrase used ("跟牢 [侬] 跑 running after [you]," "追 chasing around") animate the positive assessment "美女 beauty." The vivid "star chasing" image presented by these *action focused* strategies forcefully enhances the positive semantic strength of the positive assessment, making Guan's beauty even more desirable.

Excerpt 7.20 illustrates in another complete compliment-response sequence how the impact oriented *action focused* strategy is used to achieve emphasis.

Excerpt 7.20 [108] "I've eaten two big bowlfuls of wonton already." "Mom, give me two more wontons."

Situation: Yuanyuan [F, 46] is visiting her brother Feng's [M, 51] family. She and her niece Wei [F, 22] have just returned from a shopping trip. While shopping, they had a late Japanese lunch. Feng's wife Mianmian [F, 53] has prepared delicious wonton for them.

01	元：绵绵，这是馄饨啊？	Yuan: Mianmian, these are	
02		wontons, aren't they?	
03	风：1.绵绵馄饨老好吃额今	Feng: 1.Mianmian, your	1.core
04	朝！	wontons are	delicious
05		delicious... today...	wonton
06	为：2.姆妈今朝大显身手！	Wei: 2.Mom is putting on a	2.intensifi-
07	对伐，	talent show today,	cation
08		isn't she?	
09	元：（笑）3.汤鲜得来。	Yuan: (laughs) 3.The soup is	3.comment
10		delicious.	
11	为：嗯，味精加倍摆。	Wei: Hum... an extra dose of	
12		MSG.	
13	元：（笑）	Yuan: (laughs)	
14	风：4.那姆妈勿摆味精额。	Feng: 4.Your mother doesn't	4.comment
15	5. 从来勿摆额，6.我有	use MSG. 5.Never. 6.I	5.intensifi-

16		辰光要摆一眼，烧菜。	sometimes use a bit... when I'm cooking.	cation 6.comparison self
17				
18		绵：好吃伐啦元元？	Mian: How does it taste	
19			(*Does it taste good*),	
20			Yuanyuan?	
21		元：7.嗯，好吃！8.好吃！	Yuan: 7.Hum, it's delicious!	7.agreement
22			8.It's delicious!	8.repetition
23		绵：嗳，格么多吃呀，	Mian: Then you should eat a	
24		〔胃口……	lot. [Your appetite...	
25	→	元：〔9.胃口又来了！	Yuan: [9.It has brought	9.intensifi-
26		10.（笑）格只紫菜一	back my appetite.	cation
27		吊，胃口又来了！	(laughs) 10.The seaweed	10.repetition
28		（笑）	[in the soup]...	
29			stimulates my appetite	
30			again (has brought back	
31			my appetite). (laughs)	
32		为：〔……？？	Wei: [...??	
33		绵：〔格只汤噢，海带，紫	Mian: [This soup has...	
34		菜，	kelp strips and	
35			seaweed ...	
36		元：嗯，	Yuan: Yeah.	
37		绵：好吃伐啦，馄饨？	Mian: How do you like it	
38			(*Does it taste good*)...	
39			the wonton?	
40		元：11.嗯——，格只是清	Yuan: 11.Hum... it's light	11.comment
41		香，12.格只馄饨清	and delicious. 12.Your	12.repetition
42		香！13.真额赞！	wonton's light and	13.intensifi-
43		〔绵绵侬，侬……	delicious. 13.Really	cation
44			great! [Mianmian you...	
45			you...	
46		为：〔姆妈侬摆点香菜伐？	Wei: [Did mother add	
47			some cilantro?	
48		元：……14.菜饭也灵	Yuan: ...14.The vegetable	14.comment
49		（笑），馄饨也灵	rice is great (laughs).	
50		15.交关赞！	The wonton is great.	15.repetition
51			15.So great!	
52		绵：还有一盒饭搭侬装好来	Mian: I've boxed a meal for	
53		海。	you to take home.	
54		元：嗯！	Yuan: Oh.	
55	→	为：16.姆妈侬包……馄饨	Wei: 16.Mom, box some	16.intensifi-
56		让我带到学堂里厢去。	wontons for me... to	cation
57			take to school.	
58		绵：我今朝就包一包皮子，	Mian: I only made a package	
59		多就勿灵了，物事弄多	of wonton wrappers	
60		勿灵额！	today. If I made more,	
61			it wouldn't be as good.	

62			Too much of anything is	
63			no good.	
64		元：17.赞赞赞！18.格只物	Yuan: 17.Great, great, great!	17.repetition
65		事赞！	18.This is great!	18.repetition
66		绵：好吃伐？里厢香菜西洋	Mian: Does it taste good?	
67		菜。	There are cilantro and	
68			watercress inside.	
69		元：19.嗯，格只馄饨赞！	Yuan: 19.Hum... this wonton	19.repetition
70			is great.	
71		为：……酱呢？姆妈格个，	Wei: Where's the bean sauce?	
72		弄眼……酱。	Mom... get some bean	
73			sauce.	
74		绵：好额。	Mian: Sure.	
75		绵：侬觉着我眼馄饨势头哪	Mian: What do you think of	
76		能？鲜伐？啊？	the flavor of my	
77			wonton today? Isn't it	
78			delicious?	
79		元：20.好好好好好吃！	Yuan: 20.Great, great, great!	20.repetition
80		21.格只今朝是，菜香！	21.Today's wonton has	21.comment
81			delicious vegetable	
82			flavor.	
83		风：22.赞额， 23.邪气好！	Feng: 22.Very good. 23.	22.repetition
84			Wonderful!	23.intensifi-
85		元：24.今朝菜香。	Yuan: 24.Today's wonton has	cation
86			delicious vegetable	24.repetition
87			flavor.	
88		风：25.清新。	Feng: 25.Light and fresh.	25.comment
89		绵：……我希望侬多多吃	Mian: ...I would like you to	
90		噢。（稍停顿）格只馄	eat a lot today. (after	
91		饨赞勿啦？	a short pause) Are the	
92			wontons good?	
93		元：（Mumbles with food	Yuan: (Mumbles with food in	
94		in mouth） 26.嗯！	mouth) 26.Hum.	26.agreement
95	→	风：27.我馄饨已经两大碗	Feng: 27.I've eaten two big	27.intensifi-
96		了。	bowlfuls of wonton	cation
97			already.	
98		绵：冲，汤还要冲点勿啦？	Mian: Add... soup... add some	
99			soup?	
100		风：勿要，	Feng: No.	
101		绵：格汤鲜噢？……我今朝	Mian: The soup is delicious,	
102		弄得来虾仁还排勿进。	isn't it? ...I still	
103			have a course of shrimp	
104			I have no way of	
105			serving.	
106	→	元：28.绵绵我已经四只馄饨	Yuan: 28.Mianmian, I've eaten	28.intensifi-
107		下去了啊！	four wontons already.	cation

108		绵：嗳，我四十只，	Mian: Oh, I've prepared forty.	
109				
110		元：（笑）	Yuan: (laughs)	
111		绵：四个人，我今朝十只一个人。	Mian: Four people. I've prepared ten each.	
112				
113		为：侬要伐？	Wei: Do you want more?	
114	→	风：〔29.我十只已经吃塌了。	Feng: [29.I've already eaten ten.	29.intensification
115				
116		绵：〔我还有一盆已经冰上去了。冰上去拨元元明朝带好了。	Mian: [I have another boxful in the fridge... for Yuanyuan to take home with her tomorrow.	
117				
118				
119				
120		(Feng usually doesn't like Wonton, but today he's asking for more.)	(Feng usually doesn't like wonton, but today he's asking for more.)	
121				
122				
123	→	风：30.我绕［添］三只噢，十三只噢。	Feng: 30.Give me three more. That makes 13 for me.	30.intensification
124				
125		元：（笑）	Yuan: (laughs)	
126	→	为：31.姆妈再把我添两只馄饨，……	Wei: 31.Mom, give me two more wontons.	31.intensification
127				
128		元：来，我来搭侬添……	Yuan: Here, let me serve them to you...	
129				
130		绵：为今朝仍旧吃勿塌啥。	Mian: Wei hasn't eaten much today.	
131				
132	→	元：32.今朝阿拉两个头主要外头吃过了。	Yuan: 32.The problem is that we two had already eaten outside.	32.intensification
133				
134				
135		绵：嗳。	Mian: Oh.	
136		元：32.外头哦，〔外头勿吃过要象饿狼一样，33.阿拉已经蛮结棍咾！	Yuan: 32.Outside...[if we hadn't eaten outside we would be eating like hungry wolves. 33.We've already done very well!	
137	→			33.intensification
138				
139				
140				
141	→	为：〔34.我也算蛮结棍咾！35.我吃过还是十一只馄饨下去噢！	Wei: [34.I've done pretty well! 35.I ate out, but I still ate 11 wontons!	34.intensification
142	→			35.intensification
143				
144				
145		绵：侬啊？	Mian: You did?	
146		元：36.侬十一只馄饨啊？	Yuan: 36.You... 11 wontons?	36.intensification
147		为：37.嗳！	Wei: 37.Yeah.	
148	→	元：38.我八只。	Yuan: 38.I've eaten eight.	37.agreement
149		绵：格只馄饨好吃噢？	Mian: This wonton tastes good, doesn't it?	38.intensification
150				
151		为：39.嗳。	Wei: 39.Yeah.	39.agreement
152	→	元：40.八只馄饨但是我吃了交关菜啊，侬看我吃了	Yuan: 40.I had eight. But I ate a lot of the other	40.intensification
153				

154		格搭一角全部全是我吃	dishes. Look at my	
155		塌额看到伐。	corner of the table.	
156			I've finished my corner	
157			of the dishes, do you	
158			see?	
159		(Mianmian continues to	(Mianmian continues to press	
160		press them to eat more.)	them to eat more.)	

In Excerpt 7.20, Feng, Wei and Yuan are so impressed by Mianmian's delicious wontons that a series of 18 intensification strategies is used to emphasize the core compliment strategy ("绵绵馄饨老好吃额今朝！ Mianmian, your wontons are delicious... today...") (C1). Among the 18 intensification strategies, 13 are impact oriented *action focused*, describing what the complimenters have done and want to do as a result of their admiration for Mian's excellent wonton making skill. Specifically, the *action focused* strategies present a picture of a "competition": the complimenters "vie with one another" in proclaiming their good appetite ("胃口又来了！ It has brought back my appetite.") (C9), how many wontons they have already eaten and how many more they still want. Feng declares first that he has already eaten two big bowlfuls ("我馄饨已经两大碗了。") (C27) or ten wontons ("我十只已经吃塌了。") (C29). Yuan follows immediately by stating that she has already eaten four ("绵绵我已经四只馄饨下去了啊 [a]！") (C28). Although four does not sound much, the sentence-final particle "啊 [a]" used in Yuan's statement implies an achievement. Then Yuan and Wei both emphasize that they have done pretty well ("阿拉已经蛮结棍咾！" "我也算蛮结棍咾！") (C33, C34): even though they have eaten out, Wei still ate 11 wontons ("我吃过还是十一只馄饨下去噢！") (C35) and Yuan eight (by then) plus a lot of the other dishes, in fact all the dishes at her corner of the table ("我八只。但是我吃了交关菜啊，侬看我吃了格搭一角全部

全是我吃塌额看到伐。") (C38, C40). Yuan reiterates that they would do even better—

"would be eating like hungry wolves"—if they hadn't already eaten outside ("外头勿吃过

要象饿狼一样，") (C32). Despite having eaten so much, Feng still wants three more

wontons ("我绕 [添] 三只噢，") (C30) and Wei two more ("姆妈再把我添两只馄饨，")

(C31). Wei also asks her mother to "box some wontons for her (*me*) to take to school" ("姆

妈侬包……馄饨让我带到学堂里厢去。") (C16). By describing their good appetite and

their desire for more wontons, the complimenters show how good Mian's cooking skill is,

making the delicious wontons even more desirable. The *action focused* strategies vividly

animate the compliments. The exciting "fan acts" presented by these *action focused*

strategies forcefully enhance the positive semantic strength of the positive assessment,

leaving no room for anyone to doubt the excellent quality of Mian's wontons.

Excerpt 7.20 serves an example of how the *repetition* strategy is used when the

complimentee directly accepts the compliment strategy .

Sequentially, just like most other support compliment strategies, the *impact

oriented* strategies, whether *emotion focused* or *action focused*, are not contingent upon

the complimentee's negative response strategy. They can follow the complimentee's

downplaying, rejection of a compliment, or the complimentee's acceptance of a

compliment or self-compliment. In fact, they frequently follow directly after the

complimenter's or other's compliment strategy without waiting for a response from the

complimentee. For example, in Excerpt 18, Qiong's *action focused* strategy "我全藏了

海， I've filed all of them." (C3) follows Yang's rejection of her compliment "范文，勿

要搞了！ Models, you must be mistaken!" (lines 6–8). In Excerpt 7.19, Shao's two

action focused strategies "我搭侬讲，后头，一群外国人要跟牢侬跑来！追侬来！Let me tell you... a mob of foreign men would be running after you! Chasing you around everywhere!" (C11, C12) follow Guan's downplaying (non-rejection, non-acceptance) response "喔唷！ Oh!" (line 35) to Miao's compliment that Guan would "absolutely be a beauty" if she went to the West ("像关小波侬去了绝对是美女！") (C9). However, in Excerpt 7.15, Xue's two *emotion focused* strategies "留下了美好的记忆！It has left me with beautiful memories." (C10) and "以后要馋死掉了！I'll be missing your cooking so so much!" (C11) follow Min's acceptance ("手艺有伐啦？I have some cooking skills, don't I?") (line 45) of Ying's *action focused* intensification strategy that she "has learned some cooking skills" from Min ("手艺学着了！) (C9). In Excerpt 7.20, Mian self-compliments her own cooking skills throughout the sequence, which is followed by *action focused* strategies in many cases. For example, Mian's self-complimenting "Are the wontons good?" ("格只馄饨赞勿啦？") is followed by Yuan's agreement ("嗯！Hum.") (C26) and Feng's *action focused* intensification strategy ("我馄饨已经两大碗了。 I've eaten two big bowlfuls of wonton already.") (C27).

Summary

In this chapter, I have examined the support compliment strategies for *emphasis*—the *repetition* strategy and the *intensification* strategy, the second and the third most frequently used support compliment strategies. I have described in detail how each strategy is realized, the strategy's linguistic form, and discourse and functional characteristics.

The *repetition* strategy is realized by restating a compliment strategy initiated by the same speaker. It can restate a compliment strategy either completely or partially, in exact words (i.e., restating a strategy word for word without any change), in non-exact words (i.e., restating a strategy with minor changes in form but retaining the same key positive semantic carrier), or in paraphrase (i.e., restating the meaning expressed in a strategy in different words).

The *intensification* strategy is the most complicated strategy in terms of the variety of forms used for its realization. It upgrades a compliment strategy by strengthening the positive semantic force of the positive assessment. The *intensification* strategy can be either attribute oriented or impact oriented. The attribute oriented strategies intensify the positive semantic force of the positive assessment of the complimentee. They can be either complimentee focused—emphasizing the complimentee's positive attribute itself, or complimenter focused—emphasizing the complimenter's sincerity of the assessment. The impact oriented strategies intensify the positive impact the complimentee has on the complimenter or other. They can be either emotion focused—emphasizing the complimenter's or other's feeling of admiration, or action focused—emphasizing the complimenter's or other's act of admiration. All the impact oriented strategies are complimenter focused.

The majority of the *intensification strategies* are *attribute oriented complimentee focused*, which are realized by using *intensifiers*, *lexical items of high intensity*, *sentence-initial interjections*, *sentence-final particles*, *negation*, and *question*. These six major intensification strategies are in turn realized by a wide variety of lexical and syntactic forms such as different types of adverbs and adverbial phrases, nouns and noun phrases,

idioms and idiomatic expressions, formal honorific words, interjections/exclamative particles, modal particles, negation adverbs or expressions, rhetorical questions, etc. The *attribute oriented sincerity* strategy, and the *impact oriented emotion focused* and *action focused* strategies are all complimenter focused. They are realized by using mainly words and expressions indicating sincerity, stative verbs or phrases expressing emotion, and dynamic verbs or phrases describing an action. While second (or third) person focus is normally used for complimentee focused strategies, first or third person focus is normally employed for complimenter focused [sincerity, emotion and action] strategies.

Sequentially, it is observed that the *repetition* strategy frequently interacts with the *agreement-by-repetition* strategy. They build onto each other, acting in a force like a hammer hitting a nail, forcefully strengthening the positive semantic force of a compliment strategy. Although like the comment and example strategies, the use of *repetition* strategy or *intensification* strategy does not have to be contingent upon the complimentee's response, we do see more occurrences of the *repetition* strategy and the *intensification* strategy follow the complimentee's downplaying, denial or rejection response. In fact, the *negation* strategy and the [*rejection*] *question* strategy are contingent upon the complimentee's negative response. The interpretation of a *question* as an intensification question rather than an information-seeking question depends on the sequential context: whether there is a relevant information-giving "answer" as the second pair part; whether there are other positive strategies preceding, following, or as a component part of the *question*. Sequentially, the interactional "tug-of-war" over multiple turns using strategies such as repetition, negation, question, sentence-final particles, sincerity, etc., has also been repeatedly observed.

Perhaps the most significant insight comes from the use of the *sincerity* strategy. The complimentee's explicit questioning/challenging the complimenter's sincerity of his/her assessment, especially when the compliment is of high semantic intensity; the complimenter's rigorous proving of sincerity using not only the sincerity strategy but also other support strategies; the sequential placement of the sincerity (or other support) strategy not only after but also before the complimentee's rejection response; and the complimentee's turning from rejecting to accepting the compliment (directly or indirectly) when the complimenter's proof of sincerity reaches a certain degree/point, show that sincerity is one fundamental underpinning of the pattern of Chinese compliments. When engaging in the complimenting speech action, both the complimenter and the complimentee are closely monitoring/evaluating and constantly negotiating to establish the credibility/validity of the compliment. Although in depth investigation is needed and is beyond the scope of this dissertation, the preliminary observation and analysis of the *sincerity* strategy provides us with an exciting start. (See my future study on this topic.)

The majority of the important features of the *repetition and intensification* strategies summarized above have not been addressed in the compliment literature so far. In Chapter VIII, I will examine the *multi-functional* support compliment strategies—the *quote* strategy and the *comparison* strategy. I will describe how each strategy is realized, the strategy's linguistic form, and discourse and functional characteristics.

Chapter VIII

MULTI-FUNCTIONAL SUPPORT COMPLIMENT STRATEGIES

This chapter examines the multi-functional support compliment strategies: *quote strategy* and *comparison strategy*. As has been stated in Chapter IV (Overview of Chinese Compliment Structure), the support compliment strategies play three major pragmatic-discursive functions: (1) to align with, (2) to elaborate, or (3) to emphasize the core compliment strategy or another support compliment strategy. The *agreement* strategy fulfills the first function, the *comment* and *example* strategies fulfill the second function (see Chapter 6), while the *repetition* and *intensification* strategies fulfill the third function (see Chapter 7). The support compliment strategies of *quote* and *comparison* differ from other support compliment strategies examined so far in that while other support strategies play primarily one major function (e.g., alignment, elaboration, or emphasis), the *quote* and *comparison* strategies are observed to play different functions. In fact, they can function as a core compliment strategy itself to initiate a compliment topic. How do *quote* and *comparison* strategies play different functions in a compliment-response sequence? In this chapter, I will describe the realization of each strategy in detail, the strategy's linguistic form, and discourse and functional characteristics.

Quote

The support compliment strategy of *quote* enlists other's words or perspective to perform a compliment action. The "other's words or perspective" here can be words or

views from (1) speech or (2) writing. As has been stated in the introductory remarks, the

quote strategy differs from other support compliment strategies examined so far in that it

plays different functions. The multifunctional nature of the *quote* strategy makes it

mutually non-exclusive with other strategies (e.g., quote and comment, quote and

comparison) and thus creates problems with coding. In this dissertation, all the *quote*

actions are recorded and analyzed, but only those *quote* actions which function to

emphasize the core or another support strategy AND which are not overlapping with

another emphasis strategy (i.e., repetition, intensification, or comparison) are listed under

the heading of *quote* strategy. In other words, when the *quote* strategy overlaps with

another strategy, it is coded as the strategy it overlaps with (e.g., quote and comment is

coded as a comment strategy). This is arbitrary, but there is no basis for choosing one

strategy over the other. A total of 160 *quote* actions are observed in the 300 compliment-

response sequences, 56 of them (1.7% of 3,310) are grouped under the heading of *quote*

strategy. However, to capture the features of the *quote* strategy more accurately, all 160

quote actions (mutually exclusive or non-exclusive ones) are included in the analysis.

Table 8.1 presents the taxonomy of the *quote* strategies (see next page). The following

sections report the results of the analysis.

Quoting Speech

The majority (150 or 93.8%) of the 160 quote strategies quote *speech*, i.e., enlist

words or views from another speaker or from the speaker/complimenter him/herself.

When quoting *speech*, two different speech frames are adopted: (1) direct or quoted

speech (32, 21.3%) or (2) indirect or reported speech (118, 78.7%). The *speech* quoted

can be in the structure of (1) monologue (141, 94%) or (2) conversation (9, 6%).

Table 8.1

Taxonomy of Quote Strategies

Quote Strategies	Number of Occurrences	Percentage
(1) Quoting Speech	**150**	**93.8**
(a) Quote speech frame		
Using direct/quoted speech frame	(32)	(21.3)
Using indirect/reported speech frame	(118)	(78.7)
(b) Quote structure		
Quoting monologue	(141)	(94.0)
Quoting conversation	(9)	(6.0)
(2) Quoting Writing	**10**	**6.2**
(a) Quote speech frame		
Using direct/quoted speech frame	(9)	(90.0)
Using indirect/reported speech frame	(1)	(10.0)
(b) Quote structure		
Quoting monologue	(10)	(100.0)
Quoting conversation	(0)	(0)
Total	**160**	**100.0**

NOTES: N = 160, which includes 56 mutually exclusive quote strategies and 104 mutually non-exclusive quote strategies. The numbers in the brackets present the distribution of the substrategies of each main strategy.

Direct vs. indirect speech. *Direct or quoted speech* enlists what someone has

said in exact words. *Indirect or reported speech* enlists what someone has said in non-

exact words. For *indirect speech*, a reporting clause with a reporting speaker and a

reporting verb in it, such as "he said" or "I thought," is normally present. The reference

in the reported clause (the content of what a speaker has said) usually shifts in accordance

with the reference of the reporting clause. However, for *direct speech*, the reporting

clause is frequently absent, and the reference in the quoted clause remains the same.

Examples 8.1 and 8.2 illustrate the two different speech frames.

Core or Other Strategy	Quote	Core or Other Strategy English Translation	Quote English Translation
Direct speech frame			
(8.1) 崔：侬还是老样子！ 宋：我还老样子啊？ 崔：年轻轻的。	梁：（笑）"年轻轻的，"听见伐！	Cui: You still look the same. Song: I still look the same? Cui: You're young.	Liang: (laughs) "You're young," didn't you hear?
Indirect speech frame			
(8.2) 崔：……真额一眼也呒没变。 宋：（笑）我伊额辰光胖噢？（笑）	崔：……看到小杨，小杨讲嗳，伊看见宋莹莹对伐伊好像比走额辰光年纪还轻！	Cui: ...Truly hasn't changed a bit. Song: (laughs) I was fat back then, wasn't I? (laughs)	Cui: ...I saw (ran into) Xiao Yang. Xiao Yang said, she saw Song Yingying... she (Song) seemed even younger than when she left [ten years ago]!

In Example 8.1 (the *direct speech* frame) Liang enlists Cui's words "年轻轻的 you're young" in exact words with no reporting clause, while in Example 8.2 (the *indirect speech* frame) Cui enlists Xiao Yang's words in non-exact words with a reporting clause "小杨讲嗳 Xiao Yang said" present. Note the reference shift in Example 8.2. The third person focus "伊 she" is used (in "伊看见宋莹莹 she saw Song Yingying...") instead of the first person focus "我 I" (as would be used in direct speech) in accordance with the third person reference "小杨 Xiao Yang" in the reporting clause.

While both *direct or quoted speech* and *indirect or reported speech* are observed in the data corpus, *indirect speech* with a reporting clause characterizes the majority of the quote strategies which quote *speech*.

Temporal shift. It must be pointed out here that in English grammar, temporal shift is an important characterization of indirect or reported speech. When using indirect speech, the tense of the reported clause usually shifts in accordance with the basic tense of the reporting clause. However, this is not the case for Chinese indirect speech. Chinese does not grammatically mark tense (i.e., the actual location in time of an action or event, or when an action or event happens), but grammatically marks aspect (i.e., the temporal shape of an action or event, or how an action or event unfolds over time, e.g., whether it is completed or not, whether it is in progress or not). There are grammaticalized function words to mark aspect (e.g., perfective "了 [le]" marks an event as actualized; preverbal progressive "在 [zai]" marks an action as going on; the durative suffix "着 [zhe]" converts a dynamic verb into a durative state, etc.). However, there are no morphological tense markers, i.e., the verb form (including adjective/stative verb) remains the same no matter when the action or event takes place. Action or event time may be indicated by an explicit time adverb/expression or inferred from an aspectual marker, or rely completely on the context for temporal reference.

For example, in Cui's quote strategy in Example 8.2, the verb "看到 see" (in "看到小杨 I saw/ran into Xiao Yang") and the verb "看见 see" (in "伊看见宋莹莹 she saw Song Yingying") have perfective aspect markers "到 [dao] perceived" or "见 [jian] perceived" in them, both resultative verb complements indicating the completion of the action "看 look." However, other verbs such as "讲 say" (in "小杨讲嗳 Xiao Yang said") and "走 leave" (in "走额辰光 when she left"), or stative verbs such as "年纪轻 young," have neither a morphological tense marker nor a grammatical aspect marker. Their

interpretation as past action or state is inferred from the perfective aspect markers of the prior verbs "看到 see" or "看见 see." These, in turn, are contingent upon an explicit time adverb/expression (e.g., yesterday, the other day) to set them in the past time frame, because an aspect marker indicates the completeness of an action/event, it does not locate the action/event in actual time. In the absence of an explicit time adverb/expression in Example 8.2, the time of the reporting event has to be inferred from the context. The big situational context is that Cui is reporting an encounter with Xiao Yang using perfective aspect of the verb "看到 see." This sets the whole scene in the past time frame. The verbs in the reporting and reported clauses are interpreted as past action or state accordingly. Please note, the tense agreement is reflected in the English translation, not in Cui's original Chinese speech.

Reference shift. It is observed from the data that the shift of the reference in indirect speech is largely determined by the addressee in the interaction—who is being reported to. The most common changes of the reference observed in the data are (1) from the third person focus in direct speech to the third person focus in indirect speech *when reporting to a third party* (with the complimentee present), and (2) from the third person focus in direct speech to the second person focus in indirect speech *when reporting to the complimentee him/herself* (with or without the third party present). For example:

(8.3)
Direct speech:
阿拉姆妈讲："啊哟，姜欣民顶好。"
My mom said, "Oh, Jiang Xinmin is the best."

Indirect speech:
To the third party (with the complimentee present):
阿拉姆妈讲，(啊哟，) 伊顶好。
My mom said (that) (oh) *he* is the best.

*阿拉姆妈讲，(啊哟，) 姜欣民顶好。
*My mom said (that) (oh) *Jiang Xinmin* is the best.

To the complimentee (with or without the third party present):
阿拉姆妈讲，(啊哟，) 侬顶好。
My mom said (that) (oh) *you* are the best.
*阿拉姆妈讲，(啊哟，) 姜欣民顶好。
*My mom said (that) (oh) *Jiang Xinmin* is the best.

(The sentences with an asterisk will be discussed later. Please note, exclamatory expressions, such as an interjection or a modal particle, are usually omitted when converting direct speech to indirect speech in Chinese.) Examples 8.4 and 8.5 illustrate the reference shift.

Core or Other Strategy	Quote	Core or Other Strategy English Translation	Quote English Translation
Reference shift: to the third party (with the complimentee present)			
(8.4) 秦：……上次在 [曾]天敏格搭吃了一顿美餐。 曾：（笑）瞎烧额！	梁：秦搭我讲，伊一台子额小菜！	Qin: Last time at **[Zeng] Tianmin**'s place, we were treated to a scrumptious feast. Zeng: (laughs) I was a lousy cook.	Liang: Qin said to me, **her** table was loaded with food!
Reference shift: to the complimentee (with or without the third party present)			
(8.5) 董：你的语音很好，好听得很。 刘：（笑）谢谢董老师。	董：我听到他们（旅游团员），他们说，**你**英语说得很好听的。他们在说**你**，说得很好听。	Mrs. Dong: Your pronunciation is good. It's very pleasant to the ear. Miss Liu: (giggles) Thank you, Teacher Dong.	Mrs. Dong: I hear them (the tourists) say... they say **your** English sounds very pleasant. They're saying... it's pleasant to listen to **you**.

In Example 8.4, Liang is reporting what Qin Yi told her about the complimentee *to the third party*, so third person pronoun "伊 her" is used to refer to the complimentee Zeng Tianmin. In Example 8.5, Mrs. Dong is reporting what the other tour group members say

or are saying about the complimentee Miss Liu's good English pronunciation *to the complimentee*, so a second person pronoun "你 (英语) your (English)" or "你 you" is used.

However, as a rule in English, a common noun or a proper noun such as a person's name does not change when converting direct speech to indirect speech. In my data, a person's name is also frequently retained instead of being switched to a personal pronoun in indirect speech whether *reporting to a third party* (understandable, since using a name clearly identifies the complimentee) or *to the complimentee him/herself* (probably not common in English). (See the sentences with an asterisk in Example 8.3 on p. 386). How do we know, then, if the speaker is quoting in exact words (direct speech) or non-exact words (indirect speech)? In English, other indicators, such as the reported clause marker "that," or a change of a tense, a time expression or a demonstrative pronoun... in the reported clause in accordance with the reporting clause, can disambiguate direct speech from indirect speech. However, since Chinese has no reported clause marker "that" to link the reported clause to the reporting clause, since Chinese does not grammatically mark tense, and if there is no other indirect speech indicator (e.g., a pronoun) present in the reported clause, ambiguity may occur as to whether the speaker is quoting in direct or indirect speech frame. Excerpt 8.1 demonstrates in a complete compliment-response sequence the pronoun reference shift and the possible ambiguity when a proper noun—a person's name—is quoted.

Excerpt 8.1 [289] "Qin said your place is beautiful beyond words."

Situation: Zhou [F, 55], (Tianmin) Zeng [F, 48] and Gong [F, 58] are visiting Peng's [F, 57] new apartment. They are good friends. All four have acquired new housing recently, so housing is the topic of the visit.

01 02 03		曾：……秦怡来看过来！第一个。	Zeng: ...Qin Yi was here to see [my new apartment]. The first one to come.	
04 05 06 07	→	周：嗳，1.秦怡讲额呀，伊讲天敏伊讲老……邪气漂亮！	Zhou: Yeah, 1.Qin Yi told us. She said Tianmin ['s place], she said very... so beautiful!	1.core 1 Zeng's beautiful apartment quote other
08 09 10		曾：（笑）伊讲邪气漂亮啊伊讲？（笑）	Zeng: (laughs) She said it's so beautiful? She said? (laughs)	
11 12 13 14 15 16	→	周：2.因为伊，到过交关地方，伊呒没搭我讲其他人啥个屋里厢啥个漂亮。	Zhou: 2.Because she... she's been to a lot of places... she's never said [*to me*] how beautiful any of these places is.	2.quote other comparison other
17		曾：嗳嗳，	Zeng: Uh-huh.	
18 19 20 21	→	周：2.伊就讲曾天敏屋里厢老漂亮额，伊讲（笑）。	Zhou: 2.She only said Zeng Tianmin's place is very beautiful... she said (laughs).	2.(continue)
22 23 24 25		曾：呒没，伊因为去额……，人家房子大来！	Zeng: Not really. Because she's been... All the houses she visited were large!	
26		周：嗯嗯。	Zhou: Uh huh.	
27 28 29 30 31 32 33		曾：伊拉大得是！伊SD城（一个富裕的小镇)有一个学生子是一幢房子来！勿好比额，简直！（笑）	Zeng: Lots of large houses. She has a (former) student in SD (an affluent town); she's got a huge house. Mine is nothing compared to that, simply nothing!	
34 35		(Peng comes into the room.)	(Peng comes into the room.)	
36		曾：3.蛮好蛮好。	Zeng: 3.Very good, very good.	3.core 2 Peng's high class apartment
37		彭：好伐？	Peng: Isn't it?	
38 39 40 41		曾：4.高级啦！叫秦怡来看看，5.比我房间高级得多了！	Zhou: 4.High class! Bring Qin Yi here to see it. 5.Much more classy than mine.	4.intensifi-cation
42 43 44	→	彭：勿要瞎讲，6.伊讲侬好看得来勿得了噢！	Peng: What nonsense. 6.She said your place is beautiful beyond words.	5.comparison self 6.quote other
45 46		曾：呒没！根本呒没弄好了还！	Zeng: No such thing. I haven't even fixed it	

47			up yet.	
48	→	周：7.我看侬信写来也漂亮	Zhou: 7.From what you wrote	7.quote
49		得要命了！	me in a letter, it's	complimentee
50			drop-dead beautiful.	
51		曾：呒没呀！〔漂亮啥物事	Zeng: No, it's not.	
52		啦，就一条河浜外	[Beautiful, what	
53		头……	nonsense! Only a creek	
54			out there...	
55	→	周：　　　〔8.秦怡讲，	Zhou: [8.Qin Yi said, Zeng	8.quote other
56		曾天敏屋里厢对伐，介	Tianmin's apartment...	comparison
57		许多房子去过，曾天敏	of all the places she's	other
58		屋里厢顶漂亮，伊讲	visited, Zeng Tianmin's	
59		额。	is the most beautiful.	
60			That's what she said.	
61		曾：呒没，人家勿弄就是	Zeng: Not really. Others	
62		了。	simply don't bother to	
63			fix their place up.	
64		龚：阿拉屋里厢全把了这个	Gong: My room is surrounded	
65		壁橱包围……	by cabinets.	
66		(talk about Gong's	(talk about Gong's	
67		apartment)	apartment.)	

In Excerpt 8.1, five quote strategies are employed—four by Zhou to initiate and emphasize the core compliment strategy 1 on Zeng's beautiful apartment, and one by Peng to return Zeng's compliments (C6). Four of the quote strategies enlist the words from a non-present friend Qin Yi, who has visited Zeng's apartment; one enlists the complimentee Zeng's own words from a letter (C7). From the situational and sequential contexts (Peng's non-presence in the first part of the conversation; the use of second person reference "你 you" by Peng and Zhou to address the complimentee Zeng after Peng comes into the room; Zeng's immediate and relevant responses to Zhou and Peng; the third party Gong's non-participation) we know that all five quote strategies are addressed to Zeng. Therefore, reference shift from the third person focus in direct speech to the second person focus in indirect speech is expected. Peng's quote strategy (C6) and Zhou's third quote strategy (C7) clearly mark the expected shift:

彭: 伊讲**侬**好看得来勿得了噢！   (C6)
Peng: She said **your** place is beautiful beyond words.

周: 我看**侬**信写来也漂亮得要命了！   (C7)
Zhou: From what **you** wrote me in a letter, it's drop-dead beautiful.

However, the other three quote strategies demonstrate no reference shift from direct speech to indirect speech—keeping the complimentee's name "曾天敏 Zeng Tianmin" rather than switching to the second person pronoun.

周: 秦怡讲额呀，伊讲**天敏**伊讲老……邪气漂亮！   (C1)
Zhou: Qin Yi told us. She said **Tianmin**[**'s** place], she said very...
       so beautiful!

周: 因为伊，到过交关地方，伊呒没搭我讲其他人啥个屋里厢
       啥个漂亮。伊就讲**曾天敏**屋里厢老漂亮额，伊讲（笑）。   (C2)
Zhou: Because she... she's been to a lot of places... she's never said
       [*to me*] how beautiful any of these places [is]. She only said
       Zeng Tianmin's place [is] very beautiful... she said (laughs).

周: 秦怡讲，**曾天敏**屋里厢对伐，介许多房子去过，**曾天敏**屋   (C8)
       里厢顶漂亮，伊讲额。
Zhou: Qin Yi said, **Zeng Tianmin's** apartment... of all the places
       [she's or I've] visited, **Zeng Tianmin's** [is] the most beautiful.
       That's what she said.

In these three quote strategies, there is no reported clause marker "that" to introduce each reported clause. There is no personal pronoun or demonstrative pronoun... in any of the three reported clauses. Therefore, we don't know, for example, in the last quote strategy (C8), whether Zhou is quoting Qin Yi in exact words ("of all the places [**I've**] visited") or reporting in non-exact words ("of all the places [**she's**] visited"). Furthermore, since a Chinese stative verb such as "漂亮 beautiful" (which appeared in all three quote strategies) is used without a linking verb and has no tense marking, we cannot be certain whether Zhou is quoting Qin Yi in a direct speech or an indirect speech frame.

Pronoun reference shift is the key indicator to differentiate direct speech from

indirect speech in my data. Excerpt 8.2 provides an example.

Excerpt 8.2 [39] "He said, you know at first sight that she's a young lady from a respectable upper-class family."

Situation: Yan, Ying and Xue [all females in the mid 40's] were college classmates. Yan and Ying ask Xue about her American boyfriend. While Xue is describing how Asian women are pursued by American men, Yan tells the story of how Xue's student falls for Xue.

01 02 03 04 05 06	砚：嗳，你还记得廖东海吗？你的学生，就是干校培训班的？还记得吗？	Yan:	Hey, you still remember Liao Donghai? Your student, the one at the cadres training program? Still remember him?	
07 08 09 10	雪：廖东海？是不是那个奉贤，奉贤教师培训班的？	Xue:	Liao Donghai? The one from Fengxian (county) ... Fengxian teacher training program?	
11 12 13 14 15 16	砚：嗳，对对对。老好玩的嗳，1.那天我们在看照片，看到你那两张老灵的照片，	Yan:	(laughs) Yeah, right, right, right. So funny. 1.We were looking at pictures the other day and saw two great pictures of you...	1.core 1 great photo
17	雪：（笑）什么照片？	Xue:	(laughs) What pictures?	
18 19 20 21 22	砚：2.唉，就是你寄给我们的，穿着大衣站在河边上的，老灵的……	Yan:	2.That one... the one you sent us, in an overcoat by the river... that great (picture)...	2.comment
23 24	雪：噢，对对对（笑）。	Xue:	Oh, yes, yes, yes. (laughs)	
25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34	砚：3.结果廖东海看到了噢，他激动得不得了！他说，啊呀！你怎么会有她的照片的？我认识她的呀！我说，你怎么会认识她的？他说，她是我们的老师呀！（笑）	Yan:	3.What happened was... Liao Donghai saw the picture and got terribly excited. He said, oh my god, how come you have her picture? I know her! I said, how come you know her? He said, she was our teacher! (laughs)	3.intensifi-cation

35		雪：（笑）	Xue: (laughs)	
36		砚：4.激动得不得了！	Yan: 4.He was terribly	4.repetition
37	→	5.后来他说，说你噢，	excited! 5.Later he	5.quote other
38		她一看就是大家闺秀！	said...he said you...	comparison
39		（笑）	*she*... you know at	
40			first sight [she]'s	
41			a young lady from a	
42			respectable upper-class	
43			family. (laughs)	
44		雪：（笑）大家闺秀	Xue: (laughs) A young lady	
45		（笑）。	from a respectable	
46			upper-class family	
47			(laughs).	
48		英：（笑）	Ying: (laughs)	
49		砚：6.他盯着你的照片，穷	Yan: 6.He stared at your	6.intensify-
50	→	看穷看，7.直说，8.啊	picture, looked and	cation
51		呀！现在更漂亮了！	looked, and 7.kept	7.intensify-
52	→	9.更漂亮了！（笑）	exclaiming, 8.wow,	cation
53			prettier than ever!	8.quote other
54			9.Prettier than ever!	comment
55			(laughs)	9.quote other
56		雪：（笑）	Xue: (laughs)	repetition
57		英：（笑）	Ying: (laughs)	
58	→	砚：10.他说，她是我们最	Yan: 10.He said, she was our	10.quote other
59	→	喜欢的老师嗳，11.我	favorite teacher. 11.Of	comment
60		们所有的老师噢，就是	all our teachers, she	11.quote other
61		她，一看到我们就笑！	was the only one, who	comparison
62		（哈哈哈大笑）	always smiled when she	
63			saw us. (ha, ha, ha...	
64			laughs out loud)	
65		英：（笑）	Ying: (laughs)	
66		雪：（笑）啊呀，我长了两	Xue: (laughs) Well, you see,	
67		条弯眉毛呀，很合算，	I have curved eyebrows	
68		所以看上去总是在笑！	... serves me well...	
69			makes me look like I'm	
70			always smiling.	
71		砚：（笑）好玩吧？老好玩	Yan: (laughs) Funny. Very	
72		的噢？12.他激动是激	funny isn't it? 12.He	12.repetition
73		动得来……	was so excited...	
74		英：13.不但美国人迷侬，	Ying: 13.Not only Americans	13.core 2
75		14.连侬的学生子也迷	fall for you, 14.even	attractive
76		侬！（笑）	your students fall for	to Americans
77			you! (laughs)	14.core 3
78		雪：（笑）	Xue: (laughs)	attractive
79		(laughing and teasing)	(laughing and teasing)	to students

In Excerpt 8.2, Yan initiates, elaborates and emphasizes the core compliment strategies on Xue's beauty and charming personality by quoting her conversation with Xue's former student Liao Donghai and by describing Liao Donghai's emotion and action accompanying his talk. There are three people present in Excerpt 8.2, but we can infer that Yan is relaying the story to Xue. Situational and sequential contexts that Liao Donghai is a mutual acquaintance of Yan and Xue but a stranger to Ying, Xue's relevant responses to Yan, and Ying's silence (except for a few laughs) until the end of the story, may provide some clues for the inference. However, Yan's choice of pronoun reference provides the key indicator as to who her addressee is. At the very beginning of the excerpt, Yan identifies Xue as the addressee by using the second person pronoun or possessive pronoun in singular form "你 you" and "你的 your" ("嗳，**你**还记得廖东海吗？**你的**学生⋯⋯ Hey, **you** still remember Liao Donghai? **Your** student...") (lines 1–2). In the following non-quote compliment strategies (C1, C2, C6 and C7), she uses the same second person focus, which indicates that Xue is still her addressee.

> 砚：　那天我们在看照片，看到**你**那两张老灵的照片，　　　　　　(C1)
> Yan: We were looking at pictures the other day and saw two great
> 　　　pictures of **you**...

> 砚：　呃，就是**你**寄给我们的，穿着大衣站在河边上的，老灵的⋯⋯　(C2)
> Yan: That one... the one **you** sent us, in an overcoat by the river...
> 　　　that great (picture)...

> 砚：　他盯着**你的**照片，穷看穷看，直说，　　　　　　　　　　(C6, C7)
> Yan: He stared at **your** picture, looked and looked, and kept exclaiming,

Having established that Xue is the addressee, we know that Yan's five quote strategies (in fact the entire quoting of her conversation with Liao Donghai) are in the direct speech frame in that the pronoun references used at the time of speaking (original

conversation between Yan and Liao Donghai) remain the same at the time of Yan's reporting to Xue. Take the following three quote strategies for example:

砚: 后来他说，说你噢，**她**一看就是大家闺秀！（笑）   (C5)
Yan: Later he said... he said you... ***she***... you know at first sight
    [**she**]'s a young lady from a respectable upper-class family. (laughs)

砚: 他说，**她**是**我们**最喜欢的老师嗳，   (C10)
Yan: He said, **she** was **our** favorite teacher.

砚: **我们**所有的老师噢，就是**她**，一看到**我们**就笑！   (C11)
Yan: Of all **our** teachers, **she** was the only one, who always smiled
    when she saw **us**.

There is no pronoun reference shift from third person focus "她 she/her" (used at the time of speaking by Liao Donghai to refer to his teacher Xue—the complimentee) to second person focus "你 you" (at the time of Yan's reporting to Xue—the complimentee and the addressee) as is necessary for indirect speech frame. There is no other corresponding pronoun reference shift either. The first person pronoun focus "我们 we/us/our" (used at the time of speaking by Liao Donghai to refer to himself and his classmates) remains the same instead of changing to third person focus "他们 they/them/their" (to refer to Liao Donghai and his classmates at the time of Yan's reporting to Xue) as is required by the indirect speech frame.

Yan's other two quote strategies (one of them a repetition) of Liao Donghai's words "啊呀！现在更漂亮了！更漂亮了！ **wow**, prettier than ever! Prettier than ever!" (C8, C9) have no pronoun reference in them. However, they are also considered to be in the direct speech frame on the (different) account that exclamatory expressions, such as an interjection or a modal particle, are usually omitted when converting direct speech to indirect speech in Chinese (see Example 8.3 on p. 385). The retention of the sentence-

initial interjection "啊呀！ wow" at the beginning of a series of two quote strategies

serves as evidence that they are in the direct speech frame.

  Reporting verbs. A variety of reporting verbs are observed in the reporting

clauses. The following are the most commonly used ones in the data:

Reporting verbs used to report a speaker's words:

 e.g., 讲, 说 (say, said),
 搭……讲, 跟……说 (say to…, said to…),
 讲拨……听额, 说给……听的 (tell…, told…),
 听说, 据说 (I hear, I heard, It is said),
 听……讲/说, 据……说 (hear from…, heard from…, according to…),
 称赞, 夸 (praise, compliment), etc.

Reporting verbs used to report a speaker's view:

 觉着, 想, 看 (think, thought, in…opinion, to be considered, regard),
 喜欢, 欢喜 (like), etc.

Out of 150 reporting verbs, the majority of them (135 or 90%) are used to report a

speaker's *words*. Only 15 (10%) of them are used to report a speaker's *view* or *thoughts*.

Examples 8.6 to 8.11 illustrate how different reporting verbs are used to report a

speaker's *words*.

Core or Other Strategy	Quote	Core or Other Strategy English Translation	Quote English Translation
"讲" or "说" (say, said)			
(8.6) 施伯母：伊…祖风（元元的哥哥）只脑子是蛮有得创造额。 元元：（笑）手巧勿过。（笑）	施伯母：施家伯伯总归**说**伊只手巧勿过。	Aunt Shi: He... Zufeng's (Yuan Yuan's brother) brain is very creative. Yuan Yuan: (laughs) His hands are very skillful. (laughs)	Aunt Shi: Uncle Shi always **says** his hands are very skillful / he has very nimble fingers.

"搭······讲" or "跟······说" (say to…, said to…)			
(8.7) 助理：邵老师老帮忙额。 女店员：**全**靠她帮忙。 助理：就是帮忙！	助理：吴善青也，也是来**搭我讲**。	Assistant Manager: Teacher Shao is always ready to help. Saleswoman: We owe all our thanks to her help. Assistant Manager: Helpful indeed!	Assistant Manager: Wu Shanqing also... also **said** the same thing **to me**.
"讲拨······听额" or "说给······听的" (tell…, told…)			
(8.8) 厂长：我听小郑说你舞跳得挺好，（笑）歌也唱得很好（笑）！ 主任：哎呀······	副厂长：在上海我**说给他听**的，说你唱得很好！	Factory Manager: Xiao Zheng says you dance very well, (laughs) you also sing very well (laughs). Director: Oh...	Deputy Factory Manager: I **told him** in Shanghai… that you sing very well.
"听说" or "据说" (I hear, I heard, It is said)			
(8.9) 书记：你看她家嗲吗？ 主任：嗲！房间里煞清。	主任：（对教师说）你家老灵的，我老早就**听说**了。	Party Secretary: Isn't her place wonderful? Director: Wonderful! The rooms are spotless.	Director: (to the teacher) Your home's beautiful… I **heard** it a long time ago.
"听...讲/说" or "据...说" (hear from..., heard from..., according to...)			
(8.10) 领队（作者）：······（笑）照理讲应该淘汰了，伊拉还来了用。（笑） 男导游：就是用，	男导游：**听，听阿拉表弟讲**，伊拉，全讲，迭一套教材蛮好······	Tour Leader (author): ... (laughs) The book should have been replaced a long time ago, and they're still using it. (laughs) Male Guide: Of course still using it...	Male Guide: I **hear**... I **hear my cousin say**... they all say... this set of textbooks is great.

"称赞" or "夸" (praise, compliment)			
(8.11) 院长助理：她是我们 78 级留校的高材生，百里挑一。		Assistant to the Dean: She was tops in the Class of '78, and was retained to teach at her Alma Mater after graduation. One in a hundred.	
于科长：呵，瞧您说的！(不好意思，笑）	肖副处长：昨天开会后吃午饭时，黄文敏副处长……她**夸**了你半天！……说你能干、勤劲儿！	Director Yu: Oh, what are you talking about! (looks embarrassed, laughs).	Associate Dean Xiao: Yesterday Associate Dean Huang Wenmin was **praising** you for a long time at lunch after the meeting, saying you're capable and hard-working.

Examples 8.12 to 8.14 illustrate how different reporting verbs are used to report a

speaker's *view*.

Core or Other Strategy	Quote	Core or Other Strategy English Translation	Quote English Translation
"觉着," "想" or "看" (think, thought, in…opinion, to be considered, regard)			
(8.12) 康：蹲了格面对伐，……人家全讲侬只有 twenty-five 啦，	林：蹲了伊搭全是噢，人家全是噢……格**觉着**侬年轻是年轻得来，勿晓得侬漂亮到啥个地步！	Kang: Over there... everybody said I was only *twenty-five* [in English].	Lin: Over there they all **think**... they all **marvel at** how young you are. They make you out to be something out of this world.
康：像阿拉格种人来拉外头**属于**老正气暖。	康：我搭阿拉刘杰跑出去，老挺括呕！好像人家**看起来**，喔唷哪能好像，人家**讲起来**，"very handsome" 对伐，就讲。	Kang: Over there, people like us **are considered** very presentable.	Kang: When I went out with Liu Jie (Kang's husband), how smartly dressed we were... people **seemed to think**... Wow... they said, "*very handsome* [in English]," they

	（哈哈大笑）		**thought**. (ha, ha, laughs out loud)
(8.13) 芯：一看么伊（芯额爷叔）讲，伊点牢侬，伊讲阿是侬， 瑶：嗳，（笑）	芯：呸，人家呢**看**侬呢属于是漂亮就讲，**看**我呢属于是健康。	Xin: He (Xin's uncle) took just one look [at the picture] and said... he pointed at you... he said is it you. Yao: Uh huh. (laughs)	Xin: People **see** you **and regard** you as beautiful. They **see** me **and regard** me as healthy.
"喜欢" or "欢喜" (like)			
(8.14) 女游客（老师）：你们这边，画家很多！ 男店主：嗯，我画的！我画的（笑）。 一学生：啊！	女游客（老师）：他们都很**喜欢**你的画！非常**喜欢**你的画！	Woman Tourist (teacher): You have lots of artists here! Male Store Owner: Um... I painted them myself. I painted them myself (laughs). A Student: Wow!	Woman Tourist (teacher): They all **like** your paintings. They **like** them very much!

Views or thoughts are often expressed by the reporter's summary of what was said rather than the actual wording. Take Example 8.13 for instance, people may never have said precisely "we see Yao and regard Yao as beautiful" or "we see you (Xin) and regard you as healthy." The reporter Xin, in relating what other people say about Yao's beauty and her own healthy look, is summarizing other people's thoughts or positive comments in her own words. The same applies to Example 8.14. In the art store, the students have been giving all kinds of positive comments about the paintings, such as "Wow!" (see the student's line in Example 8.14), "So beautiful!," "This painting is so cool!" or "I really want this painting!" From these comments, the teacher (woman tourist) gains a sense that the students like the paintings very much. Instead of reporting the students' actual positive comments one by one, the teacher relates the positive sentiment to the artist/store owner with a summary in her own words.

Monologue vs. conversation. When quoting *speech*, two different quote structures are observed: (1) *monologue* and (2) *conversation*. Most of the quote strategies quote *monologue*, i.e., enlisting a single quote or multiple quotes (or even the whole sequence) by one speaker (141 or 94% of 150). The single quote usually contains a reporting clause. The multiple quotes, however, may contain a reporting clause in each quote or only in the first quote. Although the majority of the quote strategies enlist a single speaker's *monologue*, quotes of *conversation*, i.e., enlisting interaction between two or more speakers in the form of "he said…, I said…" ("他说……，我说……") or its variations are also observed in the data (9 or 6% of 150). Examples 8.15 to 8.17 show how *monologue* is employed to realize the quote strategy.

Core or Other Strategy	Quote	Core or Other Strategy English Translation	Quote English Translation
Quoting monologue: single quote by one speaker with a reporting clause			
(8.15) 珍：一封信是写得真灵啊！ 颖：喔唷！瞎写额，到后头。（笑）	珍：**阿拉格日子看好对伐，搭阿拉囡五讲，** 拿去好好叫做教材啊！（笑）	Zhen: That letter was really well written! Ying: Oh! It was a mess... toward the end. (laughs)	Zhen: After reading it, **we said to our daughter**, take it and make good use of it as teaching material. (laughs)
Quoting monologue: multiple quotes by one speaker with a reporting clause in each quote			
(8.16) 审计：……请教侬哪能培养出来啊？**讲**俬囡五伊个叫啥个，优秀，优秀人才噯！ 科长：噢伊拉已经	审计：**伊拉讲，** 介好一个伊个叫啥个囡五，一定要看一看（笑）。 **讲**俬囡五老来三额对伐？ **讲**伊各方面，方方面面全老，全老来三	Auditor: ...May I ask you to enlighten me on something… how do you educate your daughter? **They say** your daughter… what did they say? Yeah, outstanding... outstanding talent. Deputy Director: So	Auditor: **They say** such a good… uh… daughter. I'm dying to meet her (laughs). **They say** your daughter is very capable, isn't she? **They say** she's well-rounded. Outstanding in all… all aspects.

| 搭侬讲过啦？哎呀—— | 额。 | they've already told you about it? Oh... | |

| Quoting monologue: multiple quotes by one speaker with a reporting clause only in the first quote |

| (8.17)
刘科长：**听说**乔厂长在厂里威信很高。 | 刘科长：金厂长常讲你人好，肚量大，实惠。 | Director Liu: **I hear** Manager Qiao is highly respected in the company. | Director Liu: Manager Jin often **says** you're a kind man, generous, and practical. |

Excerpt 8.3 illustrates how *monologue* is employed to realize the quote strategy in a complete compliment-response sequence.

Excerpt 8.3 [264] "They say your English sounds very pleasant."

Situation: On a tour bus in Chengdu, China. Mrs. Dong [F, 47] and other tourists in the group are very impressed with the local guide Miss Liu's [F, 25] English pronunciation and intonation.

01 02 03		董：1.你的语音很好，2.好听得很。	Dong: 1. Your pronunciation is good. 2.It's very pleasant to the ear.	1.core good pronunciation 2.intensifi-cation
04 05 06 07		刘：（笑，像很多中国女孩子，刘非常喜欢笑）谢谢董老师。	Liu: (giggles. Like a lot of Chinese girls, she loves to giggle.) Thank you, Teacher Dong.	
08 09 10 11 12 13 14	→ →	董：3.我听到他们（旅游团员），他们说，你英语说得很好听的。4.他们在说你，说得很好听。	Dong: 3.I hear them (the tourists) say... they say your English sounds very pleasant. 4.They're saying... it's pleasant to listen to you.	3.quote other 4.quote other
15		刘：噢。（笑）	Liu: Oh. (giggles)	
16 17	→	董：5.说得很清楚。	Dong: 5.[You] speak very clearly.	5.quote other comment
18		刘：很—清—楚—。	Liu: Very-clear-ly.	
19 20 21 22 23 24	→ →	董：6.嗳，这个调，这个语调很好听，7.就好像是听他们native speakers 在说话。（笑）	Dong: 6.Yeah, your intonation ... intonation is very pleasant. 7.It's like listening to a *native speaker* [in English] speaking. (laughs)	6.quote other comment 7.quote other comparison other
25		刘：噢——，那，那太好	Liu: Oh... That, that's	

26	了。	great to hear.	
27	董：（笑）	Dong: (laughs)	
28	刘：太好了，太荣幸了！	Liu: It's great. I'm so	
29		honored!	
30	董：太荣幸了（笑）。	Dong: So honored (laughs).	
31	刘：（笑）	Liu: (smiles)	

In Excerpt 8.3, five quote strategies (including three overlapping ones), all in indirect speech frame, are employed by the tour group member, Mrs. Dong, to elaborate and emphasize her core compliment strategy on the local tour guide Miss Liu's good English pronunciation. The first quote strategy ("我听到他们，他们说，你英语说得很好听的。 I hear them say... they say your English sounds very pleasant.") (C3) enlists what the tour group members have been saying ever since they got off the bus and met Miss Liu. It is a *monologue of a single quote* with a reporting clause ("我听到他们，他们说 I hear them say... they say") present in the quote. Then Mrs. Dong enlists what the tour group members are saying at the moment of her reporting to Miss Liu (almost a simultaneous report), this time a *monologue of multiple (four) quotes* saying that Miss Liu's English pronunciation is excellent ("他们在说你，说得很好听。 They're saying... it's pleasant to listen to you.") (C4), that she "speaks very clearly" ("说得很清楚") (C5) and her "intonation is very pleasant" ("这个语调很好听") (C6), and that she speaks like "a native speaker speaking" ("就好像是听他们 *native speakers* 在说话") (C7). These four quote strategies contain only one reporting clause ("他们在说你 they're saying") at the beginning of the first quote. Note three quote strategies overlap with two comment strategies (C5, C6) and a comparison strategy (C7).

Examples 8.18 and 8.19 show how *conversation* is employed to realize the quote strategy.

Core or Other Strategy	Quote	Core or Other Strategy English Translation	Quote English Translation
Quoting conversation: quote of interaction between multiple speakers			
(8.18) 董事长：这里有卡啦 OK！**据小郑（副厂长）说**么老孙，歌喉相当好！ 孙厂长：不行不行不行！我歌喉不行。	董事长：**他跟我讲的**，小郑噢？**我说**唱歌谁好，**他说**老孙……	Board Chairman: We have karaoke here. **I heard from Xiao Zheng**... Lao Sun has a pretty good voice. Factory Manager Sun: No, no, no. I can't sing.	Board Chairman: **He told me**. Am I right, Xiao Zheng? **I asked** who's a good singer, and **he said** Lao Sun...
(8.19) 马教授：在中年干部中我最佩服你，不但工作认真，学习也刻苦！ 赵处长：谢谢马老师夸奖。我哪有那么好。	秘书：处长就是实干！**唐先生问我**处长是不是靠他父亲（的地位）晋升的？**我说，**我们处长是自己实干出来的！	Prof. Ma: Among the middle-aged administrators, I admire you the most. You not only work hard, but you also study hard. Director Zhao: Thank you Prof. Ma for your compliment, but I'm not that good at all.	Secretary: Our director indeed works very hard. **Mr. Tang asked me** if the director had gotten the promotion on his father's coattails (position and reputation), and **I said** the director had made it entirely on his own merits.

In Example 8.18, the Board Chairman quotes his *conversation* with Xiao Zheng (the deputy manager of the factory) to emphasize his core compliment strategy on Factory Manager Sun's good voice. In Example 8.19, the office secretary quotes her *conversation* with Mr. Tang to support Professor Ma's and her own admiration for Director Zhao. Both quotes of *conversation* are in the form of "A asked..., B said…" ("我说 [问]……，他说……"; "唐先生问我……，我说……"). Please note, in Example 8.18 the *core* compliment strategy itself is a quote of a *monologue*, using the reporting verb "据……说, heard from.../according to..." ("**据小郑说**么老孙，歌喉相当好！ **I heard from Xiao Zheng**... Lao Sun has a pretty good voice.").

Excerpt 8.4 illustrates how *conversation* is employed to realize the quote strategy

in a complete compliment-response sequence.

Excerpt 8.4 [10] "I said, how can she write so well, and he said, that's the quality writing of a doctoral candidate!"

Situation: Ning [F, 45] and Qian [F, 52] used to teach English in the same college. They are good friends. Ning comes home for vacation. Qian calls her to say hello.

01	倩：宁宁！侬好！格次好蹲	Qian: Ningning, how are you?	
02	多少辰光啦？	How long can you stay	
03		this time?	
04	宁：一个多月，五个礼拜。	Ning: One month...five weeks.	
05	倩：1.嗳，侬封信写得老灵	Qian: 1.Hey, that letter of	1.core great
06	额！	yours was so well	writing
07		written!	skill
08	宁：啥个信？	Ning: What letter?	
09	倩：侬忘记塌啦？就是伊封	Qian: You forgot? That	
10	circulation letter	*circulation letter* [in	
11	呀！	English].	
12	宁：噢，圣诞节写额。	Ning: Oh, the one I wrote for	
13		Christmas.	
14	倩：2.写得老灵额！3.学生	Qian: 2.So well written!	2.repetition
15	子全看了……	3.All my students read	3.intensifi-
16		it.	cation
17	宁：学生子也看了？！啊呀	Ning: Your students read it	
18	瞎写额呀！	too? Oh my! But it was	
19		such a mess!	
20	倩：4.啥人讲额？5.老灵	Qian: 4.Who says so? 5.Great	4.intensifi-
21 →	额！6.学生全讲好！	writing! 6.All the	cation
22		students said it was	5.repetition
23		great.	6.quote other
24	宁：全讲好啊？	Ning: All said so?	
25	倩：嗳，侬啥辰光来屋里厢	Qian: Hey, when will you be	
26	啦？我来看侬好伐？	home? I'll come see	
27		you, alright?	
28	宁：我啥个辰光全来拉海。	Ning: I'm always home.	
29	……	...	
30	(After talking about a	(After talking about a get-	
31	get-together, Qian	together, Qian returns to the	
32	returns to the Christmas	Christmas letter.)	
33	letter.)		
34	倩：7.宁宁，你那封信写得	Qian: 7.Ningning, that letter	7.intensifi-
35	老好的啊！	you wrote was just	cation
36		wonderful!	

37		宁：瞎七搭八！	Ning: Nonsense.	
38		倩：8.嗳，真额，9.真额。	Qian: 8.Honest. 9.Honest.	8.intensifi-
39	→	10.我跟我爱人讲，哪	10.I said to my	cation
40	→	能写得介灵额！11.阿	husband, how can she	9.repetition
41		拉爱人讲，伊是博士生	write so well, and	10.quote self
42	→	嘛！12.博士生额水平	11.my husband said,	11.quote other
43		嘛！	she's a doctoral	12.quote other
44			candidate! [How could	
45			it be bad?] 12.That's	
46			the quality writing of	
47			a doctoral candidate!	
48		宁：（笑）瞎讲，勿灵	Ning: (laughs) Nonsense. Not	
49		额。	good at all.	
50		(Ning asks Qian for	(Ning asks Qian for phone	
51		phone numbers of some	numbers of some friends.)	
52		friends.)		

In Excerpt 8.4, Qian uses four quote strategies to emphasize her core compliment strategy on her friend Ning's great English writing skill—a beautifully written Christmas letter. The first quote strategy consists of *monologue* of a single quote from Qian's students: "学生全讲好！ All the students said it was great." (C6). The other three quote strategies (C10–C12) are quotes of *conversation* between Qian herself and her husband in the form of "A said..., B said…":

倩：	**我跟我爱人讲**，哪能写得介灵额！	(C10)
Qian:	**I said to my husband**, how can she write so well,	

	阿拉爱人讲，伊是博士生嘛！	(C11)
	and **my husband said**, she's a doctoral candidate! [How could it be bad?]	

	博士生的水平嘛！	(C12)
	That's the quality writing of a doctoral candidate!	

The first three quote strategies (C6, C10 and C11) all use the reporting verb "讲 said" in the reporting clause. The last quote strategy (C12), being the second one in the series of two quotes by Qian's husband, the reporting clause is absent.

So far, I have described how quoting *speech* is realized. In the next section I will describe how quoting *writing* is realized.

Quoting Writing

Table 8.1 shows that only 10 (6.2%) of the 160 quote strategies quote *writing*, i.e., enlisting words or views from a writer, e.g., a movie title, song lyrics, a commercial line, a quote from a poem, a letter or a book. When quoting *writing*, we also see two different speech frames being adopted: (1) direct or quoted speech or (2) indirect or reported speech. However, while indirect or reported speech with a reporting clause is the most commonly used speech frame when quoting *speech*, direct or quoted speech (frame) with no reporting clause characterizes the majority of the quote strategies which quote *writing*. Furthermore, while both speech structures of monologue and conversation are employed when quoting *speech*, only monologue is observed when quoting *writing* in my data.

Direct speech. Although in Excerpt 8.1 (p. 387) we have seen an instance of the use of *indirect or reported speech* when quoting *writing* (Zhou enlisting words from a letter by Zeng: "我看侬信写来也漂亮得要命了！ From what you wrote me in a letter, it's drop-dead beautiful.") (C7), it is interesting to note that nine out of 10 (90%) quote strategies enlisting words from *writing* are in a *direct or quoted speech* frame (i.e., enlisting what someone has said in exact words). These *direct* quotes are usually short catchphrases or sentences, either popular at the time of quoting or well-known from famous people. As such, they are easily memorable for the quoter and readily recognizable for the hearer(s). They blend naturally as an integral part of the compliment sequence with no reporting clause to mark them as a quote. Excerpt 8.5 provides an example.

Excerpt 8.5 [86] "Wow! 'Splendid Sunshine'!"

Situation: On a college campus path. The Manager of the Office of Graduate Student Affairs Zhen [F, 45] and two office clerks Jie [F, 35] and Hong [F, 45], compliment on the casual outfit the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs (Xiao) [M, 47] is wearing. The dean used to wear very plain clothes.

01	振：	1. 肖处长今天真萧洒！	Zhen:	1. Well, Dean Xiao looks really chic today!	1. core chic outfit
02					
03	处长：	不是农村生产队小会计了？"老呔进城，身穿条绒。"老呔也穿西服了。	Dean:	No longer the country accountant no one took a second look at? "When the country bumpkin goes to the city, he wears corduroy." The country bumpkin has gotten to wearing Western-style clothes now.	
13	洁：	2. 肖处长，喝（哇）！3.《阳光灿烂》！（嘻嘻嘻，笑）。	Jie:	2. Dean Xiao, wow! 3. "Splendid Sunshine" (movie name)! (hhh... chuckles)	2. agreement 3. quote other (movie)
14 →					
17	红：	4. 这回你不是农村小会计了，5. 成了大老板！	Hong:	4. You're no longer the country accountant no one took a second look at. 5. Now you've become a big-shot businessman!	4. comparison other 5. comparison other
22	处长：	假装一把！（哈哈哈大笑）。	Dean:	I'll fake it for now! (ha, ha, ha... laughs out loud)	

There are two quote strategies employed in Excerpt 8.5, one as a compliment strategy—a quote of a movie title (C3), and one as a response strategy—a quote of a line from a different movie (Chinese lines 4–5, English lines 5–8). Both quote strategies are in the *direct speech* frame with no reporting clause. The core compliment strategy "肖处长今天真萧洒！ Well, Dean Xiao looks really chic today!" (C1) reflects the social cultural change associated with China's economic reform and open-door policy: attention to personal appearance and popularity of Western-style fashion. The change is not only

reflected in the compliment topic but also in the use of the trendy word "萧洒 chic" in the positive assessment. Like most people, Dean Xiao used to wear very plain, drab colored clothes that were often jokingly associated with the image of an "insignificant country accountant" ("农村生产队小会计") (line 3), or the image of a "country bumpkin going to the city wearing corduroy" ("老呔进城，身穿条绒。") (Chinese lines 4–5, English lines 5–8, response quote strategy). At that time "plain" was good and commended. However, now "chic" is in and admired. Dean Xiao's Western-style outfit must be so refreshing that Zhen's core compliment "chic" is met with Jie's enthusiastic "wow" agreement ("肖处长，喝！ Dean Xiao, wow!") (C2) followed by the quote of the title of a popular new trend movie "《阳光灿烂》！ Splendid Sunshine!"[1] (C3). Note how the quote of the movie title blends seamlessly into the compliment sequence with no reporting clause to mark it as a quote. It functions like a lexical item of high intensity. Whether Jie quotes the movie title for its surface semantic meaning or for the deep theme it reflects (see footnote) is uncertain. It is undeniable, nevertheless, that either way the quote is fitting and forceful. Dean Xiao's "chic" outfit is emphasized as splendid sunshine cutting through the dark and the drab and brightening up everything. It adds positive tone to the positive assessment of the core compliment strategy. Examples 8.20 to 8.22 give more instances of quote strategies using *direct or quoted speech* frame.

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[1] The film 《阳光灿烂的日子》 [In The Heat of the Sun] (literally "days of the bright and lush sunshine") was directed by the Chinese actor Jiang Wen in the mid 90's. Different from many other serious Cultural Revolution-set films, it is mellow and dream-like, portraying memories of that era with somewhat positive and personal resonances. While the unique perspective was well received in China and the Chinese-speaking world, the film did cause some controversy for its perceived "nostalgic" and "positive" portrayal of the Cultural Revolution (cited from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/In_the_Heat_of_the_Sun**).**

Core or Other Strategy	Quote	Core or Other Strategy English Translation	Quote English Translation
Quoting song lyrics			
(8.20) 彭大夫：段老，我有今天，不都是您帮助、教育的吗？！	彭大夫："没有您哪有我！"	Dr. Peng: Prof. Duan, I owe everything I have today to your help and education!	Dr. Peng: "**There'd be no me without you**!"
Quoting literary expressions			
(8.21) 洪主任：你们这位科长非常能干，认真务实，干炼麻利。是当院长的苗子！	洪主任："千军易得，一将难求。"	Dept. Chair Hong: This director of yours is exceedingly competent. Conscientious and down-to-earth, capable and deft. She's a candidate for dean.	Dept. Chair Hong: "**It's easier to raise an army than find one general**."
Quoting poem			
(8.22) 温：钟淑华好像，比老早看上去要潇洒交关了要！ 钟：潇洒交关……（笑）	蔡："你，潇洒首一回啊！"	Wen: Zhong Shuhua seems... looks much more relaxed and free than before. Zhong: Much more relaxed and free... (laughs)	Cai: "**You... gracefully turn [your] head around.**"

The quote strategies in all three examples are in *direct speech* frame with no reporting clause. The song lyric quoted in Example 8.20 is a line from the theme song "Any Empty Wine Bottles to Sell?" ("酒干倘卖无") of a very popular Taiwanese movie "Papa, Can You Hear Me Sing?" (《搭错车》, literally translated as "Boarding the Wrong Train"). The literary expression quoted in Example 8.21 is well known, from literary works by Ma Zhiyuan (马致远) dating back to Yuan Dynasty. However, sometimes the quote, such as the line in the poem in Example 8.22, is special to the quoter but not

necessarily familiar to the hearer. In such cases, the semantic meaning of the quote

usually creates an image recognizable to the hearer. In Example 8.22, "潇洒首一回,

gracefully turn one's head around" is an admirable image that often appears in a movie or

a story. Quoting words or lines familiar, popular, or well-known makes the quote readily

recognizable for the hearer(s), and can thus effectively reinforce the positive semantic

strength of a compliment strategy.

Excerpt 8.6 illustrates how quotes from famous people are employed in a

complete compliment-response sequence to strengthen the compliment force.

Excerpt 8.6 [67] "Teachers are the spiritual engineers of humankind." "Agriculture is the
foundation of the national economy."

Situation: On a train. A college teacher [M, 47] is on vacation. A farmer [M, 46], who
lives in the suburbs of Lanzhou is going to Wulumuqi (Ürümqi—the capital of the
Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region) to visit his sick uncle. They are chatting. The
farmer can't believe someone would spend money on pleasure travel. The college teacher
is astonished at the farmer's eloquence.

01		农民：去哪？	Farmer: Where're you going?	
02		老师：吐鲁番。	Teacher: Tulufan.	
03		农民：出差？	Farmer: On business?	
04		老师：旅游。	Teacher: Travel.	
05		农民：(惊讶)去做买卖	Farmer: (surprised) To do	
06		吧？！	business, right?	
07		老师：我是老师，学校放假	Teacher: I'm a teacher.	
08		了，出来看看大西	School is out, and	
09		北，"丝绸之路"。	I'm on vacation. So	
10			I've come out to see	
11			the Great Northwest,	
12			"the Silk Road."	
13	→	农民：1.老师好，2."老师	Farmer: 1.Teachers are	1.core 1
14		是人类 [灵魂] 的工	great. 2."Teachers	great
15		程师！"3.国家的希	are the spiritual	teaching job
16		望，4."四化"的建	engineers of people	2.quote
17		设全靠你们了！	(*humankind*)." 3.The	comparison
18			hope of the nation.	other
19			4.China's "Four	3.comment
20			Modernizations" are	4.intensifi-
21			entirely dependent	cation

22			on you.	
23	→	老师：（很惊讶）5. "农业	Teacher: (greatly surprised)	5.core 2
24		是 [国民经济的] 基	5."Agriculture is	important
25	→	础，"6. "手中有	the foundation [of	farming job
26		粮，心中不慌。"	the national	quote
27		7.全靠你们农民兄弟	economy]." 6."As	6.quote
28		辛苦啦！	long as you have	comment
29			grain in your hand,	7.intensifi-
30			you don't have to	cation
31			worry about anything	
32			else." 7.We are all	
33			indebted to you, our	
34			farmer brothers, for	
35			it's your hard work	
36			that sustains us!	
37		农民：（笑逐颜开，不语）	Farmer: (face lights up with	
38			a broad grin and	
39			says nothing)	

In Excerpt 8.6, three quote strategies, all in *direct speech* frame, are employed by a

farmer and a teacher to initiate, elaborate and emphasize the two reciprocal core

compliment strategies on the importance of the teaching and farming jobs (C1, C5). The

first quote strategy ("老师是人类 [灵魂] 的工程师！ Teachers are the spiritual

engineers of people (*humankind*).") (C2) enlists words by Mikhail Kalinin, the former

Soviet Union Communist Party and State leader, from his address to the educators in the

nation. The other two quote strategies ("农业是 [国民经济的] 基础。 Agriculture is the

foundation [of the national economy]."; "手中有粮，心中不慌。 As long as you have

grain in your hand, you don't have to worry about anything else.") (C5, C6) enlist words

from Mao Zedong, the former Chairman of the Chinese Communist Party and the

founding father of the People's Republic of China. All three quotes are widely known in

China. Comparing a teacher to a noble "spiritual engineer of humankind" and regarding

farming job as essential foundation work to the nation's economy are highly

complimentary to a teacher or a farmer. Such complimentary quotes coming from world-renowned, high-profile people add further power to the compliment force. Therefore, their uses as compliment strategies are easily recognizable and highly effective. Again all these quotes blend seamlessly into the compliment sequence with no reporting clause to mark them as quotes.

Monologue. All ten (100%) quote strategies enlisting words from *writing* are in the structure of *monologue* (i.e., employing single quote or multiple quotes by one speaker), and the majority of them employing *single quote by one speaker*. For example, "《阳光灿烂》！ Splendid Sunshine!" (Excerpt 8.5, C3); "没有您哪有我！ There'd be no me without you!" (Example 8.20); "千军易得，一将难求。 It's easier to raise an army than find one general." (Example 8.21); "你，潇洒首一回啊！ You... gracefully turn [your] head around." (Example 8.22). Only in Excerpt 8.6 do we see an instance of quoting *monologue of multiple (two) quotes*:

老师： 农业是 [国民经济的] 基础。	(C5)
Teacher: Agriculture is the foundation [of the national economy].	
手中有粮，心中不慌。	(C6)
As long as you have grain in your hand, you don't have to worry about anything else.	

The first quote initiates the core compliment strategy 2, while the second quote elaborates the first one by giving an account about why agriculture is the foundation.

Since direct or quoted speech enlists what someone has said in exact words, it requires memory to produce. This may explain why most of the direct quotes in the examples are *monologues of single quote by one speaker*. They are easier for the quoter to remember.

Functions

As has been stated in the introductory remarks, the support compliment strategy of quote is *multifunctional* in nature and is thus often *mutually non-exclusive* with other strategies. I have demonstrated many examples of the overlapping of quote and other strategies by listing double coding (e.g., quote and comment, quote and comparison) in the right column of some excerpts. For example, in Excerpt 8.3 (p. 400), Mrs. Dong uses five quote strategies to elaborate and emphasize her core compliment strategy on the local tour guide Miss Liu's good English pronunciation. The first two quote strategies ("我听到他们，他们说，你英语说得很好听的。 I hear them say... they say your English sounds very pleasant."; "他们在说你，说得很好听。 They're saying... it's pleasant to listen to you.") (C3, C4) function to *emphasize* the core compliment strategy—not only Mrs. Dong thinks Miss Liu's English pronunciation is good, other different tour group members have been and are sharing her view. The next two quote strategies ("说得很清楚。 [You] speak very clearly."; "嗳，这个调，这个语调很好听， Yeah, your intonation... intonation is very pleasant.") (C5, C6) function as two *elaboration comment* strategies to add details to the core and her first two quote strategies—Miss Liu has clear enunciation and pleasant intonation. The last quote strategy ("就好像是听他们 native speakers 在说话。 It's like listening to a *native speaker* speaking.") (C7) functions as a *comparison* strategy. It compares Miss Liu's pronunciation to a high standard—a native speaker's pronunciation, to *strengthen* the positive semantic force of the core compliment and other quote strategies.

Excerpt 8.7 illustrates how quote strategy is used throughout the entire

compliment-response sequence to perform different functions: *initiation*, *elaboration* or

emphasis.

Excerpt 8.7 [111] "It's *nuts* the way your daughter trains at the piano!"

Situation: Wei [F, 22] is a talented and accomplished music student. During the vacation, she practices piano for long hours at her father's (musical instrument manufacturing) company piano room. People there are amazed at her passion and hard-working spirit. Her father [51], an accomplished musician himself, is very proud of his daughter. It's a weekend at home. Wei's aunt is visiting them.

01	→	爸：1.阿拉公司里全来讲，侬囡五格种练琴是 nuts! 伊讲。（笑）	Dad:	1.Everybody in my company says it's *nuts* [in English] the way your daughter trains at the piano, they say. (laughs)	1.core passionate and hardworking quote other
02					
03					
04					
05					
06					
07		姑：（笑）	Aunt:	(laughs)	
08		爸：我讲，	Dad:	I said (to them)...	
09		为：……（？）	Wei:	...(?)	
10		姑：（笑）	Aunt:	(laughs)	
11	→	爸：2.我讲，像侬格能样子我讲，永远呒没出息我讲，3.全是，坐了一歇歇就要，呜呜穷哭一大堆我讲……	Dad:	2.I said, the way you guys train I said, you'll never make it, I said. 3.You all... after a short burst of effort, you'd break down crying, I said...	2.quote self comparison to other
12					
13	→				3.quote self comparison to other
14					
15					
16					
17					
18		(Wei asks if anybody is in the company today.)	(Wei asks if anybody is in the company today.)		
19					
20	→	爸：……4.伊讲啥个，伊讲我现在刚刚晓得啥个叫艺术，5.而且格艺术是啥地方来额伊讲。	Dad:	...4.He said...he said I'm just beginning to understand what art is all about, 5.and where art comes from, he said.	4.quote other comment
21					
22	→				5.quote other comment
23					
24					
25					
26		姑：（笑）	Aunt:	(laughs)	
27		为：啥人讲啊？	Wei:	Who said?	
28		爸：格个明康，伊来了学……，学，学唱额。	Dad:	This Mingkang. He's learning... learning to sing.	
29					
30					
31		为：噢。	Wei:	Oh.	
32	→	爸：6.伊讲我假使伊辰光啦	Dad:	6.He said, if I had	6.quote other

33		有伊（女儿）格能用功	worked as hard as she	comparison
34		额闲话啦，伊讲我今朝	(the daughter) back	to self
35		勿会坐了格只写字台	then, I wouldn't be	
36		上，我来台上厢了伊讲	sitting at a desk now.	
37		（笑）。	I'd be on stage, he	
38			said. (laughs)	
39		(Wei talks to her aunt)	(Wei talks to her aunt)	

There are altogether six compliment utterances in Excerpt 8.7, all of them *quote* strategies. Two quote the speaker Wei's father himself, and four quote others. Judging by the pronoun references used (there is no pronoun reference shift; the second person focus "侬 you [guys] or your [daughter]" and the first person focus "我 I" used in the original conversation between Wei's father and the people in the company remain the same at the time of Wei's father's reporting to his family), all six *quote* strategies are in direct or quoted speech frame. They are used with a reporting clause: "(阿拉公司里) 全来讲 everybody says…" (C1), "我讲 I said…" (C2, C3) or "伊讲 he said…" (C4, C5, C6). Note every *quote* strategy overlaps with another strategy. At the beginning of the excerpt, Wei's father uses a quote of general reference "everybody in my company says" ("阿拉公司里全来讲") to *initiate* an overall compliment topic: Wei is extremely passionate and hard-working at piano training ("侬囡五格种练琴是 nuts！伊讲。 it's *nuts* the way your daughter trains at the piano, they say.") (C1). Next, to support his core compliment strategy, he quotes his own conversation with people in the company, *comparing* their efforts at training with Wei's: "the way you guys train I said, you'll never make it, I said" ("像侬格能样子我讲，永远呒没出息我讲，") (C2), because unlike Wei who is training long hours like "nuts," "You all... after a short burst of effort, you'd break down crying, I said..." ("全是，坐了一歇歇就要，呜呜穷哭一大堆我

讲……”) (C3). Then to further *elaborate* his core compliment strategy, the father quotes two *comments* by Mingkang, a worker in the company who is learning singing: Wei's training efforts make him realize art is passion (cf. "nuts"), and only working hard like "nuts" as Wei does makes art ("伊讲我现在刚刚晓得啥个叫艺术"; "而且格艺术是啥地方来额伊讲。") (C4, C5). Wei's father then quotes Mingkang again to culminate the compliment sequence, and this time a *comparison* of Mingkang himself to Wei: "He said, if I had worked as hard as she back then, I wouldn't be sitting at a desk now. I'd be on stage, he said" ("伊讲我假使伊辰光啦有伊格能用功额闲话啦，伊讲我今朝勿会坐来格只写字台上，我来台上厢了伊讲。") (C6). We can see from this excerpt that the *quote* strategy is used throughout the compliment sequence to *initiate*, *elaborate*, as well as *emphasize* a compliment topic.

Although quoting other's words or perspective instead of using one's own to compliment in a way is performing an *indirect* compliment action and thus may be argued to weaken the compliment force, an examination of all the *quote* strategies used in the data can argue for the contrary. Like inviting the third party to join in the compliment action, *quote* strategy adds a "voice" not present at the scene and thus strengthening the force of the compliment action. Take Excerpt 8.7 for example, Wei's father's relay of other speakers' praises of his daughter shows no sign of reservation or non-commitment, but rather his quotes of other speakers are filled with pride and excitement. The same is observed in Excerpt 8.2 in which Yan's descriptions and quotes of Liao Donghai's fervent admiration for his teacher Xue is filled with passion and drama. The uses of the quote strategies in other excerpts show no exception. Zhou and Peng's quotes of Qin Yi's praises of Zeng Tianmin's new apartment (Excerpt 8.1), Mrs. Dong's simultaneous

reporting of what other tour group members are saying about Miss Liu's beautiful English pronunciation (Excerpt 8.3), Qian's vivid description of her conversation with her husband about Ning's excellent English writing skills (Excerpt 8.4), Zhen, Jie and Hong's citing of a popular movie title to express their admiration and approval for their Dean's chic outfit (Excerpt 8.5), and the teacher and the farmer on the train bringing in famous historical figures and their famous quotes to sing the praises of each other's important jobs (Excerpt 8.6)..., are all filled with admiration, emotion, enthusiasm, excitement, vivacity and spirit, exhibiting no sign of reservation or non-commitment. One can almost see their faces and hear their voices. They create a collective voice that not just the complimenter and the third party present at the scene admire the complimentee, but other non-present people—tour group members, friends, families, college English major students and professors, co-workers, fellow professionals, even a famous state leader and the chairman of a country—share the same feeling. This created "shared" positive feeling/opinion definitely adds power to the positive force of the core or other support compliment strategies.

In the first half of this chapter, I have described one multifunctional support compliment strategy—the *quote* strategy, its linguistic form, and discourse and functional characteristics. In the second half, I will describe the other multifunctional support compliment strategy—the *comparison* strategy, its linguistic form, and discourse and functional characteristics.

Comparison

The support compliment strategy of *comparison* compares the complimentee (1) with the complimenter him/herself or (2) with another person to perform a compliment action. The support compliment strategy of *comparison* is similar to *quote* strategy in that while the *comparison* strategy is used primarily to emphasize the core or another support compliment strategy, it is also observed to be used to initiate, align with, or elaborate the core or another support compliment strategy. The multifunctional nature of the *comparison* strategy also makes it mutually non-exclusive with other strategies (e.g., comparison and comment, comparison and quote) and thus creates problems with coding. In this dissertation all the *comparison* actions are recorded and analyzed, but only those *comparison* actions which function to emphasize the core or another support strategy AND which are not overlapping with another emphasis strategy (e.g., repetition, intensification) are listed under the heading of *comparison* strategy. In other words, when the *comparison* strategy overlaps with another strategy, it is coded as the strategy it overlaps with (e.g., comparison and comment is coded as comment strategy). However, there is one exception: when the *comparison* strategy overlaps with *quote* strategy, it is coded as the *comparison* strategy. This is arbitrary, but there is no basis for choosing one strategy over the other. A total of 547 *comparison* actions are observed in the 300 compliment-response sequences, 391 (11.8% of 3,310) of them are grouped under the heading of *comparison* strategy. However, to capture the features of the *comparison* strategy more accurately, all 547 *comparison* actions (mutually exclusive or non-exclusive ones) are included in the analysis. Among the 547 *comparison* strategies, 232

(42.4%) are *comparison to self* and 315 (57.6%) are *comparison to other*. Table 8.2

presents the taxonomy of the *comparison* strategies.

Table 8.2

Taxonomy of Comparison Strategies

Comparison Strategies	Number of Occurrences	Percentage
(1) Comparison to Self	**232**	**42.4**
(a) Complimenter focused	159	68.5
Complimenter is bad	(118)	(50.8)
Complimenter is not as good as complimentee	(28)	(12.1)
Complimenter is as bad as [a low standard]	(13)	(5.6)
(b) Complimentee focused	55	23.7
Complimentee is better than complimenter	(55)	(23.7)
(c) Complimentee and complimenter dual focused	18	7.8
Complimentee is good but complimenter is bad	(18)	(7.8)
(2) Comparison to Other	**315**	**57.6**
(a) Other focused	141	44.8
Other is bad	(118)	(37.5)
Other is not as good as complimentee	(18)	(5.7)
Other is as bad as [a low standard]	(5)	(1.6)
(b) Complimentee focused	163	51.7
Complimentee is better than other	(49)	(15.5)
Complimentee is as good as [a high standard]	(44)	(14.0)
Complimentee is excellent, or the best, or rare in a [specified or unspecified] group	(70)	(22.2)
(c) Complimentee and other dual focused	11	3.5
Complimentee is good but other is bad	(11)	(3.5)
Total	**547**	**100.0**

NOTES: N = 547, which includes 391 mutually exclusive comparison strategies and 156 mutually non-exclusive comparison strategies. The numbers in the brackets present the distribution of the substrategies under each main strategy.

The following sections report the results of the analysis.

Comparison to Self

Table 8.2 shows that 232 (42.4%) of the 547 *comparison* strategies are *comparison to self*, i.e., presenting the weakness of the complimenter him/herself to raise the complimentee. *Comparison to self* strategies can be (a) complimenter focused, (b) complimentee focused, or (c) complimentee and complimenter dual focused (see Table 8.2).

Complimenter focused. The majority (159 or 68.5%) of the 232 *comparison to self* strategies are *complimenter focused*. *Complimenter focused* strategies raise the complimentee by focusing on the complimenter's weakness, pointing out that "the complimenter him/herself is 'bad'", or "the complimenter is not as good as the complimentee," or in extreme cases, comparing the complimenter him/herself to a "low" standard ("complimenter is as bad as [a low standard]"), which includes normal comparison (i.e., comparing the similarities of things in the same category) as well as figures of speech such as simile, metaphor, or analogy (i.e., comparing the similarities of things in otherwise dissimilar categories). It must be pointed out that the term "bad" or "low (standard)" used here and throughout the present study does not imply moral judgment. It simply describes the complimenter's act of self-deprecation or other-deprecation as a strategy to raise the complimentee. Since the focus is on the complimenter's weakness, first person focus is normally employed. Commonly used lexical and syntactic forms include:

(a) Complimenter focused

   Negation adverbs:

      e.g. 不, 没, 呒没, 勿 (no, not), 不会 (can't, not able to), etc.

Lexical items of negative meaning:

e.g., 老 (old), 一歇歇忘记塌 (forget things in a short moment), 打工额 (laborers), 黄鱼脑袋 (heads like the "yellow croaker"—a fish with a big head but no brains), 乡下人 (country bumpkin), 贫民窟 (the slums),大锅饭 ("big-pot cafeteria food"), etc.

Comparative forms:

A 勿如/不如 B (A not as good as B, A inferior to B),
A 呒没/没有 B [Adjective] (A not as [Adjective] as B), etc.

Comparative forms (used for comparison or as figures of speech):

A 像 B, A 像 B 一样 (A is like B),
A 像 B 一样 [Adjective] (A as [Adjective] as B),
A 是 B (A am/is/are B), etc.

Examples 8.23 to 8.31 illustrate how *complimenter focused* strategies are realized.

Core or Other Strategy	Comparison	Core or Other Strategy English Translation	Comparison English Translation
Complimenter is bad			
(8.23) 邻居唐：侬额囡五好！	邻居唐:阿拉姆妈养了五个小人，结果一个也照顾勿上。	Neighbor Ms. Tang: Your daughter is great!	Neighbor Ms. Tang: My mom has raised five children, but not one of us can take care of her.
(8.24) 客 2：两只菜做得老好额！（笑） 客 1：伊拉就讲全想得出额， 主妇：吃塌伊。 客 1：全呶，伊拉全想得恰到好处噢？	客 1：呶格个两只菜对伐，我想也想勿出来额！（笑） 客 1：就讲格能介搭配就想勿出来。 客 1：阿拉哪能全想勿出来啦？（笑）	Guest 2: These dishes are cooked so well. (laughs) Guest 1: They have such new ideas. Hostess: Finish them all. Guest 1: All... they mix and match things just right.	Guest 1: These two dishes, I couldn't possibly come up with such ideas. (laughs) Guest 1: I couldn't even think of such combinations. Guest 1: How come none of us can come up with such ideas? (laughs)

(8.25) 方：格地方结棍来！ 张：侬格是要，要六千多一个平方了。	张：阿拉，阿拉格搭勿做老总房子买勿起嗳（笑）！	Fang: This is a really upscale location! Zhang: This must cost you... cost you over 6,000 yuan per square meter.	Zhang: We… here we can't afford such an apartment unless you're a CEO [like you] (laughs).
Complimenter is not as good as complimentee			
(8.26) 何审计：高经理侬现在走运来， 高经理：（笑）机遇……	何审计：阿拉全打工额， 乔财务：阿拉现在全勿如侬，	Auditor He: Manager Gao, you've hit a streak of good luck. Manager Gao: (laughs) It's opportunity...	Auditor He: We are all just laborers. Accountant Qiao: We aren't doing as well as you are.
(8.27) 炜：俫姆妈皮肤老好额。	炜：侬额我额皮肤全呒没俫姆妈皮肤好。	Wei: Your mom has great skin.	Wei: Neither you nor I have skin as good as your mom's.
(8.28) 崔：很漂亮！（新房子）	宋：我实实叫还呒没介高级了！	Cui: Beautiful! (new apartment)	Song: Mine is truly not as classy as this.
Complimenter is as bad as [a low standard]			
(8.29) 孙：看俫姆妈后生蛮后生额！	孙：阿拉姆妈老！看上去像八十几岁……	Sun: Your mom looks really young for her age.	Sun: My mom looks old. She looks like she's over 80…
(8.30) 邢：啥物事啦，我讲，格种水平格种房子我从来呒没看见过！ 叶：勿要瞎讲八讲！	杨：是额呀，乡下人。 邢：我也看看像乡下人一样了！	Xing: It's true... I must say... I never saw a place of such quality, such class. (decoration style) Ye: What nonsense!	Yang: Yeah, you're right. I'm a total country bumpkin. Xing: I'm looking like a country bumpkin too.
(8.31) 马：卫娟娟读书脑子勿要太好噢！（笑）对伐？ 卫：勿来三，现在勿来三了！	马：阿拉对伐，全是黄鱼脑袋（笑）。	Ma: Wei Juanjuan had a terribly good mind in school (laughs), didn't she? Wei: Not any longer. My mind isn't any good any more.	Ma: We all had heads like the "yellow croaker" (laughs).

First person focus "我, 我额, I, my, mine," "阿拉 we, us, our" are employed in almost all the comparison strategies in these examples. In Examples 8.23 to 8.25 ("complimenter is bad"), negation adverbs ("照顾勿上 **can't** take care of," "想勿出来 **couldn't** come up with or think of," "买勿起 **can't** afford") are used to express the complimenter's inability to do what the complimentee can do. Lexical items of negative meaning ("打工额 laborers" in Example 8.26, or "老 old" in Example 8.29) are also used to present the complimenter's weakness. In Examples 8.26 to 8.28 ("complimenter is not as good as complimentee"), comparative forms "A 勿如 B, A not as good as / inferior to B" ("勿如 侬 aren't doing as well as you are") and "A 吭没 B [Adjective], A not as [Adjective] as B" ("吭没佴姆妈皮肤好 do not have skin as good as your mom's," "吭没介高级 not as classy as this") are used to express the complimenter's inferiority. In Examples 8.29 to 8.31 ("complimenter is as bad as [a low standard]"), the complimenter uses the comparative forms "A 像 B, A is like B" or "A 像 B 一样 [Adjective], A as [Adjective] as B" or "A 是 B, A am/is/are B" together with lexical items of negative meaning to degrade him/herself to a low standard ("像八十几岁 looks like she's over 80," "像乡下 人一样 looking like a country bumpkin," "是黄鱼脑袋 had heads like the 'yellow croaker'"). Please note, Example 8.29 is an instance of normal comparison: comparing the similarities of things in the same category (the appearance of a 72-year-old woman is compared with the appearance of a woman over 80). However, Examples 8.30 and 8.31 are instances of figures of speech: comparing the similarities of things in otherwise dissimilar categories (a simile: big city college professors are compared to a "country bumpkin"; a metaphor: the complimenter's academic mind is compared to the head of a

"yellow croaker"). By presenting complimenter's weakness, the complimentee's strength is greatly emphasized.

Excerpt 8.8 illustrates how *complimenter focused* strategies "complimenter is bad" and "complimenter is not as good as complimentee" are used in a complete compliment-response sequence to achieve emphasis.

Excerpt 8.8 [577] "I don't have your patience."

Situation: Chen [M, 67] and Feng [F, 38] are both auditors from a district taxation bureau. They are auditing the account at a company. Zhao [M, 69] is the company accountant.

01		冯审计：1.陈老师，侬搭伊	Auditor Feng: 1.Teacher Chen,	1.core
02	→	拉蛮耐心额，2.阿	you're very patient	patience
03		拉呒没介耐心，	with them. 2.I don't	2.comparison
04	→	3.阿拉完成任务	have your patience.	self
05		要紧。	3.I'm in a hurry to	3.comparison
06			get my job done.	self
07		陈审计：（笑）	Auditor Chen: (laughs)	
08		赵财会：（笑）	Accountant Zhao: (laughs)	
09		冯审计：阿拉来拉帐上	Auditor Feng: When I check	
10		厢……（不清楚）	the account...(not	
11			clear)	

In this brief excerpt, Auditor Feng supports her core compliment strategy with two *comparison to self*, *complimenter focused* strategies. By stating that she does not have Auditor Chen's patience ("阿拉呒没介耐心") (C2) ("complimenter is not as good as complimentee") and that she just wants to get the job done quickly ("阿拉完成任务要紧") (C3) ("complimenter is bad"), she raises Auditor Chen and makes his fine personal quality "patience with the clients" ("侬搭伊拉蛮耐心额") more prominent.

Excerpt 8.9 illustrates how the *complimenter focused* strategy "complimenter is as bad as [a low standard]" is used in a complete compliment-response sequence to achieve emphasis. (It also demonstrates how some response strategies are used in the same way.)

Excerpt 8.9 [159] "Then... people like me are about to be grandmothers."

Situation: At a high school class reunion dinner to honor Shao [F], who has just returned to Shanghai from abroad for a visit. In the middle of her story about her early days abroad, the waitress and the host Xue [M] place a big and the best part of turtle (considered a nutritious delicacy) on Shao's plate. Xue, Li, Zhang and Zou are males. Shao, Guan, Zhong, Jiang and Qiu are females. They are all around 45 years old.

01	邵：……喔唷！勿来三，我	Shao: ...Oh, no... I can't, I	
02	勿来三！介许多！	can't eat that much...	
03	（笑）	too much! (laughs)	
04	薛：勿是呀！一只壳，旁边	Xue: It's not much. Only a	
05	一圈额物事。	shell... a little stuff	
06		(meat) surrounding it.	
07	……(omit six turns)	...(omit six turns)	
08	章：不过侬是要吃，是要	Zhang: But you must eat it,	
09	吃，又瘦，要吃。	must eat it. You're so	
10		skinny. You need to eat	
11		more.	
12	邵：格，我，吃……	Shao: Then... I'll... eat...	
13	钟：嗯，邵云云还可以！	Zhong: Well, Shao Yun Yun is	
14		alright [not too	
15		skinny].	
16	邵：我勿瘦噢！	Shao: No, I'm not skinny.	
17	李：1.蹲国外么格种就算，	Li: 1.Living abroad, this	1.core 1
18	保持苗条的身材格是算	would be... to keep slim	slim figure
19	好额来！2.全要做瘦人	is desirable.	2.intensifi-
20	对伐啦。	2.Everybody wants to be	cation
21		skinny.	
22	邹：3.嗯！	Zou: 3.Yeah.	3.agreement
23	邵：（笑）	Shao: (laughs)	
24	（大家笑）	(all laugh)	
25	江：……4.人家觅也觅勿着	Jiang: ...4.It's what others	4.comparison
26	了噢！	want and can't get!	other
27	章：5.格是，跟中国相比。	Zhang: 5.True...unlike China.	5.agreement
28	李：6.人家想瘦，出了钞票	Li: 6.They want to be	6.comparison
29	去减肥对伐啦！	skinny, they'd pay to	other
30		get skinny.	
31	薛：7.嗳嗳。	Xue: 7.Yeah, yeah.	7.agreement
32	（大家笑）	(all laugh)	
33	钟：8.格个东方美嗳伊拉	Zhong: 8.This is Asian beauty	8.comment
34	是！	they fancy.	
35	邵：9.嗯，勿是，上海小姐	Shao: 9.Well, no. This is	9.core 2
36	美！10.但是现在	the beauty of Shanghai	slim and
37	（笑），〔侬到外头去	girls! 10.But nowadays	beautiful
38	看噢，勿得了！	(laughs)... [you walk	10.intensifi-

39		out on the street and	cation
40		all you see... wow!	
41		[Shanghai girls are so	
42		beautiful!]	
43	钟：　　　　〔（笑）	Zhong:　　　　　[(laughs)	
44	章：喔唷唷唷，上海全两个	Zhang: Oh, my, my, my... all	
45	老姐了！	you see in Shanghai are	
46		old hags (*sisters*).	
47	（大家笑）	(all laugh)	
48	邵：（笑）老姐……（笑）	Shao: (laughs) Old hags	
49		(*sisters*)... (laughs)	
50	关：真的老姐了。	Guan: [We've] Really become	
51		old hags (*sisters*).	
52	章：坐了海么全是爷叔！	Zhang: Or us sitting here,	
53	（笑）	old turkeys (*uncles*).	
54		(laughs)	
55	（大家笑）	(all laugh)	
56	邱：阿姨，现在跑出去全喊	Qiu: Auntie, when we're out	
57	阿姨了！（笑）	they all address us as	
58		"auntie"! (laughs)	
59	邹：是的呀。	Zou: Exactly (It's true).	
60 →	邵：11.格，格，像阿拉格	Shao: 11.Then... then...	11.comparison
61	种要做外婆了！（笑）	people like me are about	self
62		to be grandmothers.	
63		(laughs)	
64	章：我来拉，我来拉，我来	Zhang: When I was at... when	
65	拉，邹晓杰呢，滑	I was at... when I was	
66	稽了，我们在上海大学	at... Hey, Zou Xiaojie,	
67	念书，	it's funny... when I was	
68		a student at Shanghai	
69		University...	
70	邹：嗯。	Zou: Yeah?	
71	章：现在人家那个什么呢，	Zhang: Now it has become	
72	中专，化工中专在那个	that... that...	
73	上那个什么课，格两个	vocational school...	
74	小赤佬跑进来搬台子，	chemical vocational	
75	"哪能像阿拉阿爸一样	school... I was... was	
76	来读书啦？"伊讲。	taking a course. Two	
77	（笑）	little rascals (*devils*)	
78		came in to take	
79		desks out... "how come	
80		people like my dad are	
81		going to school here"	
82		they said.	
83	邵：（笑）	Shao: (laughs)	
84	（大家笑）	(all laugh)	

85	钟：（笑）想想老无没劲噢	Zhong: (laughs) The thought	
86	（笑）？	of it is depressing,	
87		right? (laughs)	
88	章：伊讲像阿拉阿爸一样伊	Zhang: He said like my dad...	
89	讲来读书伊讲。（笑）	he said going to school	
90		here... he said.	
91		(laughs)	
92	邵：不过侬真额到国外去么	Shao: But when you get	
93	全是老头子老太全了读	abroad... it's true...	
94	书。	old men and old women	
95		are all going to school.	
96	(Change topic. Talk	(Change topic. Talk about age	
97	about age and education,	and education, different	
98	different philosophies	philosophies and practices	
99	and practices between	between China and other	
100	China and other	countries.)	
101	countries.)		

In Excerpt 8.9, five *comparison to self* strategies of extreme self-deprecation are used.
One of them is the *complimenter focused* "complimenter is as bad as [a low standard]"
strategy; the other four, interestingly, are response strategies of the same type—the
complimentees compare themselves to a low standard to reject the compliment. Coming
back from abroad, Shao is very impressed by how little her friends have changed and
how slim the Shanghai girls look. When she is complimented on her slim figure ("苗条
的身材") (C1) and is called an "Asian beauty" ("东方美") (C8), she returns the
compliment to her old classmates at the reunion and calls them "Shanghai beauties" ("上
海小姐美") (C9). This triggers off a series of rejection responses. After uttering a series
of "Oh, my, my, my…" Zhang compares the Shanghai girls (women present) to "老姐
old hags (*sisters*)" (line 44) and men to "爷叔 old turkeys (*uncles*)" (line 52). Then Qiu
escalates the self-deprecation and upgrades the "old sisters" to "阿姨 old aunties" (line
56). Zhang then tells a story about how he was regarded as "阿爸 old dad" by two

students at a vocational school (lines 64–82). These *comparison to self* response strategies are intensified and firmly agreed to by Guan and Zou (line 50, line 59) and repeated by Zhang himself (line 88). Before Zhang's last comparison strategy, the complimenter Shao "fights back" and rejects the rejections by comparing herself to "外婆 grandmother" (C11), an upgrade from Qiu's "old aunties." Shao's *complimenter focused* "complimenter is as bad as [a low standard]" strategy expands the distance between the complimentee's strength and the complimenter's weakness, making her old classmates' beauty and slimness stand out even more. It greatly strengthens the force of her core [return] compliment strategy (C9). Similarly, the four *comparison to self* strategies of extreme self-deprecation ("responder is as bad as [a low standard]") dramatically strengthen the rejection force. Note there are two *comparison to other* strategies (see next section) used at the beginning of the compliment sequence: Jiang says Shao's slim figure is "what others want and can't get" ("人家觅也觅勿着") (C4) and Li comments that "they'd pay [money] to get skinny" ("人家想瘦，出了钞票去减肥") (C6). Like *comparison to self* strategies, *comparison to other* strategies used in the compliment sequence serve to emphasize the core compliment (C1). The two *comparison to other* strategies and the five escalating *comparison to self* strategies of extreme self-deprecation present another powerful interactional "tug-of-war."

Complimentee focused. Out of the 232 *comparison to self* strategies, 55 or 23.7% are *complimentee focused*. *Complimentee focused* strategies raise the complimentee by focusing on the complimentee's strength ("betterness"), pointing out that "the complimentee is better than the complimenter." Since the focus is on the

complimentee's "betterness," second person focus (or third person focus in a multi-party

interaction) is normally employed. Commonly used lexical and syntactic forms include:

(b) Complimentee focused

Comparative forms:

A 比 B [Adjective] (A [more/less Adjective] than B),
A 搭/帮/和 B 勿一样/两样 (A different from B), etc.

Examples 8.32 to 8.34 illustrate how the *complimentee focused* strategy "complimentee is

better than complimenter" is realized.

Core or Other Strategy	Comparison	Core or Other Strategy English Translation	Comparison English Translation
Complimentee is better than complimenter			
(8.32) 濛妹：侬烧只菜饭烧得好！ 濛濛：侬烧格只啦还要有一段距离，	濛妹：我烧勿出来额格物事…… 濛夫：现在侬烧得比我好来！	Meng's Younger Sister: This vegetable rice you made is great! Meng Meng: You still have much to learn to cook this.	Meng's Younger Sister: I can't cook anything like it… Meng's Husband: (to Meng) Now you do it better than I do.
(8.33) 云云：伊（沈的外孙女）蛮懂事体额， 沈伯母：蛮懂额？	云云：比阿拉全懂！	Yun Yun: She (Shen's granddaughter) is very mature. Aunt Shen: Very mature?	Yun Yun: More sophisticated than all of us.
(8.34) 吴：洋来，现在！（笑）……弄得老好额！（笑） 鲁波：格勿会额。	吴：鲁波，你家的房子搞得比小吴阿姨家还要好看！（笑）还要，还要——，还要考究！还要好，	Wu: Very modern and Western-looking now. (laughs)... You did a great job (remodeling)! (laughs) Lu Bo: That's not possible.	Wu: Lu Bo, you made your place more beautiful than Aunt Xiao Wu's. (laughs) More… more sophisticated. Much better.

Second person focus "侬/你, you, your" is employed in the comparison strategies in these examples (the third person focus "伊 she" used in Example 8.33 refers to a person, Shen's granddaughter, related to the complimentee). Since Examples 8.32 to 8.34 focus on the complimentee's "betterness," comparative form "A 比 B [Adjective], A [more/less Adjective] than B" is used ("比我好 [cook it] better than I do," "比阿拉全懂 more sophisticated than all of us [in handling things]," "比小吴阿姨家还要好看 [decorated the apartment] more beautiful than Aunt Xiao Wu's," "还要考究 more sophisticated," "还要好 much better").

Excerpt 8.10 illustrates how comparative form "A 帮 B 勿一样/两样, A different from B" is used to present the complimentee's "betterness" in a complete compliment-response sequence.

Excerpt 8.10 [236] "Going abroad and staying here are two entirely different worlds."

Situation: Ziyun [F, 76] and Riliang [M, 61] are old friends. They both sang in the Shanghai Amateur Singing Choir many years ago. Riliang is visiting Ziyun. Ziyun's son is present. In this part of the conversation, they are talking about Ziyun's children, all of them are doing well and three of them are living abroad now.

01		日亮：1.格额侬两个小人全	Riliang: 1.All your children	1.core
02		比较，有出息啊！	are doing quite well,	children
03		啊？	aren't they?	doing well
04		紫云：有啥额出息！	Ziyun: Not really doing well.	
05		日亮：2.还呒没出息？！	Riliang: 2.How can you say	2.intensifi-
06			they're not really	cation
07			doing well?!	
08		紫云：一个也勿来格搭。	Ziyun: Not one of them are	
09			around.	
10		儿子：（笑）	Son: (laughs)	
11	→	日亮：3.到国外去么帮阿拉	Riliang: 3.Going abroad and	3.comparison
12		此地是格，两重天	staying here are...	self
13		呀！	two entirely different	
14			worlds.	
15		儿子：两重天（笑）。	Son: Two entirely different	

16			worlds (laughs).	
17	→	日亮：4.差一个世纪呀！	Riliang: 4.A difference by a	4.intensifi-
18			century.	cation
19		紫云：国外也苦噢！	Ziyun: It's very difficult	comparison
20			living abroad.	self
21	→	日亮：5.苦么苦人勿一样额	Riliang: 5.It's difficult but	5.comparison
22	→	呀！6.人自由呀！	different. 6.You have	self
23		7.迭个人自由呀，	freedom. 7.You... you	6.comment
24	→	8.呼吸额空气也两样	have freedom. 8.Even	comparison
25		了！	the air you breathe is	self
26			different.	7.repetition
27		(They continue to talk	(They continue to talk about	comparison
28		about job and housing.)	job and housing.)	self
29				8.comment
30				comparison
31				self

In Excerpt 8.10, a different comparative form "A 帮 B 勿一样/两样, A different from B"

is used to present the complimentee's "betterness": "到国外去么帮阿拉此地是格，两

重天呀！ Going abroad and staying here are... two entirely different worlds." (C3).

However, it may be argued that "different" is not necessarily "better," just as Ziyun

points out in lines 19–20 that "it's very difficult living abroad" ("国外也苦噢！"). What

makes going abroad a "better world" are the positive qualifications/*comments* in the turns

following the "different worlds" assertion: that "you have freedom" ("人自由呀！") (C6),

and that "even the air you breathe is different" ("呼吸额空气也两样了！") (C8)—much

better air quality according to the discussion between Ziyun and Riliang in prior talk.

Both qualities, associated with "going abroad" (signs/proof of "doing well"), are very

much desired at the time. Without the positive qualifications, the "different" may indeed

be interpreted differently.

Complimentee and complimenter dual focused. Out of the 232 *comparison to*

self strategies, 18 or 7.8% are *complimentee and complimenter dual focused*.

Complimentee and complimenter dual focused strategies raise the complimentee by

juxtaposing the complimentee's strength and the complimenter's weakness to form a

contrast, pointing out that "the complimentee is good but the complimenter is 'bad.'"

The contrast is mostly formed by placing two single opposing traits right next to each

other ("A, but B"). Occasionally two groups of opposing traits are juxtaposed ("A, A...,

but B, B..."). Since the focus is on both the complimentee's strength and the

complimenter's weakness, second person focus (or third person focus in a multi-party

interaction) and first person focus are both employed. Commonly used lexical and

syntactic forms include:

(c) Complimentee and complimenter dual focused

    Contrastive forms:

        Contrasting single opposing traits (A, but B)
        e.g., 你/伊……, 我…… (you/he or she..., but I...)

        Contrasting multiple opposing traits (A, A..., but B, B...)

Examples 8.35 to 8.37 illustrate how *complimentee and complimenter dual focused*

strategy "complimentee is good, but complimenter is bad" is realized.

Core or Other Strategy	Comparison	Core or Other Strategy English Translation	Comparison English Translation
Complimentee is good, but complimenter is bad			
(8.35) 连：伊出道老早噢！	连：我来插队入户额辰光伊来电台里厢教英文。	Lian: She made it a long time ago.	Lian: When I was working in the countryside she was teaching English at the [Shanghai] Radio Station.
(8.36) 谢审计：覃老师，侬格脑子是特殊材料额，	谢审计：覃老师，侬哪能记得牢额啦？我	Auditor Xie: Teacher Tan, your brain is made of a special	Auditor Xie: Teacher Tan, how can you remember

	全记勿牢……	material.	everything? I can't remember anything...
(8.37) 赵：毕业后，在大学找份工作，当教授……超级大款啦！	赵：你年薪五十万，我只一千；你读了博士，我才是大专；你"洋插队"，我"土插队"。真自惭形秽！	Zhao: After graduation, you can find a teaching job at a college and become a professor… A super rich woman!	Zhao: Your annual income is 500,000 (RMB), mine's only 1,000; You have a PhD, I only have a junior college degree; You went to get "reeducated" in a Western country, I went to get "reeducated" in the Chinese countryside. I feel truly ashamed of myself!

In Examples 8.35 to 8.37, both first person focus and second person focus (or third person focus in a multi-party interaction in Example 8.35) are employed. The complimenter in each example uses the contrastive frame "A, but B" ("你/伊……, 我……; you/she..., but I...") to juxtapose the complimentee's strength and the complimenter's weakness ("complimentee is good, but complimenter is bad"): "teaching English at the [prestigious Shanghai] Radio Station" vs. "working in the countryside" ("来电台里厢教英文", "插队入户"); can remember "everything" vs. "nothing" ("记得牢", "全记勿牢"). In Example 8.37, the complimentee's long time close friend Zhao poses a series of contrasts between them on the topics of income ("五十万 500,000" vs. "一千 1,000"), education ("博士 a PhD" vs. "大专 a junior college degree"), career and social status ("洋插队 get 'reeducated' in a Western country" vs. "土插队 get 'reeducated' in the Chinese countryside"), ending with a climactic emotion focused intensification strategy "真自惭形秽！I feel truly ashamed of myself!" The side by side

contrast, especially multiple contrasts in a row, makes the complimentee's strength stand out even more, dramatically raising the complimentee.

Excerpt 8.11 demonstrates how *complimentee and complimenter dual focused* strategy "complimentee is good, but complimenter is bad" is used in a complete compliment-response sequence to achieve emphasis.

Excerpt 8.11 [238] "It's quite clean here where you live. Over where I live, the whole place is littered with trash."

Situation: Ziyun [F, 76] and Riliang [M, 61] are old friends. They both sang in the Shanghai Amateur Singing Choir many years ago. Riliang is visiting Ziyun. In this part of the conversation, they are talking about the living environment in New Zealand (where Riliang's relative has immigrated to) and Shanghai.

01		紫云：新西兰蛮好。	Ziyun: New Zealand's great.	
02		日亮：新西兰噢？	Riliang: New Zealand, right?	
03		紫云：地方好。	Ziyun: Great place.	
04		日亮：地方好，空气好。阿	Riliang: Great place. The air	
05		拉现在上海像个垃圾	is fresh. We in	
06		场！	Shanghai... it's like a	
07			dump site now.	
08		紫云：嗳——。	Ziyun: Yeah.	
09	→	日亮：1. 侬此地还清爽，	Riliang: 1.It's quite clean	1.core 1
10	→	2. 跑到阿拉伊面全是	here where you live.	clean
11		垃圾。	2.Over where I live,	2.comparison
12			the whole place is	self
13			littered with trash.	
14		紫云：阿拉格搭也龌龊。	Ziyun: It's dirty here too.	
15		日亮：嗳。	Riliang: Uh.	
16		紫云：（笑）	Ziyun: (laughs)	
17	→	日亮：3. 阿拉比侬还要龌	Riliang: 3.Our place is	3.comparison
18	→	龊。4. 侬此地还安静	dirtier than yours.	self
19	→	来！5. 地段也算比较	4.Your place is quiet.	4.core 2
20	→	好，6. 房子还有小花	5.A better neighborhood	quiet
21	→	园来！7. 像阿拉伊面	too. 6.The houses even	5.core 3 good
22		旁边好了只有只有，	have small gardens.	neighborhood
23		迭个汽车排成队啊，	7.Where I live... all	6.comment
24	→	8. 格废气朝屋里厢喷	there is... all there	7.comparison
25		额是，9. 喔唷！	is are lines of cars.	self
26			8.Exhaust pours into	8.comparison
27			the rooms. 9.Gosh,	self
28			terrible!	9.intensifi-

29	紫云：现在交通是一塌糊	Ziyun: Now traffic has gotten	cation
30	涂。	awful.	
31	日亮：一塌糊涂！（停顿）	Riliang: It's awful. (after a	
32	迭个侬（紫云的儿	pause, to Ziyun's son)	
33	子）乘飞机回去唠？	So... so you're flying	
34		back home?	
35	（They change the topic.）	(They change the topic.)	

In Excerpt 8.11, Riliang employs a series of *complimentee and complimenter dual focused* strategies ("complimentee is good, but complimenter is bad") to compare Ziyun's place and his own using the contrastive frame "侬此地……，阿拉伊面……， where you live..., where I live...." First he uses the side by side single trait contrastive frame "A, but B" to compare the "cleanness" of the two places, pointing out that it's "quite clean" where Ziyun lives, but where he lives, it's "dirty with trash" ("侬此地还清爽," "跑到阿拉伊面全是垃圾") (C1, C2). Then he uses the contrastive frame "A, A..., but B, B..." to compare two groups of opposing traits: that Ziyun lives in a quiet ("安静来") and upscale neighborhood ("地段也算比较好") where houses even have gardens ("房子还有小花园来"), whereas in his neighborhood the houses open to the "lines of cars" ("汽车排成队啊") with noise (implied) and "exhaust" pollution ("格废气朝屋里厢喷额是") (C4 to C8). Note the repeated use of the contrastive frame: "侬此地……，阿拉伊面……，where you live..., where I live...." Juxtaposing the two places of opposing environmental qualities and raising the other and lowering the self at the same time definitely sharpens the comparisons, effectively emphasizing how good Ziyun's living environment is and making it even more desirable.

So far, I have described how the *comparison to self* strategy is realized. In the next part, I will describe how the *comparison to other* strategy is realized.

Comparison to Other

Table 8.2 shows that 315 (57.6%) of the 547 *comparison* strategies are *comparison to other*, i.e., presenting the weakness of another person or comparing the complimentee to a high standard to raise the complimentee. *Comparison to other* strategies can be (a) other focused, (b) complimentee focused, or (c) complimentee and other dual focused (see Table 8.2).

Other focused. Out of the 315 *comparison to other* strategies, 141 or 44.8% are *other focused*. *Other focused* strategies raise the complimentee by focusing on other's weakness, pointing out that "other is 'bad,'" or "other is not as good as the complimentee," or in extreme cases, comparing other to a "low" standard ("other is as bad as [a low standard]"), which includes normal comparison (i.e., comparing the similarities of things in the same category) as well as figures of speech such as simile, metaphor, or analogy (i.e., comparing the similarities of things in otherwise dissimilar categories). Since the focus is on other's weakness, third person focus is normally employed. Commonly used lexical and syntactic forms include:

(a) Other focused

    Negation adverbs:

        e.g. 不, 没, 呒没, 勿 (no, not), 不行 (can't, not able to), etc.

    Lexical items of negative meaning:

        e.g., 老 (old), 刁蛮 (willful), 全是靠别人帮助额 (rely on others), 摆架子 (put on airs), 高高在上 (uppity), 勿负责任 (irresponsible), 抽烟 (smoke), 贵 (expensive), etc.

    Comparative forms:

        A 勿如/不如 B (A not as good as B, A inferior to B),
        A 呒没/没有 B [Adjective] (A not as [Adjective] as B), etc.

> Comparative forms (used for comparison or as figures of speech):
>
> A 像 B, A 像 B 一样 (A is like B),
> A 像 B 一样 [Adjective] (A as [Adjective] as B),
> A 是 B (A am/is/are B), etc.

Examples 8.38 to 8.45 illustrate how *other focused* strategies are realized.

Core or Other Strategy	Comparison	Core or Other Strategy English Translation	Comparison English Translation
Other is bad			
(8.38) 刘师傅：你姚老师也是追求自然的， 施师傅：姚老师眼界不要太高噢！人家啥水平啦！	刘师傅：不像有的人不懂，以为出了钱就要用料多，越多越好，结果得不偿失。	Master Liu (hair dresser): You Prof. Yao like things to be natural. Master Shi: Prof. Yao has such refined taste! Very high standards!	Master Liu: Unlike some people who don't understand. They think they've spent all that money, so they want a lot of dye and stuff. The more the better. But more isn't better in the end.
(8.39) 科长：乃现在，现在税务局现在，就是格批人伊拉格批人撑了海， 经理：侬，侬要去，介许多年数做下来是——经验就丰富了。	科长：新进来大学生侬勿要看伊噢，勿来事额！ 经理：伊呒没实践操作经验！ 科长：实践工作能力太差……	Director: Now… now these… these are the pillars of the tax bureau. Manager: You, you must… after so many years of working here… they've accumulated a rich store of experience.	Director: The newly hired college graduates… they're not good despite their educational background. Manager: They lack practical operational experience. Director: Their ability to get things done is poor…
(8.40) 领队：……难怪他们说你是第一流的司机！ 司机：没有……	导游：是啊，很多人到这边来开不了车， 领队：不行，开不了……	Tour Leader: …No wonder they say you're a first-class driver! Driver: No...	Tour Guide: You're right. Many people come here and can't drive. Tour Leader: They can't… they can't drive…

(8.41) 宋：伊格套家具高级得来比我还要高级！ 杨：格格是线条蛮，蛮，线条蛮简单额，阿是？ 邢：蛮流畅额好象，噢？ 杨：线条自然了……	杨：伊啥地方去看得来额呀？有种介弄得来花里八巧额真额蛮难看额。 宋：花里八巧额有辰光反而难看得来一塌糊涂。弄得，太，太罗嗦了，噢？	Song: The quality of this furniture is so superior… it's better than mine. Yang: These lines… these lines are nice and simple, aren't they? Xing: The lines seem to flow, don't they? Yang: Simple is natural...	Yang: Where did she find this design? Some designs are so elaborate that they're ugly. Song: Elaborate designs sometimes look very messy. Too… too busy, right?

Other is not as good as complimentee

(8.42) 董事长：嗯我感到你——有能力！	董事长：小郑么能吃苦，不过能力么稍微差一点，不如你。	Board Chairman: Um… I feel you… have ability.	Board Chairman: As for Xiao Zheng… he's a hard worker. But not quite as competent as you are.
(8.43) 客1：范老师，伊拉格个虾是蛮新鲜额噢？ 客3：嗯。	客1：侬格种外头格种大额饭店里质量呒没伊拉格搭新鲜。	Guest 1: Prof. Fan, their shrimps are so fresh, aren't they? Guest 3: Yeah.	Guest 1: Those… those big restaurants out there, their materials aren't as fresh as here.
(8.44) 日亮：伊拉，伊拉蛮好噢。 祖龄：嗳，	日亮：阿拉区里厢伊拉，一块牌子了！ 日亮：嗳，嗳，阿拉，阿拉，阿拉区一只合唱团现在呒没伊拉好呀！	Riliang: They… they've got a great choir. Zuling: Yeah.	Riliang: They've made a name for themselves in our district. Riliang: Yeah, yeah. Our… our… our district choir now is not as good as theirs.

Other is as bad as [a low standard]

(8.45) 康：格个看起来好象阿拉中国人还有点优点（笑）（指皮肤）， 康：国粹全宝！	康：……乃末皮肤么全老粗额是伐？喔唷——毛孔大得来！像猪皮一样！对伐。	Kang: It seems we Chinese are better in some ways (laughs). (referring to skin) Kang: An all-China national treasure!	Kang: … And their skin's very rough, isn't it? My gosh… the pores are huge! Like pigskin! (referring to some foreigners)

Third person focus such as "伊, 伊额, he/she, his/her," "他们, 伊拉, they, their, theirs," "格 this/that," "格种 these/those," "有的人 some people," a person's name (e.g., "小郑 Xiao Zheng")... are employed in all the comparison strategies in these examples. In Examples 8.38 to 8.41 ("other is bad"), negation adverbs ("不懂 **don't** understand," "勿来事 **not** good," "呒没实践操作经验 **lack/don't have** practical operational experience," "开不了车 **can't** drive," "不行 **can't**") are used to express other's inability to do what the complimentee can do. Lexical items of negative meaning ("得不偿失 more isn't better," "差 (ability) poor," "花里八巧 too elaborate," "难看 ugly, messy," "罗嗦 busy," or in Example 8.45 "粗 (skin) rough" or "大 (pores) huge") are also used to present other's weakness. In Examples 8.42 to 8.44 ("other is not as good as complimentee"), comparative forms "A 不如 B, A not as good as B" ("(能力) 不如你 not as (competent) as you are") and "A 呒没 B [Adjective], A not as [Adjective] as B" ("呒没伊拉格搭新鲜 (materials) aren't as fresh as here," "没伊拉好 (our district choir) not as good as theirs") are used to express the complimenter's inferiority. In Examples 8.45 ("other is as bad as [a low standard]"), the complimenter uses the comparative form "A 像 B 一样, A is like B" together with a lexical item of negative meaning to degrade other to a low standard ("像猪皮一样 (skin) like pigskin") (a simile). By presenting other's weakness, the complimentee's strength is greatly emphasized.

Excerpt 8.12 illustrates how *other focused* strategies "other is bad" and "other is not as good as complimentee" are used in a complete compliment-response sequence to achieve emphasis.

Excerpt 8.12 [207] "Nobody would have such patience."

Situation: At a company social dinner in honor of Lu [F, 40] and Shi [F, 34], auditors for the government Bureau of Taxation. After complimenting the dishes and cooking skills, the conversation turns to Shi. Shi is fair, and does not abuse her power like many others in the same position do. Two accountants [F, around 35] from the company participate in the conversation.

01		卢审计：……（停顿）1.不	Auditor Lu: ...(pause) 1.But	1.core
02		过俩碰着阿拉史老	you are really lucky to	fair and
03		师俩也算运道好	have our teacher Shi.	patient
04		额！		
05		会计1：2.嗳，我就格能讲	Accountant 1: 2.Exactly.	2.agreement
06		呀。	That's what I say too.	
07	→	卢审计：3.碰着格种人家格	Auditor Lu: 3.If you run into	3.comparison
08		种男小囝，态度清	those... those guys...	other
09		高一点，啥地方拨	with an air of	
10		侬介好耐心啊！	arrogance, who would	
11	→	4.上趟就拨侬罚款	have such patience with	4.comparison
12		跑路了！	you? 4.They would have	other
13			given you a fine last	
14			time!	
15		会计2：5.嗯，对额。	Accountant 2: 5.Yeah,	5.agreement
16			exactly.	
17		会计1：6.是格能介啊，	Accountant 1: 6.Exactly.	6.agreement
18	→	7.刚刚我还来搭小	7.I was just telling	7.comparison
19		史来讲，今朝外经	Xiao Shi, a guy from the	other
20		局人来，看也勿	Bureau of Foreign Trade	
21		看，拿出张单子，	and Economic Cooperation	
22		百分之十，8.看也	came today. He didn't	8.repetition
23		勿看就格能介一副	even take a look... just	comparison
24		腔调。	whipped out a form and	other
25			wrote a fine—ten	
26			percent. 8.The jerk	
27			didn't even take a look!	
28		卢审计：9.嗳，单子一开么	Auditor Lu: 9.Yeah, they	9.agreement
29		跑路了！	would just write the	comparison
30			fine and leave.	other
31	→	会计1：10.嗳，全格能介！	Accountant 1: 10.Yeah,	10.comparison
32			they're all like that!	other
33		卢审计：11.啥地方有介好	Auditor Lu: 11.Nobody has	11.repetition
34		耐心！	such patience.	comparison
35		会计1：12.道理也呒没额！	Accountant 1: 12.They won't	other
36			even bother to give a	12.intensifi-
37			reason.	cation
38		史审计：（没有说话）	Auditor Shi: (silent)	comparison

39 40 41	(The company accountants talk about other auditors they met.)	(The company accountants talk about other auditors they met.)	other

In Excerpt 8.12, Auditor Lu and the company accountants support the core compliment strategy that the company is really lucky to have Auditor Shi auditing their tax (C1) with a series of *other focused* strategies. Auditor Lu first compares Auditor Shi with some "arrogant" ("态度清高") guys from the government Bureau of Taxation, who are in no way as patient with the companies as Auditor Shi is ("啥地方拨侬介好耐心啊！") (C3) ("other is not as good as complimentee"), and who "would have given them (*you*) a fine last time" ("上趟就拨侬罚款跑路了！") (C4) ("other is bad"). Accountant 1 then compares Auditor Shi with an auditor from the Bureau of Foreign Trade and Economic Cooperation, who gave them a fine "without even looking at the book" ("看也勿看，拿出张单子，百分之十，") (C7) ("other is bad"). She adds that he was not the only one, "they're all like that!" ("全格能介！") (C8) ("other is bad"). These comparison strategies are agreed to (C5, C6, C9), repeated (C8, C11), and intensified (C12) vigorously by the participants, most of them overlapping comparison strategies: comparison and agreement ("嗳，单子一开么跑路了！ Yeah, they would just write the fine and leave.") (C9), comparison and repetition ("看也勿看就格能介一副腔调。 The jerk didn't even take a look!"; "啥地方有介好耐心！ Nobody has such patience.") (C8, C11), comparison and intensification ("道理也呒没额！ They won't even bother to give a reason.") (C12). By presenting other auditors' weakness (bad attitude)—how people in the same position abuse power, the complimentee's fairness and patience are highlighted.

Complimentee focused. More than half (163 or 51.7%) of the 315 *comparison to other* strategies are *complimentee focused*. *Complimentee focused* strategies raise the complimentee by focusing on the complimentee's strength ("goodness," "betterness," "bestness," or "rareness"), pointing out that "the complimentee is better than other" (49 or 15.5% of the 315), or "the complimentee is as good as [a high standard]," which includes normal comparison (i.e., comparing the similarities of things in the same category) as well as figures of speech such as simile, metaphor, or analogy (i.e., comparing the similarities of things in otherwise dissimilar categories) (44 or 14.0% of the 315), or "the complimentee is excellent or the best or rare in a [specified or unspecified] group" (70 or 22.2% of the 315). Note, the latter two strategies ("complimentee is as good as [a high standard]," and "complimentee is excellent/the best/rare in a [specified or unspecified] group") are absent from *comparison to self*. Since the focus is on the complimentee's strength, second person focus (or third person focus in a multi-party interaction) is normally employed. Commonly used lexical and syntactic forms include:

(b) Complimentee focused

    Comparative forms:

        A 比 B [Adjective] (A [more/less Adjective] than B),
        勿像 (unlike), A 搭/帮/和 B 勿一样/两样 (A different from B), etc.

    Comparative forms (used for comparison or as figures of speech):

        A 像 B, A 像 B 一样 (A is like B),
        A 像 B 一样 [Adjective] (A as [Adjective] as B),
        A 搭 B 像 (A similar to B), A 跟 B 一般 (A same as B),
        A 是 B (A am/is/are B), A 成 B (A becomes B), etc.

    Superlative forms:

        顶/最 [Adjective] (the most [Adjective], the best),
        顶顶/最最 [Adjective] (the most [Adjective] of all, the best of the best)

Lexical items of positive meaning or of high intensity:

> e.g., 风凉 (cool), 有情调 (has an ambiance), 终身制额 (tenured position), 好看 (beautiful), 明朗 (bright and cheerful), 成功 (successful), 聪明人 (smart person), 高材生 (top student), 电影明星 (movie star), 仙女 (angel), 美女 (beauty), 淑女 (maiden, young girl), 漂亮的君子 (a beautiful gentlewoman), 大家闺秀 (a graceful young lady from a respectable upper-class family), 人类灵魂的工程师 (spiritual engineer of humankind), 大老板 (big-shot businessman), 四梁八柱 (the pillar), 国家的希望 (the hope of the nation), etc.

Adverbs, stative verbs, or phrases expressing "rareness":

> e.g., 蛮少额/啊, 不多, 勿大有额 (rare, very few); 勿大听到过额 (seldom hear of), 还没碰到 [过] have never met"; 寻勿着额, 寻勿到额 (cannot be found), 寻勿出第二个来 (there isn't a second); 阿里有 (don't see... any more), 啥地方有啦, 啥地方去寻 (where on earth can you find); 勿好比额, 勿好搭人家比额 (cannot be compared, no comparison), etc.

Examples 8.46 to 8.49 illustrate how the *complimentee focused* strategy

"complimentee is better than other" is realized.

Core or Other Strategy	Comparison	Core or Other Strategy English Translation	Comparison English Translation
Complimentee is better than other			
(8.46) 潘：喔唷，蛮好！	潘：比格个还写得好！（笑）（指墙上一幅有名的书法） 江：啊呀侬格个字好像比格个灵噢我觉着好像！	Pan: Wow, great!	Pan: Better than that. (pointing to a piece of famous calligraphy on the wall) Jiang: Wow, your writing seems to be better than this... it seems to me.
(8.47) 陶审计：……我呒没我没考大学……我就进了税务局。 科长：但现在好来！ 经理：财务么现在好来！	科长：现在比大学毕业额好来！大学毕业额分配进额还进勿去了！	Auditor Tao: ...I didn't go to college... I went straight to the taxation bureau. Director: But now you're in a great position. Manager: Accounting is hot nowadays.	Director: Now you're doing better than college graduates. College graduates can't get a job with your taxation bureau, much as they want to.

(8.48) 地陪：不过还可以啊！	地陪：……我觉得比白的颜色要好，	Guide: But you're doing fine. (choice of silk scarf)	Guide: ...I think [it] looks better than the white one.
(8.49) 孔：嗳，象伊就是，就是开脱。谭立韦自家举旗子来现在！	金：举旗子还好一点，勿像人家，上头呒没格种头头老啥压牢侬来管。	Kong: Well, he is really... really free of restraints. Tan Liwei has established his own business now.	Jin: It's good to have your own business. Unlike others, you don't have a boss breathing down the back of your neck all the time.

Second person focus "侬/你, you, your" or third person focus "伊 he" in a multi-party interaction (Example 8.49) is employed in the comparison strategies in these examples. Since Examples 8.46 to 8.48 focus on the complimentee's "betterness" ("complimentee is better than other"), comparative form "A 比 B [Adjective], A [more/less Adjective] than B" is used ("比格个还写得好 [your writing] is better than that [famous calligraphy written by a student of the great master Zhang Daqian]," "比大学毕业额好 doing better than college graduates," "比白的颜色要好 looks better than the white one"). Example 8.49 presents the "betterness" by using the comparative form "勿像 unlike (人家 others)" followed by the good quality that the complimentee has but others don't ("上头呒没格种头头老啥压牢侬来管。 you don't have a boss breathing down the back of your neck all the time."). The use of "betterness" strategy is interesting. In many cases the "other" being compared to is not just any ordinary other, but someone good or even of high standard. For instance, in Example 8.46, the great master Zhang Daqian's student is an excellent calligrapher; in Example 8.47, college graduates hold a higher educational credential and thus enjoy greater social prestige than high school graduates; in Example

8.48, the white silk scarf being compared to is exquisite. When the complimentee is praised as being better than the already good, he/she is raised to an even higher status.

Excerpt 8.13 illustrates how the *complimentee focused* strategy "complimentee is better than other" is used in a complete compliment-response sequence to achieve emphasis.

Excerpt 8.13 [198] "His voice is... better than Liao Changyong's!"

Situation: At a karaoke party hosted by Qiao [M, 49]. He and three others [M] are cheering and complimenting their friend, who sang beautifully. All men are in the 30s or 40s.

01		乔： 1.格只歌蛮好听！	Qiao: 1.That's a beautiful song!	1.core 1 good song choice
02				
03		男 1：2.好！唱得好！（喝彩，鼓掌）	Man1: 2.Bravo! Excellent singing! (cheers, applauds)	2.core 2 great singing skill
04				
05				
06		乔： 3.呚格只，中音伊好像还可以。	Qiao: 3.The alto was pretty good.	3.comment
07				
08	→	男 2：4.伊是……一种，廖昌永额嗓子（嘿嘿，笑）……	Man2: 4.His voice is... something like... Liao Changyong's (a popular vocalist) (hei hei, laughs).	4.comparison other
09				
10				
11				
12				
13	→	男 1：5.比廖昌永还好！（笑）	Man1: 5.Better than Liao Changyong! (laughs)	5.comparison other
14				
15		乔： 6.（笑）比廖昌永还好！7.呚像似音色蛮好噢？	Qiao: 6.(laughs) Better than Liao Changyong. 7.The quality of the voice is great.	6.agreement comparison to other
16				
17				
18				7.core 3 great voice
19		男 2：8.还可以。我也会唱唱，我唱……	Man2: 8.Yeah, pretty good. I also know a thing or two. I can sing...	8.agreement
20				
21				
22	→	乔： （对歌手）9.侬唱得比伊唱得好……	Qiao: (to the singer) 9.You can sing better than him...	9.comparison other
23				
24				
25		男 2：10.老厚，呚只声音老厚额！	Man2: 10.Rich... your voice is rich.	10.comment
26				
27		歌手：（笑）	Singer: (laughs)	
28		乔： 11.嗳，	Qiao: 11.Yeah.	11.agreement
29	→	男 1：12.老厚额，13.我只喉咙叫勿出额。	Man1: 12.Rich, yeah. 13.I can't get my voice out.	12.agreement 13.comparison self
30				
31		乔： 14.嗳，	Qiao: 14.Yeah.	

32	→	男 2: 15. 叫勿出噢!	Man2: 15.Can't get voice out, yeah.	14.agreement
33				15.comparison self
34		大家: 16. 好! 17. 好!	All: 16.Bravo! 17.Bravo!	
35		男 1: 18. 好额好额!	Man1: 18.Great, great!	16.repetition
36		歌手: (笑)交关辰光呒没练来,阿拉是老早就勿唱了。	Singer: (laughs) I haven't practiced for a long time. I quit a long time ago.	17.repetition
37				18.repetition
38				
39				
40		男 3: 19. 你唱得挺好!	Man3: 19.You sing very well.	19.repetition
41	→	20. 喉咙还要好!嗳!	20.And you've got an even better voice.	20.comparison
42				
43		乔: 21. 嗳。	Qiao: 21.Yeah.	21.agreement
44		男 2: 22. 独唱蛮好额!	Man2: 22.A good solo singer.	22.comment
45		歌手: 要么勿唱,唱就唱出水平来!	Singer: If I sing, I come out with my best!	
46				
47		男 2: 应当迭能!应当迭能!	Man1: That's the way to go. That's the way to go.	
48				
49		男 3: 23. 挺俏的!(笑)	Man3: 23.Quite sexy! (laughs)	23.core 4 cute look
50		男 2: 24. 嗳!	Man2: 24.Yeah.	
51		歌手: 今朝水平摆出来了噢?	Singer: I was able to come out with my best, wasn't I?	24.agreement
52				
53				
54		乔: 25. 今朝头发也卷起来了!	Qiao: 25.You came out with your hair permed.	25.comment
55				
56		大家: (笑,起哄)	All: (laugh and start teasing him noisily)	
57				
58		乔: 26. 喔唷!嗲煞了!	Qiao: 26.What a flirt!	26.intensifi-
59				cation

In Excerpt 8.13, seven comparison strategies (one of them an overlapping strategy) are used to strengthen the core compliment strategies on the singer's great voice and singing skill. Five of these strategies are *comparison to other*, *complimentee focused*. The complimenter Man 2 first compares the singer's voice to the voice of a popular vocalist Liao Changyong using the strategy "complimentee is as good as [a high standard]" ("伊是……一种,廖昌永额嗓子……") (C4). Then four "betterness" strategies ("complimentee is better than other") are employed, the first one by another friend (Man 1) to emphasize that the singer's voice is "even better than Liao Changyong's" ("比廖昌

永还好！) (C5). This strategy is immediately agreed to by Qiao, the Karaoke party host

("比廖昌永还好！ Better than Liao Changyong.") (C6). (C6 serves as an example of a

comparison and agreement overlapping strategy.) When Man 2 brags that he can sing too,

Qiao uses the third "betterness" strategy to shut him up, reaffirming that the singer "sings

better" ("侬唱得比伊唱得好……") (C9). The last "betterness" strategy is used by Man

3, who further emphasizes the singer's good voice by comparing it to singer's own

already admired singing skill ("你唱得挺好！ 喉咙还要好！ You sing very well. And

you've got an even better voice.") (C19, C20). Note two *comparison to self* strategies are

also used in the sequence by Man 1 and Man 2 to present their own weakness that they

can't get their voice out ("我只喉咙叫勿出额。"; "叫勿出噢！") (C13, C15)

("complimenter is bad"). Using the *comparison to other*, *complimentee focused*

strategies—comparing the singer to a high standard (a popular vocalist) and emphasizing

that the singer is even better than the high standard, and at the same time using the

comparison to self, *complimenter focused* strategy—the complimenters pointing out their

own weakness, create a great distance between the singer's good voice and the friends'

bad voice, effectively strengthening the positive semantic force of the core compliments.

Examples 8.50 to 8.55 illustrate how the *complimentee focused* strategy

"complimentee is as good as [a high standard]" is realized. As has been stated before,

this strategy is used for normal comparison (i.e., comparing the similarities of things in

the same category), or as figures of speech such as simile, metaphor, or analogy (i.e.,

comparing the similarities of things in otherwise dissimilar categories). In Excerpt 8.13

we have already seen an example of this strategy: the complimentee singer's voice is

compared to a high standard—the voice of a popular vocalist Liao Changyong (C4)—to achieve emphasis. Examples 8.50 to 8.55 give more illustrations.

Core or Other Strategy	Comparison	Core or Other Strategy English Translation	Comparison English Translation
Complimentee is as good as [a high standard]			
(8.50) 林：后来伊讲刚刚我接到一个啥个中国人噢，伊漂亮是漂亮得来，	林：像电影明星。	Lin: Later she said... he (the taxi driver) had just had a Chinese lady in his taxi… she was so very beautiful,	Lin: as beautiful as a movie star.
(8.51) 雪：格只调料老好吃额！	雪：像人家蟹额味道，阿是啊？	Xue: This sauce is delicious!	Xue: Tastes like crab sauce (known in China as really delicious), doesn't it?
(8.52) 书记：你看她家嗲吗？	主任：像外头的精品商店。	Party Secretary: Isn't her place wonderful?	Director: It's like a fancy premium store.
(8.53) 崔老师：你女儿本来就非常漂亮，再戴上这耳环，更锦上添花，	崔老师：要成仙女啦！	Prof. Cui: Your daughter is very beautiful just as she is. With this pair of earrings, it's like "embroidering flowers on brocade."	Prof. Cui: She's about to be as beautiful as an angel.
(8.54) 洪主任：你们这位科长非常能干，	肖副处长：这是教务处的"四梁八柱。"	Dept. Chair Hong: This director of yours is exceedingly competent.	Associate Dean Xiao: She's the pillar (*four beams and eight pillars*) of the Department of Curriculum and Teaching.
(8.55) 邓：我香港也搞点，外地也有业务过来，乃末我自家也搞点，来了格个，来了单位里厢么我……		Deng: I have businesses in Hong Kong and businesses in other parts of China, and I also have my own business. In the [state	

（大家笑） 童：（笑）格蛮好！	苏：格，格……格个啥个狡兔，什么哩个，还有……有四窟！	owned] company I … (all laugh) Tong: (laughs) It's great [to have diverse sources of business] !	Su: This, this… what do you call it? Yes, resourceful rabbit… and what do we say… "A resourceful rabbit has… has four burrows!"

Again, second person focus "侬/你, 你们, 你的, you, your" or third person focus "伊/她 she" in a multi-party interaction are employed in the comparison strategies in these examples. In Examples 8.50 and 8.51 ("complimentee is as good as [a high standard]"), the complimenter uses the comparative forms "A 像 B, A 像 B 一样, A is like B" to compare the complimentee to a high standard: the complimentee is "like or as [beautiful] as a movie star" ("像电影明星"), and the sauce the host made "tastes like [delicious] crab sauce" ("像人家蟹的味道"). These two examples compare the similarities of things in the same category: beautiful persons, or delicious sauces. In Examples 8.52 and 8.53 "A 像 B, A is like B" and "A 成 B, A becomes B" are used to introduce a simile: the teacher's full use of small space and exquisite home decoration is compared to "a fancy premium store" ("像精品商店"), while Prof. Guo's daughter's beauty is compared to "an angel" ("成仙女啦"). In Example 8.54, the comparative form "A 是 B, A is B" is used to introduce a metaphor: the director's ability is compared to the major beams and pillars that hold up the roof of the house ("是'四梁八柱,' is the pillar (*four beams and eight pillars*)"). In the last example (8.55), Su uses the analogy of a resourceful rabbit building itself four burrows ("狡兔有四窟") to illustrate Deng's great strategy of developing diverse sources of business. These four examples (8.52–8.55) compare the similarities of

things in otherwise dissimilar categories: exquisitely decorated home and fancy premier store, beautiful daughter and beautiful angel, strong ability and the strength of beams and pillars, diverse business strategy and resourceful rabbit building many burrows. Whether making a normal comparison or using a special figure of speech, the complimentee is compared/linked to someone or something of a high standard. By comparing the complimentee to a high standard, the complimentee's strength is greatly emphasized. In addition, the figures of speech create an interesting, sometimes unusual and emotional effect, dramatically heightening the state that they are describing.

Excerpt 8.14 illustrates how *complimentee focused* strategy "complimentee is as good as [a high standard]" is used in a complete compliment-response sequence to achieve emphasis.

Excerpt 8.14 [76] "Your hair is like a maiden's, blowing gracefully in the wind."

Situation: Xiaolu [F] has invited some old friends to her home for lunch. She went out and bought some pastries. As she is approaching her house, she sees Yuyang [F]. They walk and enter the house together. Jinhua [F] arrives a little later. They are all in their late 30s.

01		羽扬：……1.侬格双鞋子交	Yuyang: ...1.These shoes are	1.core 1
02		关漂亮么！2.交关好	cool (beautiful)! 2.Very	beautiful
03		看！	beautiful!	shoes
04		晓璐：（笑）格双鞋子么，	Xiaolu: (laughs) These	2.repetition
05		实际上格双鞋子只底	shoes... actually the	
06		老勿适宜额，是塑料	pads in these shoes are	
07		额。	very uncomfortable,	
08			they're plastic.	
09	→	羽扬：3.头发么像个淑女一	Yuyang: 3.Your hair is like	3.core 2
10		样，4.随风飘逸，烫	a maiden's, 4.blowing	beautiful
11		过伐啦？	gracefully in the wind...	hair
12			Did you get a perm?	comparison
13		晓璐：（笑）像个淑女一	Xiaolu: (laughs) Like a	other
14		样……吙没烫过，多	maiden... No perm. Too	4.comment
15		少麻烦……（笑）	troublesome... (laughs)	
16		羽扬：5.头发么像人家淑女	Yuyang: 5.Your hair's like a	5.repetition
17		一样……6.勿得了！	maiden's...	comparison
18			6.Spectacular!	other

19 20	晓璐：哎，啊呀！眼睛也张勿开！	Xiaolu: Oh... oh, I can't open my eyes!	6.intensifi-cation
21 22 23 24	羽扬：我也是今朝眼睛张勿开，我主要是感冒了。	Yuyang: I can't open my eyes either today. I've got a cold... that's my problem.	
25 26 27	晓璐：侬阿是啊？喔唷哪能好点了伐？	Xiaolu: Got a cold? Poor thing. Are you better now?	
28 29 30 31	(Jinhua and another friend have arrived. They chat in the living room.)	(Jinhua and another friend have arrived. They chat in the living room.)	
32 33 34 35 36 → 37 38 39 40 41	羽扬：7.侬看见伐，晓璐现在坐了海俉看勿出噢，到外头风一吹，一走对伐，长发飘逸，〔8.像，漂亮，漂亮的君子一样的！（笑）	Yuyang: 7.Do you see... Xiaolu sitting there... you can't tell, but when she steps out, starts walking, the wind in her hair... her long hair blows gracefully in the wind... [8.[she's] like a beautiful... beautiful gentlewoman! (laughs)	7.comment 8.comparison other
42 43	晓璐：　　〔（笑）啥闲话是（笑）……	Xiaolu:　　[(laughs) What nonsense (laughs)...	
44 45	津华：啥个君子？	Jinhua: What do you mean... like a gentlewoman.	
46 → 47 48 49 50	羽扬：9.是额么，10.人家电影里厢有额对伐啦？（笑）头发就格能介（笑）。	Yuyang: 9.It's true. 10.Don't you see this in the movies? (laughs) The hair's like that. (laughs)	9.intensifi-cation 10.comparison other
51 52 53 54 55 56 57	晓璐：（笑）还君子来（笑）……格昨日伊拉还来讲，侬格点头发呒没营养额，剪剪塌！伊讲。（笑）	Xiaolu: (laughs) Like a gentlewoman (laughs)... They were just saying yesterday, "your hair is lacking in nutrition... just cut it." They were saying. (laughs)	
58	津华：（笑）	Jinhua: (laughs)	
59	羽扬：勿要剪！	Yuyang: Don't cut it!	
60 61	(They talk about hair care.)	(They talk about hair care.)	

Contrary to most women who wear short hair in the hot summer in Shanghai, Yuyang's friend Xiaolu has long hair. Struck by Xiaolu's unusual, beautiful hair style, Yuyang issues four *complimentee focused* strategies (including an overlapping strategy), all of them "complimentee is as good as [a high standard]" strategies. Yuyang first compares Xiaolu's hair style to a "maiden's" by using the comparative form "A 像 B 一样, A is like B" ("头发么像个淑女一样," "头发么像人家淑女一样⋯⋯"; "Your hair is like a maiden's...") (C3, C5). Later after Jinhua arrives, Yuyang uses the same comparative form and compares Xiaolu's hair style to the image of a "beautiful gentlewoman" ("像，漂亮，漂亮的君子一样的！") (C8) (a simile). When the term "君子 gentlewoman" is rejected by Xiaolu and questioned by Jinhua, she specifies the term by connecting it to the image of a graceful woman commonly seen in the movies ("人家电影里厢有额对伐啦？（笑）头发就格能介（笑）。 Don't you see this in the movies? (laughs) The hair's like that (laughs).") (C10). By using these "comparison to a high standard" strategies, the complimenter creates youthful, beautiful and graceful images—a maiden, or a gentlewoman from the movie, walking in the street with long black hair blowing gracefully in the wind. These images effectively heighten the state being described and enhance the compliment force. Note the different functions the *comparison to other* strategy plays in the sequence. Apart from being used as a comparison strategy (C8, C10) or a repetition strategy (C5) to emphasize the core or another support compliment strategy, *comparison to other* strategy is employed to initiate the core compliment (C3).

Examples 8.56 to 8.64 illustrate how *complimentee focused* strategies "complimentee is excellent or the best or rare in a [specified or unspecified] group" are realized. These strategies are used to compare a complimentee with a group of more than

two parties. They raise the complimentee by assigning the complimentee a standing in a group, usually near the top (excellent) or the top (the best) or beyond the top (rare) position. It is observed from the data that the scope or the composition of the group is normally specified, but could also be implied, especially when assigning the complimentee the "rare" position. Lexical items of high intensity, superlative forms, and adverbs, stative verbs, or phrases expressing "rareness" are commonly used (see p. 442).

Core or Other Strategy	Comparison	Core or Other Strategy English Translation	Comparison English Translation
Complimentee is excellent in a group			
(8.56) 许：侬菜弄得老好额！	万：小陈啊，蹲了场友当中，菜烧得老好么侬！	Xu: You cook so well.	Mr. Wan: Xiao Chen, of all our friends, your cooking's outstanding!
(8.57) 编辑：格阿拉，阿拉许老师呢，伊，剧作大将，外加是杰出额评论家，	编辑：来拉音乐界当中呢出名额。	Editor: This is our... our Teacher Xu... he's... the great master playwright. Also an outstanding critic.	Editor: He's also made a name for himself in musical circles.
(8.58) 陆审计：史老师属于全才，	陆审计：女中豪杰！（笑）	Auditor Lu: Teacher Shi is an all-round talent.	Auditor Lu: A super talent among women! (laughs)
Complimentee is the best in a group			
(8.59) 龚：格么侬蹲了格搭做格个头头！侬检察大员是，	龚：来海大陆里厢么侬是总归属于顶有权力额，	Gong: So you've stayed and become a big shot. You're the big shot government inspector.	Gong: Here in Mainland China, you're among the most powerful people.
(8.60) 王全导：所有都是他们接的。	王全导：他们是拉萨最有名的，最有实力的！	National Guide Wang: They manage all the tour groups.	National Guide Wang: They're the best known, the most powerful [of all the tourist agencies] in Lhasa.

(8.61) 谢：施东平是老好 　　混得！ 杜：施东平现在是 　　企业家，	谢：企业家么现 　　在最最吃香 　　了，最最好 　　了！（笑）	Xie: Shi Dongping is doing great! Du: Shi Dongping is now an entrepreneur.	Xie: Nowadays entrepreneurs are the hottest of the hot, the best [career-wise] of the best! (chuckles)
Complimentee is rare in a group			
(8.62) 厂长：严主任很上 　　道！	厂长：我全国这 　　么多省的牙病 　　指导所我还没 　　碰到这样的 　　人……	Factory Manager: Director Yan is a standup guy!	Factory Manager: I've worked with so many provincial tooth disease control centers nationwide, but I've never met a person like you...
(8.63) 病属：徐医生真 　　好，勿能来看病 　　还亲自通知病 　　人……	病属：现在阿里 　　有介好额医生，	Patient's Daughter: Dr. Xu is so kind. When he couldn't see the patients, he personally informed the patients...	Patient's Daughter: You don't see such good doctors any more.
(8.64) 李：乐老师，你的 　　书这么好，出书 　　这么有经验，那 　　你现在可以编中 　　文教材了。	顾：世界上呢 　　你，有很多钱 　　的人很多，但 　　是……能编那 　　么一套这么叫 　　人喜欢的书的 　　人不多。	Li: Teacher Le, your [English] textbooks are so good, you've had so much experience in publishing [English] textbooks, you can now compile Chinese language textbooks.	Gu: In the world... there's a lot of people with plenty of money, but... there's very few people who can compile such a set of popular (*well-liked*) books.

In Examples 8.56 to 8.64, second person focus "侬/你, 你的, you, your," or third person

focus "伊 he/she, 他们 they" in a multi-party interaction, or a person's name or title such

as "施东平 Shi Dongping," "史老师 Teacher Shi," "徐医生 Dr. Xu," "严主任 Director

Yan" addressing the complimentee and/or the third party, are employed in the

comparison strategies. In Examples 8.56 to 8.58, lexical items of high intensity are used

to assign the complimentee somewhere near the top standing—being excellent in a group:

"老好么 outstanding," "出名额 has made a name," or "豪杰 a super talent." In Examples 8.59 to 8.61, superlative forms "顶/最 [Adjective], the most [Adjective], the best," or "顶顶/最最[Adjective], the most [Adjective] of all, the best of the best" are used to assign the complimentee the top standing—being the best in a group: "顶有权力额, 最有实力的 the most powerful," "最有名的 the best known," "最最吃香了 the hottest of the hot," or "最最好了 the best of the best." In Examples 8.62 to 8.64, adverbs, stative verbs or phrases expressing "rareness" are used to assign the complimentee a standing beyond the top—being rare in a group: "还没碰到 [过] have never met," "阿里有 don't see... any more," or "不多 very few."

In almost all the examples describing the complimentee as being "excellent" or "the best" in a group (Examples 8.56 to 8.61), the scope or the composition of the group is specified. The complimentee is described as the outstanding cook "of all our friends" ("蹲了场友当中"), having made a name "in musical circles" ("来拉音乐界当中"), a super talent "among women" ("女中"), one of the most powerful people [the government inspectors] "here in Mainland China" ("来海大陆里厢"), or the best known and the most powerful travel agency "in Lhasa" ("拉萨"). Only in Example 8.61 the group composition of "the hot and the best" is unspecified but implied in the word "entrepreneur" and the context to refer to "career." However, in the examples describing the complimentee as being "rare" in a group (Examples 8.62 to 8.64), the scope or the composition of the group is often unspecified. Except for Example 8.62 in which the scope and the composition of the comparison group is specified as "so many provincial tooth disease control centers nationwide" ("全国这么多省的牙病指导所"), the rest of

the examples have very wide, unspecified scope, such as "阿里有 don't see... any more,"

"不多 very few," or "世界上 in the world." Placing the complimentee as rare in this big,

unspecified "universe," greatly emphasizes how good the complimentee is.

Excerpt 8.15 illustrates how *complimentee focused* strategy "complimentee is

the best in a [specified or unspecified] group" is used in a complete compliment-response

sequence to achieve emphasis.

Excerpt 8.15 [15] "Of all the children overseas, she's the most successful."

Situation: Yuan Yuan [F, 45], who's back from America, is visiting an old family friend
Mrs. Shen [69]. Yuan Yuan's siblings and Mrs. Shen's children are also out of the
country. The conversation is about life overseas. A domestic helper [F, 50] is present.

01	→	沈伯母：1.濛濛（沈的女	Aunt Shen: 1.Meng Meng	1.core
02		儿）称赞侬元元开车	(Shen's daughter) praises	best driver
03	→	子么最好。〔2.介许	you... you Yuan Yuan are	comparison
04		多人开车子么元元开	the best driver.[2.Of so	other
05	→	得最稳……3. 最稳。	many people, Yuan Yuan's	2.comment
06			driving is the	comparison
07			smoothest... 3.the	other
08			smoothest.	3.repetition
09		元元：　　　〔（笑）我开	Yuan Yuan:　　　[(laughs)	comparison
10		车子马马虎虎。来纽	My driving is just so so.	other
11		约逼出来额呀。没办	In New York, you must	
12		法。	learn to drive. There's	
13			no getting around it.	
14	→	沈伯母：…… 4. 最能干。	Aunt Shen: ...4.[You're the]	4.intensifi-
15			most capable.	cation
16		保姆：5.蛮好额，6.蛮好	Domestic Helper: 5.Very good.	comparison
17		额。7.灵活，8.老灵	6.Very good. 7.Flexible.	other
18		活额。	8.Very flexible.	5.agreement
19		元元：灵活……（笑）	Yuan Yuan: Flexible...	6.repetition
20			(laughs)	7.comment
21		保姆：（笑）	Domestic Helper: (laughs)	8.intensifi-
22	→	沈伯母：9.侬现在，侬现在	Aunt Shen: 9. Now you... now	cation
23		顶好。	you're doing the best.	9.core 2
24		元元：我现在顶好啊？	Yuan Yuan: I'm doing the	doing the
25		（笑）自由呀。	best? (laughs) I'm a free	best
26		（笑）	person. (laughs)	comparison
27	→	沈伯母：10.嗯，顶好。	Aunt Shen: 10.Um, [you're	other

28	→	（对保姆说）11. 伊现在顶成功了。	doing] the best. (to the domestic helper) 11.She's now the most successful.	10.repetition comparison other
29				
30				
31		元元：（笑）最成功……也没啥。侬讲得好！	Yuan Yuan: (laughs) The most successful... not really. But you're kind to say so.	11.comment comparison other
32				
33				
34				
35		沈伯母：12. 真额。13. 勿容易，14. 勿容易。	Aunt Shen: 12.It's true. 13.You've overcome a lot. 14.You've overcome a lot.	12.intensifi-cation
36				13.core 3
37				not easy
38		元元：（笑）勿容易啊……也没啥……	Yuan Yuan: (laughs) overcome a lot... Not really...	14.repetition
39				
40	→	沈伯母：15. 现在兄弟姐妹介许多人在外头伊顶成功。	Aunt Shen: 15.Of all the children overseas, she's the most successful.	15.comparison other
41				
42				
43		元元：（笑）顶成功，也马马虎虎。	Yuan Yuan: (laughs) The most successful... Just so so.	
44				
45		沈伯母：16. 奶奶格点老得意额。	Aunt Shen: 16.Your mother's very proud of you.	16.intensifi-cation
46				
47		元元：（笑）老得意额（笑）。	Yuan Yuan: (laughs) Very proud...(laughs).	
48				
49		沈伯母：17. 勿容易，18. 勿容易。	Aunt Shen: 17.You've overcome a lot. 18.You've overcome a lot.	17.repetition 18.repetition
50				
52				
52		保姆：19. 嗯。	Domestic Helper: 19.Yeah.	19.agreement
53		元元：马马虎虎，马马虎虎。逼出来额。	Yuan Yuan: I'm just doing ok. Just doing ok. I was driven by circumstances.	
54				
55				
56		沈伯母：格个祖风（元元的哥哥）也好，祖风也好。……	Aunt Shen: Zufeng (Yuan Yuan's older brother) is doing well too. Zufeng's also doing well...	
57				
58				
59				
60		(They go on talking about Yuan Yuan's older brother.)	(They go on talking about Yuan Yuan's older brother.)	
61				
62				

In Excerpt 8.15, eight *comparison to other*, *complimentee focused* strategies are used to

initiate, elaborate and emphasize the core compliment strategies on Yuan Yuan's great

driving skill and her success in America. Since these strategies are *complimentee focused*,

second person focus "侬 you," or third person focus "伊 she" or "元元 Yuan Yuan"

addressing the third-party, the domestic helper, is employed. All eight comparison

strategies are "complimentee is the best in a [specified or unspecified] group" strategy, using superlative degree form "最 or 顶……, the most..., the best": "最好 the best (driver)" (C1), "最稳 the smoothest" (C2, C3), "最能干 the most capable" (C4), "顶好 doing the best" (C9, C10), and "顶成功 the most successful" (C11, C15). The complimentee is compared to two different groups. The composition of the first group is specified as "介许多人开车子么, of so many people driving" (C2), while the composition of the second group is specified as "现在兄弟姐妹介许多人在外头, of all the children (*siblings*) overseas" (C15). Although the scope for both groups ("of so many people driving," or "of all the children (*siblings*) overseas") seems very wide, the sequential context (prior conversation) narrows the scope of the first group down to the children who are overseas only in Yuan Yuan's and Mrs. Shen's families. The word "兄弟姐妹 *siblings*" (which is defined as individuals having one or both parents in common) narrows the scope of the second group down to the children overseas only in Yuan Yuan's family. (Note the different functions the *comparison to other* strategies play in the sequence, which will be discussed in the section on "Function" later.) By repeatedly placing the complimentee at the top position in each specified group, the compliment force is greatly strengthened.

Excerpt 8.16 illustrates how the *complimentee focused* strategy "complimentee is rare in a [specified or unspecified] group" is used in a complete compliment-response sequence to achieve emphasis.

Excerpt 8.16 [276] "Where on earth can one find a person like you!"

Situation: Renfang [F] and Xinmin [M] are visiting Qiuping [F]. They were college classmates [all in the mid 40's]. Renfang is very devoted (*filial*) to her parents. Her mother is paralyzed, but her sisters are unable to help. Renfang gives up her own life to take care of her mother. Her friends admire her character.

		中文	English	Strategy
01	→	秋苹：……1.嗳顾仁芳侬牺	Qiuping: ...1.Oh Gu Renfang,	1.core
02		牲自家寻勿着额噢！	you sacrifice everything	devoted
03	→	2.啥地方来呕像侬格	for your mother... you	(*filial*)
04		能介子额！3.呒没	can't find people like	comparison
05		了！4.伊（母亲）现	that. 2.Where on earth	other
06		在要跟我去，我也老	can one find a person	2.intensifi-
07		犹豫额！	like you. 3.None. 4.She	cation
08			(mother) wants to go	comparison
09			live with me, I'm very	other
10			hesitant too.	3.intensifi-
11		欣民：5.嗳格，格是，	Xinmin: 5.Yeah this... this	cation
12		6.格，格格，想想阿	is true. 6.This... this,	4.comparison
13		拉，阿拉也就是噢，	this... to think of	self
14		我妈妈这么近噢，有	myself... we only... my	5.agreement
15		时我们一个礼拜去过	mother lives so close,	6.comparison
16		一次也不去的，7.两	we sometimes go once a	self
17		个礼拜去一次，	week, or not even once	7.comparison
18		〔8.两个礼拜回一次	a week. 7.Once every two	self
19		家……	weeks, [8.go home once	8.repetition
20			every two weeks...	comparison
21		秋苹：〔格么侬，9.问题就	Qiuping: [Well in your	self
22		讲现在是格能介样子	case... 9.well, that's	9.comparison
23		额呀！	how it is nowadays!	other
24		仁芳：是伐？	Renfang: Is that so?	
25		(Qiuping talks about how	(Qiuping talks about how hard	
26		hard it would be to take	it would be to take care of	
27		care of her mother	her mother without any help	
28		without any help from	from her siblings.)	
29		her siblings.)		

Among a mixture of *comparison to other* and *comparison to self* strategies, two

complimentee focused "rareness" strategies ("complimentee is rare in a [specified or

unspecified] group") (C1, C2) are observed in Excerpt 8.16 to initiate and strengthen the

core compliment strategy on how devoted (*filial*) Renfang is to her parents. Both

strategies are realized by using second person focus "侬 you" and "rareness" phrases "寻

勿着额, cannot be found" or "啥地方有呕, where on earth can you find." Like most "rareness" strategies, the composition of the comparison group is unspecified (e.g., "寻勿着额, cannot be found"), and the scope is wide (e.g., "**啥地方**来呕, **where on earth** can one find"). Assigning the complimentee a standing beyond the top—being rare in such an unspecified, big "universe" greatly emphasizes how exceptionally devoted (*filial*) the complimentee Renfang is to her parents. In addition, the use of five *comparison to self*, *complimenter focused* strategies ("complimenter is bad") that Qiuping is hesitant to let her mother live with her ("伊现在要跟我去，我也老犹豫额！") (C4), that Xinmin visits his mother only once a week or every two weeks ("有时我们一个礼拜去过一次也不去的", "两个礼拜去一次", "两个礼拜回一次家") (C6–C8), and the use of one *comparison to other*, *other focused* strategy ("other is bad") that not caring for parents is common practice nowadays ("现在是格能介样子额呀！") (C9), expand the distance between Renfang's strength and the complimenters' and other's weakness, making Renfang stand out even more.

      Complimentee and other dual focused. Out of the 315 *comparison to other* strategies, 11 or 3.5% are *complimentee and other dual focused*. *Complimentee and other dual focused* strategies raise the complimentee by juxtaposing the complimentee's strength and other's weakness to form a contrast, pointing out that "the complimentee is good but other is 'bad.'" The contrast is mostly formed by placing two single opposing traits right next to each other ("A, but B"). Occasionally two groups of opposing traits are juxtaposed ("A, A..., but B, B..."). Since the focus is on both complimentee's strength and other's weakness, second person focus and third person focus are both employed. Commonly used lexical and syntactic forms include:

> (c) Complimentee and other dual focused
>
>   Contrastive forms:
>
>   Contrasting single opposing traits (A, but B)
>   e.g., 你/侬……, 伊/他/她/他们/人家…… (you..., but he/she/they/others...),
>   格能……, 伊能…… (this way..., but that way...),
>   我欢喜……, 我勿欢喜…… (I like..., but I don't like...), etc.
>
>   Contrasting multiple opposing traits (A, A..., but B, B...)

In Excerpt 8.5 (p. 406) we have already seen an example of *complimentee and other dual focused* strategy employed by the office clerk Hong to emphasize the core compliment strategy on Dean Xiao's new outfit:

Core:	振： 肖处长今天真萧洒！	(C1)
	Zhen: Well, Dean Xiao looks really chic today!	
Comparison:	红： 这回你不是农村小会计了，成了大老板！	(C4, C5)
	Hong: You're no longer the country accountant no one took a second look at. Now you've become a big-shot businessman!	

The juxtaposition of two opposing images: an "insignificant (*small*) country accountant" ("农村小会计") who wears plain, drab colored clothes and a "big-shot businessman" ("大老板") who wears chic Western-style outfits, dramatically raises the complimentee Dean Xiao and makes his new outfit even more fashionable.

Examples 8.65 to 8.68 provide more illustrations of how *complimentee and other dual focused* strategy "complimentee is good, but other is bad" is realized.

Core or Other Strategy	Comparison	Core or Other Strategy English Translation	Comparison English Translation
Complimentee is good, but other is bad			

(8.65)
 关：邹晓杰是学者
    现在。
 杜：培养学者的他
		Guan: Zou Xiaojie is a
		    scholar now.
		 Du: He trains scholars!	

是！ 吴：阿拉两个教授是上课是……天花乱坠乱讲！瞎讲八讲，乱讲！（笑）上课上五分钟，还有，还有四十分钟全是屁话。（笑）	杜：俉额老师格种全是代课老师，全啥个老师啦，勿负责任额呀！邹老师上课额辰光勿会格能介上啊，全传授正统额。	Wu: Some professors we have... when they lecture... it's just a lot of fireworks! All over the place. You don't know what they're driving at. (laughs) Just five minutes of lecture. All the rest... all the rest is just bullshit. (laughs)	Du: Your teachers are all substitute teachers... what kind of teacher is that? They're all irresponsible. Prof. Zou does not teach like that. He teaches in an orthodox style.
(8.66) 经理：伊（科长的女儿）自立能力强，伊自家额费用自家付。	女财会：伊伊对伐，做额钞票有得多，人家读大学要爷娘付额伊勿要额伊勿要爷娘付额！	Manager: She's (director's daughter) very independent. She pays her own expenses.	Female Accountant: She, she... earns more money than she needs. Other children ask their parents to pay for their college. She doesn't... she doesn't ask her parents to pay.
(8.67) 张：伊格搭看出去比我好多了！……她下面还有这个草坪。	冯：你那是自然，你那是工厂。	Zhang: Her (Meng's) view's much better than mine... She can see lawn down there.	Feng: You (Meng) see nature, but you (Zhang) see a factory.
(8.68) 肖副处长：昨天开会后吃午饭时，黄文敏副处长……她夸了你半天！……说你能干、勤劲儿！	肖副处长：她说每次全国大学英语四、六级统考后，她都看见你是用自行车驮着试卷交到市教委。而她们学校不给汽车就不送。	Associate Dean Xiao: Yesterday Associate Dean Huang Wenmin was praising you for a long time at lunch after the meeting, saying you're capable and hard-working.	Associate Dean Xiao: She says she sees you on your bike delivering the test papers to the Municipal Education Commission every year after the National College English Level 4 and Level 6 tests. But their school refuses to deliver the test papers unless the Commission sends a car.

In Examples 8.65 to 8.68, both second person focus and third person focus are employed. The complimenter in each example uses the contrastive frame "你/伊……, 人家……; you/she..., but others..." to juxtapose the complimentee's strength and other's weakness (complimentee is good, but other is bad): "teaches in an orthodox style" vs. "bullshit" and "irresponsible" ("传授正统额"; "屁话," "勿负责任"); independent—"pays her own expenses" vs. dependent on parents—"ask parents to pay for their college" ("自家额费用自家付," "读大学要爷娘付额"); apartment has a view of "nature" vs. a view of "a factory" ("自然," "工厂"); "on your bike delivering the test papers to the Municipal Education Commission" vs. "refuses to deliver the test papers unless the Commission sends a car" ("用自行车驮着试卷交到市教委," "不给汽车就不送"). The side by side contrast widens the gap between the complimentee's strength and other's weakness, effectively raising the complimentee.

Excerpts 8.17 and 8.18 demonstrate how *complimentee and other dual focused* strategy "complimentee is good, but other is bad" is used in complete compliment-response sequences to achieve emphasis. Excerpt 8.17 illustrates the juxtaposition of two single opposing traits using the contrastive frame "A, but B." Excerpt 8.18 illustrates the juxtaposition of two groups of opposing traits using the contrastive frame "A, A..., but B, B...."

Excerpt 8.17 [284] "That's too stifling. More open this way."

Situation: Ye [F, 57], Song [F, 48], Xing [F, 55] and Yang [F, 58] are good friends and college professors. They visit Ye, who has just finished remodeling and decorating her new apartment. Ye's son Luo Bin [24] is present. In this part of the conversation, they are admiring Ye's new open-style room partition, which separates the living room from the dining area, but still leaves them connected through open space.

		Chinese	English	Categories
01		叶：（pointing to the open-style partition between the living room and the dining area）格，格个呢，是，是，罗斌搭子罗斌额爸爸两个头，一个呢，弄好只架子，罗斌。乃末老罗么去拣了一块迭个……	Ye: (pointing to the open-style partition between the living room and the dining area) This... this thing... is the work of Luo Bin and his dad... one made the frame, Luo Bin. Then Lao Luo (Ye's husband) picked this...	
02				
03				
04				
05				
06				
07				
08				
09				
10				
11		宋：1.噢玻璃，好看额。	Song: 1.Oh, glass... beautiful.	1.core beautiful partition
12				
13		邢：2.格玻璃对伐邪气灵嗳，我觉着！	Xing: 2.The glass is so cool! I feel...	2.intensification
14				
15		宋：3.嗳。	Song: 3.Yeah.	3.agreement
16		邢：4.竹头嗳！	Xing: 4.Oh, bamboo [frame]!	4.comment
17		罗：伊是塑料额，塑料额格种装饰品。	Luo: Plastic. It's made of decorative plastic.	
18				
19		叶：塑料额。	Ye: Plastic.	
20		邢：5.蛮灵额，6.蛮灵额！	Xing: 5.Great. 6.Great.	5.repetition
21		宋：7.只要好么就可以来！	Song: 7.As long as it's good quality [plastic or not].	6.repetition 7.comment
22				
23				
24		叶：有交关人家呢就是讲，门口头全勒（隔）塌额啦。呶，就讲门口伊格搭全统统……	Ye: Many families... they... build a partition between the foyer and the living room... blocking your entire view...	
25				
26				
27				
28				
29				
30	→	邢：8.勒（隔）塌啊？勒（隔）塌勿灵！	Xing: 8.Partition? No, partition isn't a good idea.	8.comparison other
31				
32				
33		叶：嗳，格搭遮塌一扇门……	Ye: They put in a door there, and block the entire view.	
34				
35				
36	→	宋：9.遮塌勿灵。	Song: 9.Partition (*blocking*) isn't a good idea.	9.comparison other
37				
38		邢：10.勒（隔）塌勿灵。	Xing: 10.No, partition isn't a good idea.	10.repetition comparison other
39				
40	→	宋：11.老闷额，格能开阔。	Song: 11.That's too stifling. More open this way.	11.comment comparison other (contrast)
41				
42		杨：12.嗳，13.蛮好看额。	Yang: 12.Yeah, 13.looks good like this.	12.agreement
43				
44		叶：……反正我觉着，格搭开进来么呒没其他物事〔挡住〕。	Ye: ...In any case, when you come through the door, it's a clear	13.comment
45				
46				

47			view... no obstruction.	
48	→	杨：14.主要，弄，弄得来	Yang: 14.Mainly to... why	14.comparison
49		全拿人家挡了外头做	keep everybody out... I	other
50		啥，我勿欢喜！我欢喜	don't like it. I like	(contrast)
51		人家欢迎进来。	to welcome everybody	
52			in.	
53		宋：（笑）	Song: (chuckles)	
54		叶：全，全闷死塌了，格能	Ye: Stifling... to keep	
55		样子关了外头做啥，对	everybody out, right?	
56		伐？		
57		宋：15.蛮好蛮好！	Song: 15.Great. Great.	15.repetition
58		叶：可以吗？喝一点，喝一	Ye: Do you like it? Have a	
59		点。	drink. Have a drink.	
60		(Ye offers everyone	(Ye offers everyone drinks	
61		drinks and snacks.)	and snacks.)	
62		邢：16.我格玻璃窗我还是	Xing: 16.These glass	16.intensifi-
63	→	欢喜，17.就是讲，人	windows... I really	cation
64		家交关玻璃窗啦就是	like them. 17.A lot of	17.comparison
65		讲，有两块格能介大	glass windows are made	other
66		额，或者就是讲格能勒	up of two panes of	(contrast)
67		（隔）成功大格子额，	glass... this size, or	
68		侬格小格子看起来有情	made up of large	
69		调的！	squares. These small	
70			squares create an	
71			ambiance.	
72		叶：很有情调的！	Ye: Very much so.	
73		邢：就是擦起来蛮难擦额。	Xing: A heck of a job to	
74			clean, though.	
75		杨：嗳，我送拨侬只魔力	Yang: Hey, I'll give you a	
76		掸……	magic duster...	
77		(They talk about the new	(They talk about the new	
78		cleaning gadgets. Seven	cleaning gadgets. Seven turns	
79		turns of compliment	of compliment strategies are	
80		strategies are omitted.)	omitted.)	

In Excerpt 8.17, six *comparison to other* strategies (including the overlapping ones) are employed by Ye's friends to reinforce their admiration for Ye's new open-style room partition. Two of the comparison strategies are *other focused*, pointing out other's weakness ("other is bad") using the negation adverb "勿 not": "勒（隔）塌勿灵！ partition **isn't** a good idea." (C8), and "遮塌勿灵。 *Blocking* **isn't** a good idea." (C9).

Three of the comparison strategies are *complimentee and other dual focused*

("complimentee is good, but other is bad"), contrasting the strengths of the complimentee

Ye's open-style room partition with the weaknesses of other's close-style room partition.

All three comparison strategies are in the form of "A, but B," placing two single

opposing traits right next to each other: "open" vs. "stifling" ("开阔," "老闷额") (C11);

"welcome everybody in" vs. "keep everybody out" ("人家欢迎进来," "拿人家挡了外

头") (C14); and ambiance-creating "small square" glass windows vs. plain "large square"

glass windows ("小格子看起来有情调的," "大格子额") (C17). Note the contrastive

frames used for these juxtapositions: "格能……, 人家 [伊能]……; [you] this way..., but

others [that way]..." (C11), "我欢喜……, 我勿欢喜……; I like..., but I don't like..."

(C14), and "侬……, 人家……; you..., but others..." (C17). Juxtaposing the two

opposing traits and raising the complimentee and lowering the other simultaneously,

sharpens each comparison, making Ye's open-style room partition even more desirable.

Excerpt 8.18 illustrates the juxtaposition of two groups of opposing traits using

the contrastive frame "A, A..., but B, B...."

Excerpt 8.18 [122] "You all have a good future" but "some children become a mess..."

Situation: Yun Yun [F, 46], who came back from abroad is visiting an old family friend
Mrs. Shi [70], a retired teacher. They talk about the past, about how Yun Yun's father
worked hard for the country, but was politically persecuted and died during the Cultural
Revolution. Mrs. Shi admires Yun Yun's mother, who brought up five children and did
such a good job that all her children achieved success in education and career even
though they were all sent to the countryside during the Cultural Revolution.

01		云云：……一条命全送塌。	Yun Yun: ...a life given away	
02			for nothing.	
03	→	施伯母：1.姆妈格些辰光呢	Mrs.Shi: 1.Your mother back	1.core
04		培养俚两个小囡真额	then brought up you kids	kids doing
05		全蛮好，噢？	really well.	well
06		云云：好么全勿来身边呀！	Yun Yun: Yeah, but none of us	

07		（笑）	are around her. (laughs)	
08		施伯母：勿来身边么也呒没	Mrs.Shi: That's something you	
09	→	办法，2.勿是……至	can't help. 2.But... at	2.comment
10		少侬全有前途来！	least you all have a good	
11	→	3.格么有种社会上弄	future. 3.Some children	3.comparison
12		得一塌糊涂额也有	become a mess when they	other
13		额。	enter society.	2-3 contrast
14		云云：嗳，对额。	Yun Yun: Yeah, that's true.	
15	→	施伯母：（放低声音）4.像	Mrs.Shi: (lowers her voice)	4.intensifi-
16		现在搞得一塌糊涂！	4.Now it [the society] is	cation
17	→	5.格点插队入户老啥	a mess. 5.Those who were	comparison
18		现在全是下岗来！	sent to the countryside	other
19	→	6.全是格种，格能样	[like you during the	5.comparison
20		子额……	Cultural Revolution] now	other
21			have lost their jobs!	6.repetition
22			6.All like...like that...	comparison
23		云云：是额是额是额！我一	Yun Yun: Yeah, yeah. Lots of	other
24		点朋友老啥全是下岗	my friends have become	
25		交关！啊呀，气得来	unemployed. Oh, they are	
26		——全，全讲根本呒	all so mad... They say	
27		没……	there's simply nothing	
28			they can do about it...	
29	→	施伯母：7.苦么苦得来！	Mrs.Shi: 7.Their life is so	7.comparison
30			hard!	other
31		云云：嗳。	Yun Yun: Yeah.	
32	→	施伯母：8.有额小囡回转来	Mrs.Shi: 8.Some kids come	8.comparison
33		全呒没地方住，阿是	back [from the	other
34		啊？	countryside] and have no	
35			place to live.	
36		云云：对额。	Yun Yun: Yeah.	
37	→	施伯母：9.格真额是！	Mrs.Shi: 9.That's really	9.intensifi-
38	→	10.头起搭那姆妈讲	terrible! 10.The other	cation
39		讲是，格个侬就是故	day I was talking to your	10.comment
40		里（苏州话）蹲蹲，	mother about you kids...	contrast
41		开心来，	you've now made a life	
42			over there [abroad],	
43			so happy.	
44		云云：对额（笑）。	Yun Yun: Yeah (laughs).	
45	→	施伯母：11.真真格是大额	Mrs.Shi: 11.This is truly	11.intensifi-
46	→	幸福！12.侬小囡	great happiness! 12.Who	cation
47		会，	would have thought you	12.comment
48			kids would...	contrast
49		云云：（笑）	Yun Yun: (laughs)	
50	→	施伯母：会得迭能介样，侬	Mrs.Shi: ...would turn out	
51		屋里人全会得读书成	like this. Everyone in	
52		举！	your family did so well	

		in school and became somebody.	
53			
54			
55	云云：（笑）会得读书，读书也哄没用场！（笑）	Yun Yun: (laughs) Did well in school... just knowing how to hit the books is no use either. (laughs)	
56			
57			
58			
59→	施伯母：13. 也蛮好额，到底……出来了噢。阿谋哪能说头啦？来搞计算机……啊？	Mrs.Shi: 13.It's great... after all... you all made it. How's Mou? Working on computer science...?	13.comment contrast
60			
61			
62			
63	(talk about Yun Yun's brother Mou)	(Talk about Yun Yun's brother Mou)	
64			

Again, a series of *comparison to other* strategies are employed by Mrs. Shi in Excerpt 8.18 to support her core compliment strategy that Yun Yun's mother did a great job bringing up five children and they are all doing well ("姆妈格些辰光呢培养俉两个小囡真的全蛮好，噢？") (C1). The first comparison strategy is a side by side single trait contrast of Yun Yun and her siblings' life with the life of some others of the same generation in China using the contrastive frame "A, but B": Yun Yun and her siblings all "have a good future" ("至少俉全有前途来！") (C2) but some children "are a mess" ("有种社会上弄得一塌糊涂") (C3). Then she uses four comparison strategies in a row (one of them a repetition) to lower these people by giving details about the mess: these people "have lost their jobs" ("全是下岗来！") (C5), "their life is so hard" ("苦么苦得来！") (C7), and some "don't even have a place to live" when they return from the countryside ("有额小囡回转来全哄没地方住") (C8). In contrast to the terrible life they are living, Mrs. Shi makes three contrastive comments that Yun Yun and her siblings "have made a life overseas" and are "so happy" ("格个侬就是故里蹲蹲，开心来，") (C10), that they all "did so well in school and became somebody" ("俉小囡会，会得迭能介样，俉屋里人全会得读书成举！") (C12), and that they all "made it" ("到底……出来了噢。")

(C13). To emphasize, Mrs. Shi employs two contrastive intensification strategies. She follows the descriptions of how bad other people's life is with "That's really terrible!" ("格真的是！") (C9), and she intensifies her descriptions of Yun Yun and her siblings' good life with "This is truly great happiness!" ("真真格是大的幸福！") (C11). As can be seen, except for the first contrast (C2, C3), the rest of the contrasts are in the contrastive frame of "A, A..., but B, B...," juxtaposing a group of traits about other people's terrible life ("have lost their jobs," "their life is so hard," "don't even have a place to live," "That's really terrible!") with a group of traits about Yun Yun and her siblings good life ("have made a life overseas," "so happy," "did so well in school and became somebody," "made it," "This is truly great happiness!").

Whether making a single trait contrast or a multiple traits contrast, the juxtaposition of two opposing states of life dramatically highlights how good the complimentee's life is and thus making the compliments more powerful. Without the sharp contrast, the compliments would lose much of the color and force they enjoy in the sequence.

Functions

As has been stated in the introductory remarks, the support compliment strategy of comparison is *multifunctional* in nature and is thus often *mutually non-exclusive* with other strategies. I have demonstrated many examples of the overlapping of comparison and other strategies in the analysis of some excerpts, and by listing double coding (e.g., comparison and comment, comparison and intensification) in the right column of some excerpts. Take Excerpt 8.15 for example. In Excerpt 8.15 (p. 455) eight comparison strategies are used by Mrs. Shen, almost all of them are overlapping ones. They are used

to *initiate* two core compliment strategies ("元元开车子么最好。 [...you] Yuan Yuan

are the best driver."; "侬现在顶好, now you're doing the best.") (C1, C9), to *elaborate*

the core compliment strategies ("元元开得最稳……, Yuan Yuan's driving is the

smoothest..."; "伊现在顶成功了。 She's now the most successful.") (C2, C11)—both

comment strategies adding details to the core compliments, or to *emphasize* the core or

another support compliment strategy by *repeating* ("最稳。 the smoothest."; "嗯，顶

好。 Um, [you're doing] the best.") (C3, C10), or by *intensifying* ("最能干。 [You're

the] most capable.") (C4).

Excerpt 8.19 illustrates how *comparison* strategies are used throughout the

compliment-response sequence to perform different functions: *initiation*, *elaboration*, and

emphasis.

Excerpt 8.19 "Your qualifications are much better than hers!"

Situation: At a company office. Jin [F, 43], Yao [F, 45] and some others are discussing the
personnel change and the competition for an important position.

01		靳：勿是王明海啊？	Jin: It wasn't Wang Minghai?	
02		姚：勿是王明海。	Yao: No, not Wang Minghai.	
03		靳：嗳——！！（提高嗓	Jin: What:::? (in a high	
04		音）寻开心勿要寻得太	pitch) Don't carry the	
05		大噢！人家全认为王明	joke too far. Everybody	
06		海，勿是王明海啊？	thought it would be Wang	
07			Minghai. So it wasn't	
08			Wang Minghai?	
09		姚：勿是王明海。	Yao: It wasn't Wang Minghai.	
10		靳：徐玉英？	Jin: Xu Yuying?	
11		姚：嗳大概徐玉英。	Yao: Yeah, it was probably Xu	
12			Yuying.	
13		靳：我想对伐啦……,	Jin: I was thinking...	
14	→	〔1.格徐玉英上去（提	[1.If Xu Yuying got the	1.core
15		高嗓音）侬笃定好,	promotion, (in a high	promotion
16	→	2.伊（那）个条件比伊	pitch) you definitely	comparison
17		好交关了！3.真额！	should. 2.Your	other
18			qualifications are much	2.comment

19			better than hers!	comparison
20			3.Honest!	other
21		姚：〔徐玉英……	Yao: [Xu Yuying...	
22		靳：4.格侬格个条件勿要太	Jin: 4.But your	3.intensifi-
23		好噢！	qualifications are so	cation
24			good! You can't beat	4.intensifi-
25			them.	cation
26		姚：格王明海好。	Yao: Wang Minghai's better.	
27	→	靳：5.噯！徐玉英业务又勿	Jin: 5.I must say, Xu Yuying	5.comment
28		灵额咾！好好叫侬好	has inferior	comparison
29		来！	professional ability.	other
30			You're so much better.	(contrast)
31		姚：……（？）	Yao: ...(?) (far away from	
32			the recorder)	
33	→	靳：6.噯！外加徐玉英格个	Jin: 6.And, what's more, Xu	6.comment
34		人，区里一部分人对	Yuying's personality...	comparison
35		伊，对伊意见蛮大噯！	some people up in the	other
36			district[administration]	
37			have serious	
38			reservations about her.	
39		(Some discussions about	(Some discussions about Wang	
40		Wang Minghai. Skip 4	Minghai. Skip 4 turns)	
41		turns)		
42		姚：……（？）	Yao: ...(?)	
43	→	靳：噯，阿是啦！7.徐玉	Jin: Yeah, exactly. 7.Xu	7.intensifi-
44		英，格侬格个比徐玉英	Yuying... you're ten	cation
45	→	强十倍来！8.徐玉英岁	times better than Xu	comparison
46		数还比侬大来！	Yuying. 8.Also Xu Yuying	other
47			is older than you are.	8.comment
48		姚：帮我一样大。	Yao: We're the same age.	comparison
49	→	靳：帮侬一样大啊？9.格伊	Jin: Same age as you? 9.Her	other
50		各方面资历全呒没侬，	resumé falls far short	9.comment
51		侬迭个对伐？侬原	of you... yours, right?	comparison
52		来……咾（？）	You used to... (?)	other
53		姚：我原来……（？）(too	Yao: I used to...(?)（too	
54		noisy)	noisy)	

In Excerpt 8.19 *comparison* strategies are used throughout the compliment sequence to

systematically compare two candidates for a position: one (Ms. Xu Yuying) got the

promotion, whereas the other (the complimentee Ms. Yao) didn't, but should have

according to the complimenter Miss Jin. Note almost every *comparison* strategy overlaps

with another strategy. First the complimenter Jin uses the *comparison* strategy to *initiate*

an over-all compliment topic: comparing to Xu Yuying, Yao definitely should be the one

to get the promotion ("格徐玉英上去侬笃定好，") (C1). Then Jin uses five

comparison/*comment* strategies to *elaborate* her core compliment strategy, giving

accounts for why Yao should be promoted. The first *comparison*/*comment* is a

complimentee focused "betterness" strategy, stating that Yao's qualifications are much

better than Xu's ("伊 [那] 个条件比伊好交关了！") (C2). The second

comparison/*comment* is a *complimentee and other dual focused* strategy ("complimentee

is good, but other is bad"), contrasting Xu's "inferior" professional ability with Yao's "so

much better" professional ability ("徐玉英业务又勿灵的咾！好好叫侬好来！") (C5).

The third and fourth *comparisons*/*comments* use *other focused* "other is bad" strategy to

point out Xu's personality problem—some people in the district administration have

serious reservations about Xu's personality ("徐玉英格个人，区里一部分人对伊，对

伊意见蛮大嗳！") (C6), and Xu's age disadvantage—Xu is older than Yao ("徐玉英岁

数还比侬大来！") (C8). The last *comparison*/*comment* uses *other focused* strategy

again, but "other is not as good as complimentee" strategy: Xu's resumé falls far short of

Yao's ("格伊各方面资历全呒没侬，侬选个对伐？") (C9). In addition to the five

comparison/*comment* strategies, three intensification strategies are used to *emphasize* the

comparisons, one using a sincerity expression "Honest!" ("真的！") (C3), and two using

intensifiers: "But your qualifications are **so** good! **You can't beat them**." ("格侬格个条

件**勿要太好噢**！") (C4), and "you're **ten times** better than Xu Yuying." ("格侬格个比

徐玉英强**十倍**来！") (C7). The last *intensification* strategy is a *comparison* strategy

itself. From Excerpt 8.19, we can see the applications of different *comparison* strategies,

and the different functions the *comparison* strategies play in the compliment sequence: to *initiate*, to *elaborate*, as well as to *emphasize* the core and other support compliment strategies.

Compliment by deprecating oneself or other, or by referring to another person/standard, in a way, is performing an *implicit*/*indirect* compliment action (Wieland, 1995, p. 803; Boyle, 2000) and thus may be argued to weaken the compliment force. An examination of all the *comparison* strategies used in the data, however, can argue for the contrary. The *comparison* strategy creates and expands the distance between the complimentee's strength and the complimenter's or other's weakness: e.g., "农村小会计, an insignificant country accountant" vs. "成了大老板, become a big-shot businessman"; "国粹全宝！ An all-China national treasure (referring to skin)!" vs. "毛孔大得来！像猪皮一样！ the pores are huge! Like pigskin!"; "格种水平格种房子, a place of such quality, such class" vs. "贫民窟, the slums." The *comparison* strategy shortens the distance between the complimentee's goodness and the top standard of excellence: e.g., exquisite home decoration ("你看她家嗲吗？") is likened to "a fancy premium store" ("像精品商店"); beautiful long hair ("长发飘逸, her long hair blows gracefully in the wind") is compared to a maiden's ("像个淑女一样") and to a beautiful gentlewoman ("像，漂亮，漂亮的君子一样的！"). The distance lengthened or shortened by the *comparison* strategies dramatically highlights how good the complimentee is, making the complimentee stand out even more. In addition, the figures of speech (e.g., "是黄鱼脑袋, have heads like the 'yellow croaker'"; "成仙女啦, as beautiful as an angel"; "是四梁八柱, is the pillar [beams and pillars that hold up the roof of the house]"; "狡兔有四窟, a

resourceful rabbit building itself four burrows") create an interesting, sometimes unusual and emotional effect, vividly heightening the state that they are describing, making the complimentee's good mind in school, knock-out beauty, strong capability, or business ingenuity more distinctive/noticeable, and thus making the compliment more powerful.

Sequentially, the use of *comparison* strategy is not contingent upon the complimentee's response strategy. The *comparison* strategy is used whether the complimentee accepts, rejects, or downplays the compliment strategy, or remains silent. It frequently follows the complimenter's own compliment strategy or other's affirmation of the compliment strategy, just like most other support compliment strategies do. However, the use and the interpretation of a *comparison* strategy as a compliment strategy depend on the context within and beyond the compliment-response sequence. For example, in Excerpt 8.10 (p. 429), the complimenter uses "勿一样/两样 different from" *comparison* strategies ("到国外去么帮阿拉此地是格，两重天呀！ Going abroad and staying here are... two entirely different worlds."; "苦么苦人勿一样额呀！ It's difficult but different.") (C3, C5) to present the complimentee's "betterness." The interpretation of "different" as being "better" not "more difficult" ("国外也苦噢！ It's very difficult living abroad.") depends on the complimenter's positive qualifications/elaborations ("人自由呀！ You... you have freedom"; "呼吸额空气也两样了！ Even the air you breathe is different.") (C6, C8) in the post turns. And the interpretation of "air is different" as being better air quality is achieved by both sequential context (the discussion in their prior talk), and social situational context: "members"/coparticipants' tacit consensus that "freedom" and "better air quality" are associated with "abroad" and are very much desired in society at the time.

Summary

In this chapter, I have examined the support compliment strategies of *quote* and *comparison*. Unlike other support compliment strategies which play primarily one major pragmatic-discursive function, the *quote* and *comparison* strategies are multifunctional in nature. They can be used to initiate, align with, elaborate or emphasize a compliment strategy.

Quote strategy enlists other's words or perspective to perform a compliment action. It can quote speech or writing. The majority of the *quote* strategies (93.8% of the 160) quote speech; only 6.2% (10) quote writing. *Quote* strategy is realized in two different speech frames: direct or quoted speech (i.e., enlisting what someone has said in exact words) or indirect or reported speech (i.e., enlisting what someone has said in non-exact words). The speech quoted can be in the structure of monologue (i.e., enlisting single quote, multiple quotes or the whole sequence by one speaker) or conversation (i.e., enlisting interaction between two or more speakers). While indirect speech with a reporting clause is the most commonly used speech frame when quoting speech, direct speech with no reporting clause characterizes the majority of the *quote* strategies which quote writing. Furthermore, while both speech structures of monologue and conversation are employed when quoting speech, only monologue is observed when quoting writing. The quotes of writing are usually short, popular or well-known phrases or sentences, memorable for the quoter and readily recognizable for the hearer(s). They blend naturally as an integral part of the compliment sequence.

Grammatically, Chinese does not mark tense, but marks aspect. Therefore, temporal shift is not a characterization of indirect speech. Pronoun reference shift is the key indicator to differentiate direct speech from indirect speech. The shift of the reference in indirect speech is largely determined by the addressee in the interaction. When reporting to the complimentee (with or without the third party present), the third person focus in direct speech is changed to second person focus in indirect speech. However, the third person focus in direct speech is retained when reporting to a third party (with the complimentee present).

The support compliment strategy of *comparison* compares the complimentee with the complimenter him/herself or with another person to perform a compliment action. *Comparison to self* strategies present the weakness of the complimenter him/herself to raise the complimentee. They can be complimenter focused, complimentee focused, or complimentee and complimenter dual focused. *Comparison to other* strategies present the weakness of another person or compare the complimentee to a high standard to raise the complimentee. They can be other focused, complimentee focused, or complimentee and other dual focused. *Complimenter focused* or *other focused* strategies raise the complimentee by focusing on the complimenter's or other's weakness, pointing out that the complimenter him/herself or other is "bad," or not as good as the complimentee, or as "bad" as a "low" standard. *Complimentee focused* strategies raise the complimentee by focusing on the complimentee's strength, pointing out that the complimentee is better than the complimenter or other, or as good as a high standard, or is excellent or the best or rare in a [specified or unspecified] group. *Complimentee and complimenter* or *complimentee and other dual focused* strategies raise the complimentee by juxtaposing

the complimentee's strength and the complimenter's or other's weakness to form a contrast, pointing out that the complimentee is good but the complimenter or other is "bad." A wide variety of lexical, syntactic, rhetoric and stylistic forms are used to realize the *comparison* strategy, such as negation adverbs, lexical items of negative meaning and positive meaning, comparative, contrastive, and superlative forms, as well as figures of speech such as simile, metaphor, and analogy.

Sequentially, the use of *quote* or *comparison* strategy is not contingent upon the complimentee's response strategy. The *quote* or *comparison* strategy is used whether the complimentee accepts, rejects, or downplays the compliment strategy, or remains silent. It frequently follows the complimenter's own compliment strategy or other's affirmation of the compliment strategy, just like most other support compliment strategies do. The use and the interpretation of a *comparison* strategy (e.g., using comparative form "A 帮 B 勿一样/两样, A different from B" to present the complimentee's "betterness") as a compliment strategy very often depend on the context within and beyond the compliment-response sequence.

Although compliment by quoting other's words or perspective instead of using one's own, or compliment by pointing out one's own or other's weakness or by referring to another person or standard, in a way, is performing an indirect/implicit compliment action and thus may be argued to weaken the compliment force, an examination of all the *quote* and *comparison* strategies used in the data can argue for the contrary. Most *quotes* of other speakers' praises are filled with passion and excitement, showing no sign of reservation or non-commitment. Like inviting a third party to join in the compliment action, *quote* strategy adds a "voice" not present at the scene, creating a "shared" positive

feeling, and thus adding power to the positive force of a compliment action. The *comparison* strategy creates and expands the distance between the complimentee's strength and the complimenter's or other's weakness, shortens the distance between the complimentee's goodness and the top standard of excellence, dramatically highlighting how good the complimentee is, making the complimentee stand out even more. In addition, the figures of speech create an interesting, sometimes unusual and emotional effect, vividly heightening the state that they are describing, and thus making the compliment more powerful.

This chapter concludes the analysis of seven support compliment strategies. In the next chapter, I will summerize the major findings of the present study, discuss the theoretical implications gained from the study, and suggest directions for future research.

Chapter IX

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This large scale study of Chinese complimenting behavior conducted in the speech communities of Shanghai and some other cities started with the research question: What is the pragmatic-discursive structure of Chinese compliments in naturally occurring conversation? This chapter answers the question. In this chapter, I will first summarize the study and highlight the major findings. I will then discuss the theoretical implications gained from the study. In conclusion, I will suggest some directions for future research.

Summary of Major Findings

In this part, I summarize the major findings of the study, focusing on "pragmatic-discursive structure" of Chinese compliments.

Discursive Event

The examination of 300 multi-party compliment-response sequences in my audio-recorded naturally occurring conversation data reveals that Chinese compliments and compliment responses are not single utterance acts or simple adjacency pairs, but multi-turn discursive speech events. Altogether there are 4,909 turns in the 300 compliment-response sequences, averaging 16.36 turns per sequence. The shortest sequence has two turns while the longest 264 turns. A total of 3,835 **compliment** strategies are identified, averaging 12.78 per sequence. The longest sequence (264 turns) has 23 core compliment

strategies and 192 support strategies. Sequences with one core compliment and 20, 30, 40, 50, or more support strategies have also been observed.

The analysis indicates that Chinese compliments and compliment responses are not isolated stand-alone syntactic, lexical, or semantic formulae, but *pragmatic strategies* operating on the **discourse** level [*pragmatic-discursive strategies*]. The illocutionary compliment force is achieved not so much by the internal syntactic or lexical constitution of the compliment utterance per se, or the individual semantic/functional characterization of the response utterance per se, but (1) by what each syntactically and lexically structured compliment utterance does in the sequence, and what the individual semantically/functionally characterized response utterance does in the sequence; (2) by what all the compliment utterances concertedly do in the sequence, and what all the response utterances concertedly do in the sequence; and (3) by all the utterances, compliments and compliment responses, interactively do in the sequence. In other words, the illocutionary compliment force is achieved by the *pragmatic function* the utterance—compliment or compliment response—plays in the **sequence** [*pragmatic-discursive function*]. The different pragmatic-discursive strategies employed in the sequence do not stand in isolation on equal footing, but work closely together, and interact with each other in different ways to "co-construct" the compliment event.

The analysis indicates that it is not self-evident that a particular utterance/strategy is performing the action of a compliment. Context, both interaction-external and, particularly, interaction-internal, is crucial in the construction and interpretation of a compliment strategy. The **use** of a particular compliment strategy depends on the response or other compliment strategies or contextual/situational factors within and

beyond the sequence at the moment of interaction. For example, the use of the *negation* strategy and the [*rejection*] *question* strategy is contingent upon the complimentee's negative response (see Excerpt 7.14 "Stop talking nonsense! Your hair's not white at all!"). Similarly, the **interpretation** of a strategy as a compliment strategy also depends on the response or other compliment strategies or contextual/situational factors within and beyond the sequence. For example, the interpretation of a *question* as an intensification question rather than an information-seeking question depends on the sequential context: whether there is a relevant information-giving "answer" as the second pair part; whether there are other positive strategies preceding, following, or as a component part of the question (see Excerpt 7.15 "ONLY some shrimp and chicken! How can you say that!"). For another example, the use and the interpretation of a *comparison* strategy as a compliment strategy (e.g., using "A 帮 B 勿一样/两样, A [is] different from B" to present the complimentee's "betterness") also depends on the context within and beyond the compliment-response sequence (see Excerpt 8.10 "Going abroad and staying here are two entirely different worlds.").

Preliminary observations find two prominent compliment "co-construction" frames: (1) the "normal" complimenter-complimentee interaction, with the third party(-ies) aligning with the complimenter. Of particular interest within this co-construction frame is the back-and-forth "tug-of-war" interaction between the complimenter and the complimentee. The "tug-of-war" over multiple turns using strategies such as repetition, negation, question, sentence-final particles, sincerity, comparison, etc., has been repeatedly observed. In the "tug-of-war" interaction the compliment strategies and compliment response strategies are often inter-contingent; the complimenter and

complimentee negotiate to co-construct the compliment event. The complimenter-complimentee interaction is certainly not restricted to the "tug-of-war" interaction. The interaction between the complimentee's self-praise assertions and the complimenter and the third parties' praise affirmations has also been observed (see Excerpt 7.20 "I've eaten two big bowlfuls of wonton already."). (2) The second prominent compliment "co-construction" frame prevails in the data: the complimenter-third party(-ies) interaction with or without the complimentee's participation. This co-construction frame takes two different forms. (a) In the first form, the complimenter and the third party align with each other in an elaborate back-and-forth "incremental" interaction with or without the complimentee's participation. For example, the *agreement* strategy frequently interacts with the *comment* strategy in the following way: A: compliment – B: agreement – comment – A: agreement – further comment – B: further agreement.... (see Excerpt 5.1 "This is salmon! The best!"; Excerpt 6.1 "The way you talk is so interesting!" "Isn't it."; Excerpt 6.5 "Yeah, he's eloquent indeed."). The *repetition* strategy frequently interacts with the *agreement-by-repetition* strategy (see Excerpt 7.5 "Accounting is hot nowadays."; Excerpt 7.6 "Wow, your apartment is so full of priceless treasures!"). These back-and-forth "incremental" patterns of alignment build up the crescendo and excitement, or act in a force like a hammer hitting the nail, forcefully strengthening the positive semantic force of a compliment strategy. (b) In the second form, the third parties align with the complimenter by "chiming in" the support strategies such as *comment* and *example* strategies (see Excerpt 6.13 "We can't do without you!" in which six examples are "chimed in"; Excerpt 6.8 "Wow...wow! The calligraphy is unbelievably great!"; Excerpt 7.7 "His dad is a famous translator."). This is especially common in

conversations with multiple parties. These "chime-in" support strategies build onto each other, and complement each other, forcefully enhancing the positiveness of the compliment action. No matter how different the co-construction frames are, the compliment strategies and the compliment response strategies in each sequence do not work separately but interact with each other to "co-construct" the compliment event.

Compliment Structure

The examination of compliments in the 300 compliment-response sequences in the audio-recorded naturally occurring conversation data reveals that Chinese compliments operate as pragmatic-discursive strategies working concertedly over the discourse in a *core* and *support* relationship. Among the total 3,835 compliment strategies 525 are *core* strategies, and 3310 *support* strategies.

The ***core compliment strategy*** is mostly the first general/summative statement initiating a compliment topic—the content of the compliment. It can be explicit or implicit, addressed directly to the complimentee or indirectly to the 3rd party, using the speaker's perspective or enlisting another person's perspective. The topic is realized by two component parts of the *core* compliment strategy: an assessable and a positive assessment. The assessable can be reference-specific, reference-nonspecific, or with no overt reference. The positive assessment can be content-specific or content-nonspecific. The compliment topic/content is brought out by either the reference-specific assessable, or the content-specific positive assessment, or both. When the assessable and the positive assessment are both nonspecific, sequential context or situational context has to be examined to locate the assessable, or support elaboration strategies are used to specify the compliment topic. A wide variety of lexical and syntactic forms are used to realize the

assessable and the positive assessment, with no formulaicity and predictability in lexical or syntactic distribution (see details in the next section).

The general summative nature of the topic is largely brought out by the content-nonspecificity and the high semantic strength of the positive assessment. The content-nonspecificity is realized by using content-nonspecific lexical items, while the high semantic strength is mainly achieved by using lexical items of high intensity, intensifiers, sentence-initial interjections, and sentence-final [modal] particles. These forms are used alone or in combination. To specify the content-nonspecific or high semantic strength "general summative" topic, a series of support compliment strategies usually follow.

When a compliment-response sequence has more than one *core* compliment strategy, the topics introduced by the *core* compliment strategies are usually related in content meaning. They are related in two different ways depending on the number of complimentees (single or multiple) receiving the compliments: either different facets of an overall topic not overtly stated, or different or same topics within the same topic field.

The ***support compliment strategy*** is defined by the pragmatic function of the utterance in relation to the core compliment strategy or other utterances **in the sequence** [pragmatic discursive function]. Some support strategies (with a positive assessment) can stand alone as compliments; some (without a positive assessment) cannot, depending on other strategies within the sequence or cultural and contextual factors beyond the sequence to be interpreted as compliments. Seven major support compliment strategies have been identified: *agreement*, *comment*, *example*, *repetition*, *intensification*, *quote*, and *comparison*. They fulfill three major pragmatic-discursive functions: (1) to align

with, (2) to elaborate, or (3) to emphasize the core or another support compliment strategy.

The *agreement* strategy agrees to a strategy initiated by *a different speaker* to align with his/her position. The *comment* and *example* strategies present a specific detail or account, or a particular instance to elaborate a strategy. The *repetition* strategy restates a compliment strategy initiated by *the same speaker* for emphasis. The *intensification* strategy upgrades a strategy to higher intensity for emphasis. The *quote* strategy enlists other's words or perspective to elaborate or emphasize a strategy. The *comparison* strategy compares the complimentee to oneself or another person to elaborate or emphasize a strategy.

The seven major support compliment strategies are further realized by wide varieties of substrategies and linguistic forms.

The *agreement* strategy is realized by using agreement token, repetition, or a combination of the two. The agreement tokens can be used alone, or combined, or repeated for emphasis. The repetition can be a complete or a partial restatement of another speaker's compliment strategy in exact words or non-exact words. Different agreement tokens and repetition can also be combined to enhance the tone of agreement.

The *comment* strategy elaborates a general compliment topic with a component part, a facet, a specific characteristic, etc., which is brought out by either the reference-specific assessable or content-specific positive assessment or both. They are in turn realized by a wide variety of linguistic forms with no formulaicity and predictability in lexical or syntactic distribution. In addition, the *comments* are often given in "layers" on

different levels of generality/specificity. Each *comment* adds more detail to the previous one, unpacking the general topic of the core or support strategy in different steps.

The *example* can be in detailed descriptions of one instance, or in simple listings of multiple instances. Contextual information is specified when detailing one instance. Such information is unstated but tacitly shared by the participants when *examples* are presented in simple listings.

The *repetition* strategy can restate a compliment strategy either completely or partially (usually the positive assessment part of a strategy). It can restate a strategy in exact words, non-exact words, or in paraphrase.

The *intensification* strategy is the most complicated strategy in terms of the variety of forms used for its realization. It can be either attribute oriented or impact oriented. The attribute oriented strategies intensify the positive semantic force of the positive assessment of the complimentee, emphasizing either the complimentee's positive attribute itself, or the complimenter's sincerity of the assessment. The impact oriented strategies intensify the positive impact the complimentee has on the complimenter or other, focusing on either the complimenter's or other's emotion (feeling of admiration), or action (act of admiration). The majority of the *intensification* strategies are attribute oriented complimentee focused, which are realized by using intensifiers, lexical items of high intensity, sentence-initial interjections, sentence-final particles, negation, and question. These six intensification strategies are in turn realized by a wide variety of lexical and syntactic forms (see Figure 9.1 later for details).

Quote strategy can quote speech or writing. It can be realized in direct speech frame or indirect speech frame. The speech quoted can be in the structure of monologue

(i.e., single quote, multiple quotes or the whole sequence by one speaker) or conversation (i.e., interaction between two or more speakers). While both direct and indirect speech and both monologue and conversation are employed when quoting speech, direct speech and monologue characterizes the majority of the quote strategies which quote writing.

Comparison strategies can be (1) complimenter or other focused, (2) complimentee focused, or (3) complimentee and complimenter, or complimentee and other dual focused. Complimenter focused or other focused strategies present the complimenter's or other's weakness to raise the complimentee. Complimentee focused strategies raise the complimentee by focusing on the complimentee's strength. Complimentee and complimenter or complimentee and other dual focused strategies raise the complimentee by juxtaposing the complimentee's strength and the complimenter's or other's weakness to form a contrast. Again, a wide variety of lexical, syntactic, rhetorical and stylistic forms are used to realize the *comparison* strategy, such as negation adverbs, lexical items of negative meaning and positive meaning, comparative, contrastive, and superlative forms, as well as figures of speech such as simile, metaphor, and analogy.

The above summary still has not exhausted the list. In sum, the complexity and the variety of the substrategies and linguistic forms used to realize the main compliment strategies are nothing short of "astounding." The support compliment strategies described above are used by both the complimenter and the third parties. They are used not only to align with, elaborate, and emphasize a core compliment strategy, but also other support compliment strategies. Different compliment strategies employed in the sequence do not stand in isolation on equal footing, but work closely together, and interact with each other in different ways to "co-construct" the compliment event.

Theoretical Implications

In this section, I discuss the theoretical implications of the above findings.

Not Formulaic

Almost all the compliment studies across different languages in the past three decades support the conclusion reached by Manes and Wolfson (1981) that compliments are highly formulaic, realized by using only a limited number of syntactic structures and semantic lexical items. This revelation is "significant" (Chen, 2010, p. 93), "highly instructive, extremely interesting, and of substantial pedagogical value," but with one caveat—the results are based almost exclusively on "explicit" (Boyle, 2000, p. 42) "**CORE**" compliments (L. Beebe, personal communication, February 1, 2017). The results of the current study attest to the contrary. Chinese compliments in the naturally occurring conversations in my data corpus are anything but formulaic. They are highly sophisticated and variable on all levels: discourse organizations, pragmatic functional categories, and linguistic forms.

There are seven major support strategies. They fulfill different discourse functions. Each strategy consists of a variety of substrategies, which in turn are realized by a wide variety of linguistic forms. Take intensification strategy for example. In compliment literature, the use of intensifying devices has also been reported as highly formulaic, relying on only a few intensifiers such as "very," "really," "indeed," etc.; nothing of the complexity and variations shown in Figure 9.1.
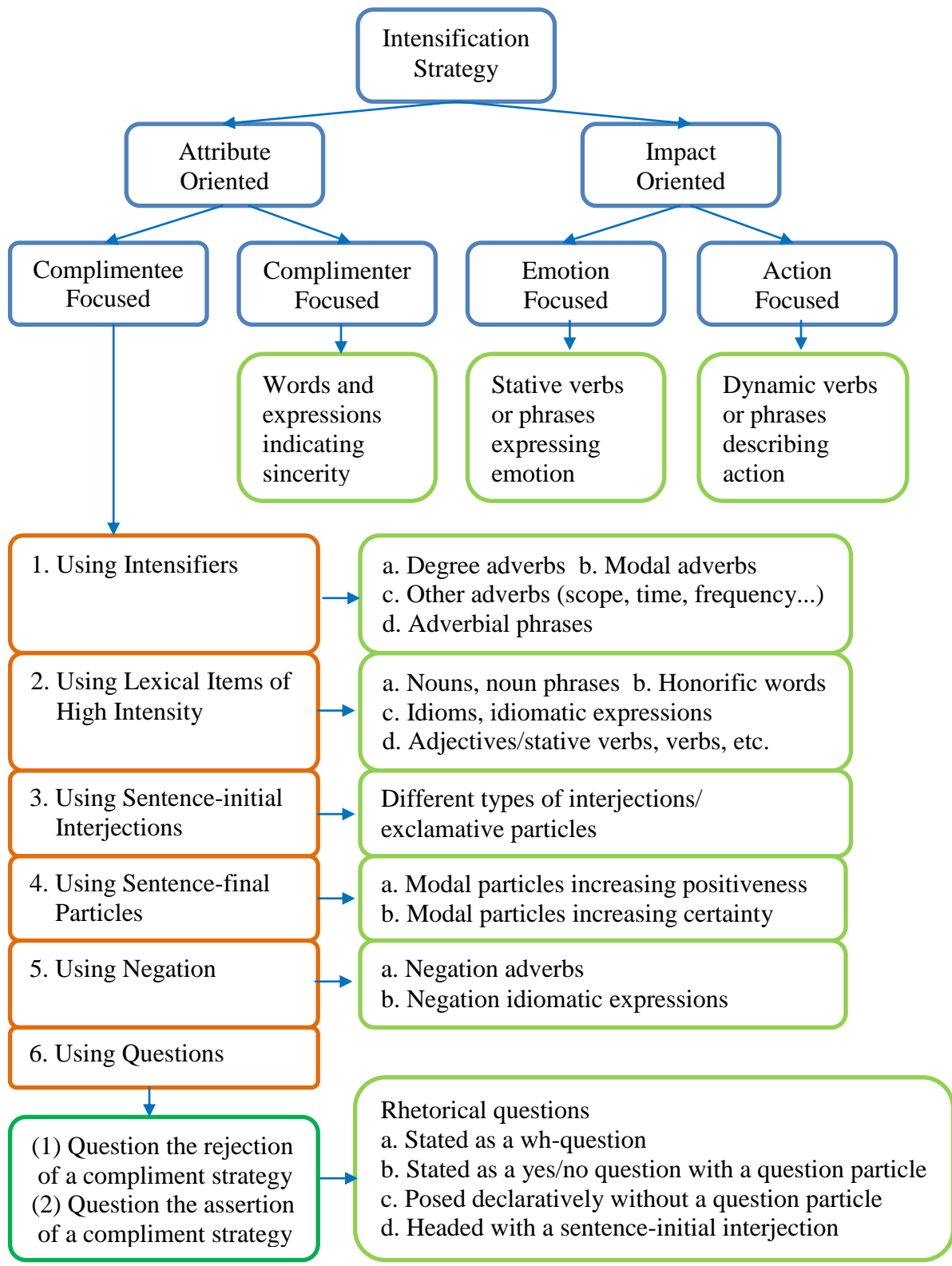
Figure 9.1 Taxonomy of Intensification Strategies

In fact, Figure 9.1 has summarized only the major strategies, substrategies, and categories of linguistic form; it has no room to list hundreds of specific syntactic, lexical, semantic, rhetoric and stylistic items under the listed categories.

Even the core compliment strategy itself shows no sign of syntactic, semantic and lexical simplicity. As has been summarized in the previous section, the *core* compliment strategy consists of an assessable and a positive assessment. The assessable can be reference-specific, reference-nonspecific, or with no overt reference. The positive assessment can be content-specific or content-nonspecific. A wide variety of lexical and syntactic forms are used to realize the assessable: noun phrases for people (e.g., names, kinship terms, titles, different combinations of these terms), noun phrases for objects, personal pronouns, demonstrative pronouns, combinations of nouns and pronouns, verb phrases, clauses, generic terms, etc. A wider variety of lexical and syntactic items are used to realize the positive assessment: adjectives/stative verbs, adverbs/adverbial phrases, noun phrases, verb phrases, clauses, interjections, modal particles, idioms, idiomatic expressions, honorific words, etc.—content-specific and content-nonspecific— with no formulaicity and predictability in lexical or syntactic distribution. Furthermore, in literature, the reference-nonspecific assessable (e.g., demonstrative pronouns, generic terms) and the assessable with no overt reference (i.e., deleted/dropped subjects) are not accounted for. An "umbrella" category "PRO" or "Dropped" covers all the different assessables situated in different sequential context/locations (in the same turn where the core compliment is initiated; in the complimenter's, the third party's, or the complimentee's prior turn(s); or in the post turn(s)), or in different situational context (the complimentee or other shows something, or the complimenter sees something). The

reference-nonspecific assessable or non-overtly referenced assessable can be a person, an object, a quality, an activity, an event, etc.

In sum, Chinese compliments, as observed in the audio-recorded naturally occurring conversations in the current study, are overwhelmingly NON-FORMULAIC.

Beyond Utterance

Almost all the compliment studies across different languages in the past three decades follow the definition proposed by Holmes (1988):

> A compliment is a speech act which explicitly or implicitly attributes credit to someone other than the speaker, usually the person addressed, for some 'good' (possession, characteristic, skill etc.) which is positively valued by the speaker and the hearer. (p. 446)

This and some other definitions are based on the assumption that the real purpose of most compliments is to **please the addressee** (Wierzbicka 1987; Herbert 1990). Complimenting is viewed here as expressing a **positive judgment** which applies **directly** to the addressee or to a quality, an object, or person(s) **more or less closely related to the addressee** (Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk, 1989).

However, this definition is based on the premise of complimenting as a single utterance act between two parties. It does not address complimenting as **multiple acts** negotiated and co-constructed by **multiple parties**. This definition cannot accommodate the exciting, intricate dynamics of the multi-turn multi-party interaction in the naturally occurring conversations in my data.

Yuan's (2002) study of compliment events in Kunming Chinese employing a semantic/functional analytic approach contributes to the compliment literature by extending the unit of analysis beyond a single utterance. It is interesting to note that the

core and support (unbound and bound semantic formulas) structure found in Yuan's DCT and ethnographic field notes data resembles the structure found in the naturally occurring conversation data in the current study (especially given that the two studies were conducted independently of each other). However, as has been discussed in Chapter II, due to the limitations of the DCT and the ethnographic field notes data collection methods, the data in Yuan's study cannot capture the long, dynamic interactive process between two or more speakers, and consequently, only half of the unbound semantic formulas (explicit compliments) co-occurred with bound semantic formulas, and combinations of the two occurred by one speaker in one turn at one stretch, and such combinations rarely exceeded three semantic formulas (nowhere near the 192 support strategies in the 264 turn multi-party compliment-response sequence). In addition, due to the noninteractive nature of the data, there is no coparticipant to validate if the bound semantic formula is indeed performing the act of complimenting.

Based on naturally occurring conversation data and adopting conversation analysis (CA) as its methodology, Golato views complimenting and responding to compliments as "social actions which are co-produced and negotiated among interactants" (Golato, 2005, p. 1). Golato was also the first one who examined in detail the orientation of the third-parties to the compliments in multi-party interactions. Among many interactional functions and achievements, Golato found that the German "second compliments" (given by the third parties) generally take the form of agreements. They seem to be all "minimal" in shape consisting of only one short turn, always occurring between the first compliment and the complimentee's response to it. The minimal nature of these agreeing turns renders them as non-intrusive, "listenership," and "bystandership"; they simply

express an alignment and affiliation with the first compliment speaker (p. 205). (See Review of the Literature.)

The results of the present study support Golato's view/findings. Chinese compliments in naturally occurring conversations operate at the discourse level in the sequential context. They are negotiated and co-constructed by all the participants in the interaction. The present study contributes further to the literature by adding Chinese-specific frames of compliment co-construction. Preliminary observations find two major frames: (1) complimenter-complimentee interaction with the third party(-ies) aligning with the complimenter; (2) the complimenter-third party(-ies) interaction with or without the complimentee's participation (see the section on "Discursive Event"). With both co-construction frames, the third parties take an active role. Chinese compliment "negotiation" can be long and insistent/intense; Chinese compliment "co-construction" is noisy and elaborate. The third parties do not display "listenership" or "bystandership." They are active and intrusive; they jump in; they frequently take over the "speakership" (see Excerpt 7.7 "His dad is a famous translator," in which the complimentee couldn't get a turn for a comment); they even bring in "voices" not present at the scene (see *quote* strategy). The "second" compliments are not "minimal," but elaborate in form, multiple in quantities. They are not just agreement tokens, but details, accounts, examples, repetitions, intensifications, quotes, and comparisons. They are not just second compliment, but third, fifth, 10th, 18th, 23rd, 27th, 36th, 39th, 50th, 74th.... Chinese complimenting in the present study is a joyful celebration, an interactive achievement, co-constructed over the discourse by all the participants in the compliment-response sequence.

Directions for Future Research

The present study is an ongoing study of the Chinese complimenting event in naturally occurring conversations. A number of suggestions for future research have stemmed from the study.

Compliment Response Structure

The compliment action cannot be fully accounted for without taking into consideration its counterpart, the compliment response action. Similar to the studies of compliment behavior, single act single adjacency pair analysis based on elicited data have dominated the research of compliment responses. The compliment responses in naturally occurring conversations in my data, however, have exhibited elaborate strategies and core and support relationship similar to the compliment structure. Take Excerpt 9.1 for example.

Excerpt 9.1 [9] "My face is painted like a map. An earthquake!"

Situation: Yu [F, 52] and Li [F, 45] were former colleagues. Yu is at Li's home for a reunion. Li's mom [F, 75] comes to the room. She hasn't seen Yu for a long time.

01		李母：	余老师老后生额。	Li's Mom: Teacher Yu [you]	
02				looks so young.	
03	→	余：	1.还后生了！2.姆妈	Yu: 1.Look young?! [How can	1.core
04			眼睛看勿清爽了。	you say that?] 2.Mom,	rejection
05				your eyes are failing	2.comment
06				you.	
07		李：	是额。	Li: You Do.	
08	→	余：	3.看勿清爽。	Yu: 3.[Her] eyes are failing	3.repetition
09				[her].	
10		李：	侬看阿拉姆妈讲侬	Li: After all, you do look	
11			总归是后生额。	young as my mother says.	
12			（笑）	(laughs)	
13	→	余：	4.诶，面孔上一塌糊	Yu: 4.Look, my face is a	4.comment

14	→		涂，5.画得来像地图	mess. 5.It's painted like	5.comparison
15	→		一样额！6.地震！	a map! 6.An earthquake!	other
16		李母：	吰没噢！	Li's Mom: No way!	6.intensifi-
17		李：	吰没噢！侬看阿拉几	Li: No way! Look, so many of	cation/
18			个同学来阿是啊，像	my schoolmates have come	comparison
19			伊个，秦家珍老啥全	like Qin Jiazhen. They	other
20			老，噢？	all looked old, didn't	
21				they?	
22		李母：	嗯。	Li's Mom: Yeah.	
23		李：	阿拉姆妈全讲伊拉	Li: My mother said they had	
24			老。我看看是面孔	all aged. I saw no	
25			全勿变，阿拉姆妈看	changes in their faces,	
26			上去觉着伊拉老。	but in my mother's eye	
27				they had all aged.	
28	→	余：	7.姆妈因为勿大看见	Yu: 7.That's because Mom	7.comment
29			伊拉。几岁啊现在？	doesn't see them very	
30			搭侬差勿多年纪？	often. How old is she	
31				now? Almost the same age	
32				as you?	
33		李：	伊搭我一样年纪额	Li: She's the same age as me,	
34			咾，比我还小来。格	actually younger than me.	
35			是侬，顶年轻了！	You look the youngest of	
36				us all!	
37	→	余：	8.我勿动脑筋嗳！	Yu: 8.I don't use my brains!	8.core
38	→		9.勿肯动脑筋，	9.I refuse to use my	deflect
39	→		10.懒惰！	brains. 10.Lazy!	9.repetition
40		李：	（笑）勿要瞎讲	Li: (laughs) Stop your	10.intensifi-
41			了！（笑）	nonsense! (laughs)	cation
42		李母：	（笑）	Li's Mom: (laughs)	
43		李：	一日到夜来教书还勿	Li: How can you not use your	
44			动脑筋来！（笑）	brains when you're	
45				teaching all the time!	
46				(laughs)	
47	→	余：	11.呶，教教书勿就	Yu: 11.Well, teaching is like	11.comment
48			格能介讲闲话啦，	talking. 12.You really	
49	→		12.勿动脑子真额	don't need to use your	12.comment
50	→		呶，13.现在呶脑筋	brains. 13.And I'm using	13.intensifi-
51			越来越勿要动了！	my brains less and less.	cation
52		李：	（笑）不过讲老实闲	Li: (laughs) Yeah, to be	
53			话教书，到后头就讲	honest, as you teach, it	
54			熟了，阿是啊？	does become old hat,	
55				doesn't it?	
56		余：	熟了嗳，嗯，总归讲	Yu: Yeah, old hat. The same	
57			来讲去格两句闲话。	few words repeated over	
58				and over.	
59		李：	不过也要备课额，也	Li: But you still have to	

60		要备额。	prepare your lessons,	
61			still have to prepare.	
62		李母：我去拿色拉舀出来。	Li's Mom: I'll go get the	
63			salad.	
64		李： 舀出来啊？等伊拉来	Li: Get the salad? Wait till	
65		了舀。	the others come.	
66		(Talk about Zhan and	(Talk about Zhan and Peng,	
67		Peng, who still haven't	who still haven't arrived	
68		arrived yet.)	yet.)	

In Excerpt 9.1, two *core* response strategies can be identified. The first one is a *rejection* strategy ("还后生了！ Look young?! [How can you say that!]") (response utterance 1, henceforth R1) given by the complimentee Yu to reject the core compliment strategy (by Li's mom) on Yu's young look (line 1). This core response strategy is supported by three *comment* strategies (R2, R4, R7), a *repetition* strategy (R3), a *comparison* strategy (R5), and an *intensification*/*comparison* overlapping strategy (R6). The three *comment* strategies give accounts for the rejection—why Yu doesn't look young. The first *comment* states that because Li's mom's "eyes are failing her (*you*)," she cannot see clearly that Yu is old ("姆妈眼睛看勿清爽了。") (R2), which is repeated by a *repetition* strategy ("看勿清爽。 [Her] eyes are failing [her].") (R3). The second *comment* states that Yu rejects the core compliment because her "face is a mess" ("诶，面孔上一塌糊涂，") (R4). This *comment* strategy is followed by a *comparison* strategy comparing her face to "a map," (implying that her face has lots of wrinkle lines) ("画得来像地图一样额！") (R5), and by an *intensification/comparison* strategy emphasizing that her face is not just painted like a map, but is like a map after "the earthquake" ("地震！") (R6), implying her face has massive, wide, deep... wrinkle lines). When Li compares Yu to some other friends who are younger than Yu but look older, Yu uses the third *comment*

strategy (R7) explaining why they do not look older. After Li's mom and Li strongly reject Yu's rejections and insist that Yu "looks the youngest of them all" (lines 35–36), Yu issues the second *core* response strategy, a *deflect* strategy ("我勿动脑筋嗳！ I don't use my brains!") (R8) to avoid direct acceptance of the compliment (I look young because I don't use my brains). It is first supported by a *repetition* strategy ("勿肯动脑筋， I refuse to use my brains.") (R9), and an *intensification* strategy ("懒惰！ [I'm] Lazy!") (R10). When these two strategies are rejected by Li, Yu uses two *comment* strategies to account for why she doesn't need to use her brains: teaching is "just like talking" ("呗，教教书勿就格能介讲闲话啦，") and she "really doesn't need to use her brains" ("勿动脑子真额呗，") (R11, R12). And she uses an *intensification* strategy to emphasize the two comments that she is "using her brains less and less" ("越来越勿要动了！") (R13). The interpretation of the second *core* response strategy ("我勿动脑筋嗳！ I don't use my brains!") (R8) as a *deflect* strategy requires context both within and beyond the sequence. The interpretive trajectory from "I don't use my brains" to "teaching has become an easy job" and "I don't need/want to work hard," thus the implication "that's why I don't look old" is certainly not a straightforward one, taking "negotiations" between Yu and Li from line 37 to line 60 to unfold.

As we can see from Excerpt 9.1, similar to the compliment strategies, the compliment responses are not single isolated stand-alone semantic/functional formulae, but *pragmatic strategies* operating on the **discourse** level [pragmatic-discursive strategies]. The different response strategies also work together in the *core* and *support* relationship. Some response strategies are not easily recognizable and have to rely on

other utterances in the sequence to be interpreted as compliment responses. The response strategies interact with each other and negotiate with the compliment strategies to co-construct the compliment event.

Taking a fresh look at the compliment responses in the naturally occurring conversations is overdue.

Compliment and Compliment Response Interaction

Preliminary analysis indicates that the Chinese complimenting event is negotiated and co-constructed by all the participants in the interaction. Different co-construction frames such as the complimenter-complimentee interaction with the third party(-ies) aligning with the complimenter, or the complimenter-third party(-ies) interaction with or without the complimentee's participation have been observed. Whether it is the intense tug-of-war interaction between the complimenter and complimentee, or the elaborate back-and-forth interaction between the complimenter and the third party, compliment strategies and compliment response strategies do not work separately. They are inter-contingent, a reflexive whole.

Preliminary observations also show that compliments and compliment responses are not readily recognizable. Analysis of context is crucial to uncover what action an utterance performs. Interaction-external context, such as demographic, social, cultural and situational variables, has been widely examined. However, interaction-internal sequential context, which is crucial for the interpretation and construction of a speech action, has not received equal attention in the compliment research. Detailing the sequential/interactional context in which a compliment or a compliment response occurs cannot be accomplished without analyzing the other pair part. To fully uncover what

action an utterance performs, to fully account for the different types of co-construction frames, to fully understand how Chinese compliment event is realized in interaction, detailed analysis of compliments and compliment responses together in naturally occurring conversations will be paramount. This will be an important part of my future study.

This large scale study of Chinese complimenting in the speech communities of Shanghai and some other cities using tape-recorded naturally occurring conversations started with a trial recording. My surprise and fascination with the counter-to-intuition, actual complimenting behavior, and my determination to get to the bottom of it have taken me through a long and arduous journey, and the journey is still unfolding. The discovery so far is fascinating and substantial, and the efforts painstaking but rewarding. I have all the intention to continue, and hope my fellow researchers who share the same interest will join in my mission to uncover the rules governing the actual, not intuitive speech behavior of complimenting and compliment responding.

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Appendix A

Directions for Data Collection

1. Bring a recorder to places, occasions, event and activities in which you think compliments may occur, such as visits to friends' and relatives' homes, dinner parties, reunions, social gatherings, business meetings (if allowed), neighborhood meetings, conferences, daily activities, etc.

2. Since ethical codes do not permit recording without consent, get consent from people before any recording. Please explain that no real name will be used unless so desired. Any private and sensitive information will be kept in strict confidence.

3. Do not interrupt the normal activity. Assume an active participant role if you can.

4. Test the recorder before recording. Prepare enough tapes. Place the recorder in an unobtrusive place. Tape the whole session.

5. Write down the background information as soon as the recording session is over while your memory is still fresh. Write down in detail the date, place, situation of the occasion and activity, and information about the speakers. Any other notes about culture and social changes will be greatly appreciated. To ease the job, a background information sheet has been prepared for you. Make copies of it. Fill out the sheet for every recording session. Use multiple sheets if there are multiple participants. Use the back side of the sheet if you need more space.

6. Number the tapes according to the order they are used. Index the tape after each recording, writing down the year, date, tape number and side, and index number marking the beginning and ending of the recording session (e.g., 2000 July 5, Tape 4B, index 45–580). Write this information also on the related background information sheet.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask me. Thank you very much for your support. Your valuable data will help expand the scope and accuracy of the descriptions and contribute greatly to the study of speech behavior in the Chinese speaking-communities. Any personal information will be held in strict confidence.

Sincerely,

Rong Rong Le
Teachers College, Columbia University

录音要求说明

1. 请带上你的录音机，在可能出现赞扬/恭维的场合和活动录音，例如：和朋友相聚，作客，宴请，聚会，各种社交、工作业务交谈场合，街道里弄活动、会议，日常生活活动，等等。

2. 录音前一定要征得被录者的许可，说明录音的目的，并解释清楚材料报告不采用被录者的真实姓名（除非本人希望用真实姓名）。研究者在任何情况下都不会泄露一切私人和敏感的信息。

3. 录音时不要打断任何正常的日程和活动安排，并尽量积极参与活动。

4. 录音前一定要试查录音机的效果，准备足够的磁带。把录音机放在不引人注目的地方。把整个场合和活动的全过程都录下来。

5. 录完之后，在记忆犹新的时候，请马上把活动的背景情况详细记录下来，包括时间、地点、场合、活动，以及参与者的背景、互相之间的关系等等。也希望记录下有关文化、社会变化的情况和想法。为了方便记录，已拟了一张"录音背景情况"记录表。拿到后请复印，每录一次音，就填写一份背景情况表。如果参与活动人多的话，就多用几张，正面填不下的话请写在表格的反面。

6. 请将磁带按录音的时间次序编号，并注明正反面。每次录音后请记录下录音的日期，录音磁带编号，磁带面，和录音开始结束的指数，例如：2000 年 7 月 5 日磁带 4 号 B 面，指数 45–580。请把这些信息也记录在相应的背景情况表格上。

如果有问题，请问我。万分感谢你的大力支持协助！你的珍贵的资料将对中国语言行为学研究和教学做出重大的贡献。没有你的同意，我保证不外泄任何有关的私人信息。

乐融融
现美国哥伦比亚大学教师学院博士研究生

Appendix B

Background Information Sheet

Collector's Name: Tape number/side/index numbers:

Date/time of the Conversation:

Place of the Conversation:

Situations (details):

Other Social/Cultural Information:

Speakers Background Information

	Speaker 1	Speaker 2	Speaker 3
Name			
Gender			
Age			
Dialect Speaking			
City of Residence			
Occupation			
Position (e.g., manager, director...)			
Income			
Education (highest grade attained)			
Role (e.g., friends, salesman/customer...)			

Relationship between the Speakers (e.g., mother/son, friends, professor/student, doctor/patient, salesman/customer, boss/ worker...):

Social Distance between the Speakers (circle one):
  1. Strangers   2. Acquaintances   3. Very Familiar   4. Intimates

录音背景情况

录音者姓名：   录音磁带编号/磁带面/录音开始结束指数：

对话发生日期时间：

对话发生地点场合：

情景（详细）：

其他社会文化背景：

对话者背景

	对话者 1	对话者 2	对话者 3
姓名			
性别			
年龄			
母语/方言			
对话所用方言			
居住城市			
职业/职位			
工资			
文化教育程度			
对话中的角色			

对话者关系：（例：母子，朋友，师生，医生/病人，店员/顾客，老板/工人……）

熟悉程度（请选择）：1. 陌生   2. 一般认识   3. 非常熟悉   4. 亲密

Appendix C

Consent Form

I understand that Rong Rong Le, from Teachers College, Columbia University in New York City, U.S.A., is conducting research on the realization of speech acts of Chinese compliments and compliment responses, etc. I agree to let Rong Rong Le use the data from her observations, interviews, tape-recordings, and written questionnaires related to me. I understand that my real name will never be used in her report when she refers to me, and I am free to withdraw consent and to discontinue participation at any point in the study. I also understand that I can request a copy of the research report when it is finished.

(Name of Participant)

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(Signature)   (Date)

参与研究同意书

我知道现在美国纽约市的哥伦比亚大学教师学院学习的博士研究生乐融融正在调查研究中国的恭维和赞扬等等语言行为。我同意参与这一调查研究活动，并允许乐融融引用她通过观察，采访，录音，和书面调查表搜集到的跟我有关的一切资料。我清楚她在调查研究报告中提及我的时候绝对不会提用我的真实姓名。我明白我有权随时退出或中断参与这一调查研究活动。我也知道在她调查研究报告完成以后，我可以要求获得一份调查研究结果的报告。

（参与者姓名）

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（签名）   （年月日）

Appendix D

Transcription Symbols

// or [	indicates that the next speaker overlaps at this point, or two speakers start simultaneously.
/ or]	indicates the point at which overlap ends.
:::	indicates prolonging sound and syllable.
Uppercase type	indicates stress (pitch and volume).
(laugh)	indicates nonverbal sounds or cues, or pause, or transcriber comments on contextual or other features.
(?)	indicates the transcriber is unsure of accuracy.
→ or __ (underline) or **boldface**	indicates parts of the transcript relevant to the analyst's description.
[she]	indicates the transcriber's interpretation of the missing or implied words or meaning

NOTE: The ending of the overlap is not marked in this study.