

RESEARCH ARTICLE

The Stancetaking of Discourse Marker “Ni Bie Shuo” and Its Variants

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ABSTRACT

The scholars noticed the interpersonal interaction function of the discourse marker “Ni Bie Shuo” (你别说), but they did not further explore the types of its function and the relationship between subjects, which is vital to understand “Ni Bie Shuo”. Therefore, this paper analyzes the different expression functions of the discourse marker “Ni Bie Shuo” and its variants based on BBC, CCL, the Chinese database of Chao Xing Du Xiu, and natural conversation corpus in oral communication. By observing and investigating a great deal of language material, we find that the stance expression function of “Ni Bie Shuo” can be divided into the consistent and opposing stance, and the process of its stancetaking can be further analyzed based on the cognitive expectation. The research is a new attempt to combine “Ni Bie Shuo” with discourse stance, providing a new theoretical perspective for exploring the pragmatic function of “Ni Bie Shuo”.

KEYWORDS

Discourse marker; “Ni Bie Shuo”; stance; expectation

ARTICLE INFORMATION

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1. Introduction

In mandarin Chinese, “Ni” means “you”, “Bie” means “don’t”, and “Shuo” means “speak”, so “Ni Bie Shuo” is used to stop someone speaking. But, since people use it frequently in oral speaking to emphasize their own opinions, the negative function of “Ni Bie Shuo” degenerates and gradually disappears. At the same time, the modal function is strengthened, so it becomes a discourse marker.

Actually, the definitions of discourse markers have not reached an absolute consensus. Schiffrin (1987) believes that a discourse marker can be syntactically detachable from a sentence, commonly used in the initial of an utterance, and has a range of prosodic contours. Ran (2000) and Wu (2005) emphasize that the main function of discourse markers lies in pragmatics instead of semantics. According to these definitions, we define the characteristics of a discourse marker as follows: independent pronunciation, syntactic optionality, procedural meaning and no-truth-conditionality. “Ni Bie Shuo” has these characteristics; thus, we define it as a discourse marker, for example:

(1) A: Where can I sell daughters? You tell me! Whose family gave birth to a daughter with the intention to earn money? (哪个地方可以卖钱? 你说出来! 谁家是为了卖钱生女儿的?)

B: **Ni Bie Shuo**... there really are such things... but not every place. (你别说.....还真有这种的.....但不能以偏概全。) (BCC Corpus)

(2) I see. **Ni Bie Shuo**, he looks really like General Chen from the Red Army era. (原来如此, 你别说,他今天的打扮还真像红军时代的陈大将军。) (Xinhua News Agency, reported in March 2003)

In Example (1), “Ni Bie Shuo” indicates a negative attitude, while in Example (2), “Ni Bie Shuo” indicates a positive attitude. Both of them have the following characteristics: Firstly, there is a clear phonetic pause between “Ni Bie Shuo” and subsequent sentences, and in writing, there is a comma after “Ni Bie Shuo”; Secondly, the position of “Ni Bie Shuo” is flexible, which can be located at the beginning of or within a passage of discourse. It can also connect the preceding and following sentences. Thirdly, “surprise” is the core meaning of “Ni Bie Shuo”, so its semantic meaning has no truth value and deleting it does not affect the grammatical and meaning correctness of the original utterance. Fourthly, it is mainly used to emphasize the speaker’s opinion. Therefore, “Ni Bie Shuo” is a typical discourse marker. “Ni Bie Shuo” can be used with adverbials such as “hai”, “zhen”, “hai zhen”, “dao” and creates new expressions ---- “Ni Hai Bie Shuo”, “Ni Zhen Bie Shuo”, “Ni Hai Zhen Bie Shuo” and “Ni Dao Bie Shuo”. These expressions are also discourse markers and have the same meaning as “Ni Bie Shuo”. But the adverbials make the subjectivity stronger.

Lots of linguists notice the pragmatic function of discourse markers and combine them with stancetaking. Kärkkäinen (2007) analyses the stancetaking function of the discourse marker “I guess” ---- an indication of the inference process of the speaker, and emphasizes that the function emerges from the subjective interaction of continuous conversation construction. Raunionmaa (2008) compares “mi nun mielestä (I think)” and “mi nust a (I guess)” in Finnish with “I guess” and “I think”, getting the conclusion that these markers have similar interactive functions and mainly are used to express personal stance. Pascale (2021) analyzes the marker “je pense (I think)” in French and points out that it has multiple pragmatic functions, such as identifying information sources and mitigating claims.

The current research on “Ni Bie Shuo” focuses on two aspects: One is exploring the source of “Ni Bie Shuo” from a cognitive or pragmatic perspective. Dong (2007), Hou (2009), Yin (2009), Tang and Hua (2011), and Zhou (2013) all believe that the discourse marker “Ni Bie Shuo” evolves from the verb phrase “Ni Bie Shuo” with behavioral negation. The other is exploring the semantic features and pragmatic functions of “Ni Bie Shuo” from the perspectives of discourse construction, interpersonal interaction or three levels, including syntax, semantics, and pragmatics. Yin (2009) believes that the semantic features of “Ni Bie Shuo” are “confirmation” and “differentiation”. Liu and Gao (2007) point out that its pragmatic functions are “reinforcing” and “indicating” views. Han and Liu (2007) argue that “Ni Bie Shuo” can express “unexpected feelings”.

Although these conclusions enrich the relevant research of “Ni Bie Shuo”, those research have shortcomings. One is that the research perspective is not novel enough, and the other is that the research depth is not sufficient. Firstly, the research perspective mostly focuses on static research, but “Ni Bie Shuo” is always used in dynamic oral communication. Secondly, although scholars have pointed out that “Ni Bie Shuo” has a pragmatic function of interpersonal interaction, they did not further classify its types of interpersonal interaction functions, nor have they conducted a thorough analysis of the relationship between subjects and their expression process.

Given the above analysis, this paper will analyze the stancetaking functions and types of discourse marker “Ni Bie Shuo” and its variants based on BBC, CCL, the Chinese database of Chao Xing Du Xiu, and natural conversation corpus in oral communication, and then further explore the process of its stancetaking.

2. The Stance Expression Function of “Ni Bie Shuo” and Its Variants

In a conversation, the discourse marker “Ni Bie Shuo” is always in the response sequence, which is a response to the triggering sequence. The response can be either agreement or refutation, depending on the positioning and evaluation of the relevant object made by both sides in the dialogue on an emotional or cognitive scale. More specifically, when their evaluations tend to be the same, they form a consistent stance; When the evaluations tend to differ, they form an opposing stance. Thus, the expression of stance depends on the positioning and evaluation of the object by both sides, as well as the convergent or divergent relationship between them, which is a specific manifestation of the “stance triangle” model (Du Bois, 2007). The stance expression function of “Ni Bie Shuo” also follows this model.

2.1 The stance triangle

Du Bois (2007) analyzes how both sides express opinions in daily communication and interaction and defines “stance” as “a public act by a social actor, achieved dialogically through overt communicative means, of simultaneously evaluating objects, positioning subjects (self and others), and aligning with other subjects, with respect to any salient dimension of the sociocultural field”.¹ What’s more, Du Bois attempts to use diagram to demonstrate the structural resonance in discourses and the relationship between speakers, so he constructs an expression model of discourse stance, known as the “stance triangle”, which is shown as follows:

¹ Du Bois, John W. The Stance Triangle. In Englebretson, Robert (ed.), *Stancetaking in Discourse: Subjectivity, Evaluation, Interaction*. 139-182. Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 2007, p163.

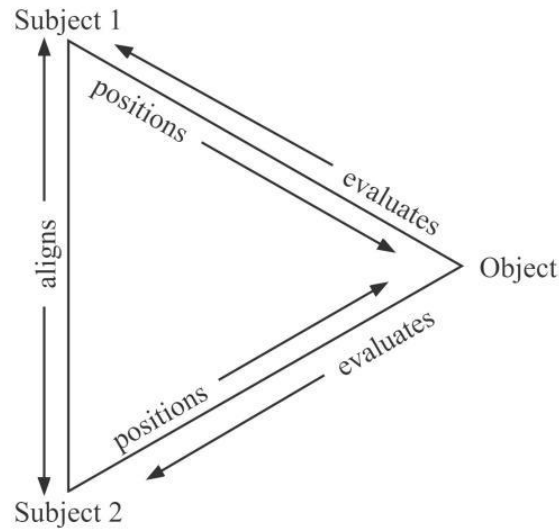


Figure 1 Caption : The stance triangle

Figure 1 Alt Text: The stance triangle model showing the relationship among listener, speaker and object

This model believes that both subjects and the object play an important role in the stancetaking in dialogue. The “stance triangle” demonstrates the three simultaneous behaviors involved in stance expression: The first is the evaluation of the object by the subject, that is, the process in which the subject endows a certain value on the object; The second is the positioning of the subject by the object, which can be divided into emotional and cognitive types. In other words, the subject sets positions on the emotional and cognitive scales; The third is the aligning, which means subjects adjust the relationship between them. Their relationship may be unified, opposing, or ambiguous, and so on.

Du Bois emphasizes that these three social behaviors occur simultaneously. While subjects evaluate the object and the object positions subjects, one subject seeks another subject’s recognition; thus, their cognitive relationships are formed, and stances are expressed successfully. All in all, the process of expressing a stance is actually a vibrant interaction process, which is jointly constructed and realized through negotiation and cooperation between the interacting subjects.

2.2 Consistent stance expression function

In the process of verbal interaction, both sides jointly position a certain object, and one strengthens the other’s positive evaluation of the object with “Ni Bie Shuo”, so they reach a convergent relationship, thus constructing a consistent stance. For example:

(3) (Context: Everyone is checking the image data of meteorological satellites.)

Ji Jiayihao: Oh, this meteorological satellite, why... why does it look so much like the one on the square... Well, I think it’s that mysterious guy. (夷, 这个气象卫星, 怎么...怎么看上去那么像那个广场上的.....嗯, 我看就是那个神秘的家伙.....)

Bao Zi: **Ni Zhen Bie Shuo**, look more and more like. (你真别说, 越看越像了!)

Ji Jai: the left, the right, and the transmitting antenna... it’s really like... (左边, 右边, 还有那个发射天线.....还真像.....) (Zhou Jun, *Panda Man in Action*)

When everyone was looking at the pictures of the meteorological satellite, Ji Jiayihao first noticed the object----the meteorological satellite and thought that it looked so much like the mysterious guy on the square. Then, he corrected his own evaluation and firmly believed that this meteorological satellite was the mysterious guy on the square. Following the discovery of Ji Jiayihao, Bao Zai further observed it and concluded that it “looked more and more liked”, showing agreement with the opinion of Ji Jiayihao. Moreover, BaoZai used “Ni Zhen Bie Shuo” to express an attitude that “if you hadn’t said such words, I really would not notice it, but you said it, I thought such was the case.” It further strengthened the degree of this agreement and constructed a consistent stance with Ji Jiayihao. According to the “stance triangle” model (Du Bois, 2007), we illustrate the consistent stance expression function of “Ni Bie Shuo” as follows:

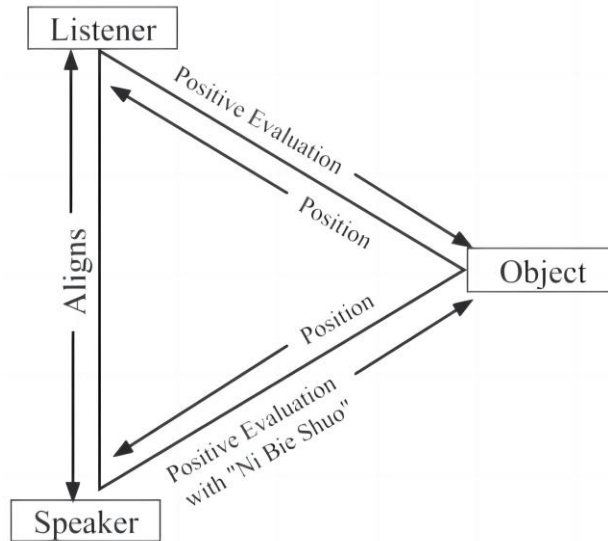


Figure 1 Caption : The consistent stance expression function

Figure 1 Alt Text: The consistent stance triangle model showing the relationship among listener, speaker and object

2.3 Opposing stance expression function

In the process of verbal interaction, both sides jointly position a certain object, and one strengthens the opposition to the other’s evaluation with “Ni Bie Shuo”. The two sides form a relationship of divergent interaction, thus constructing an opposing stance. For example:

(4) (Context: Zhang Liang’s car was hit.)

Liu Xing: Although your car was hit, your reaction is a bit exaggerated. (你这车被撞了, 反应有点夸张了吧。)

Zhang Liang: My car is hit; as a car owner, I should definitely feel heartbroken! (撞了人家, 我作为车主肯定应该心疼了呀!)

Liu Xing: If I was you, I would be distressed. I’m sure no one wants that. I just think you should handle things rationally and let him compensate. When he knelt down, at least you should pull him up and talk to him. Do you think so? (是我也心疼, 肯定了, 没人想那样, 我只是觉得你应该理性处理事情, 该让他赔还是要赔, 但人家跪下了, 至少拉起来跟人家说说, 你觉得呢?)

Zhang Liang: **Ni Bie Shuo**, if your car was hit, you might beat him, not to mention to pull him up! (你别说, 你的撞了, 你打他的心都有, 别说拉起他来了!) (Natural conversation corpus)

Liu Xing first expressed his understanding of Zhang Liang’s reaction and attitude towards the person who hit his car, and then said that Zhang Liang’s behavior was inappropriate and gave the suggestion of “at least pulling up and talking to him”. After hearing Liu Xing’s suggestion, Zhang Liang realized that Liu Xing did not approve of his behavior, so he used “Ni Bie Shuo” to draw forth his rebuttal---“If your car was hit, you might beat him, not to mention to pull him up!”, expressing strong opposition to Liu Xing’s viewpoint. “Ni Bie Shuo” further strengthened Zhang Liang’s negative tone, and both sides reached an opposing stance. We illustrate the opposing stance expression function of “Ni Bie Shuo” as follows:

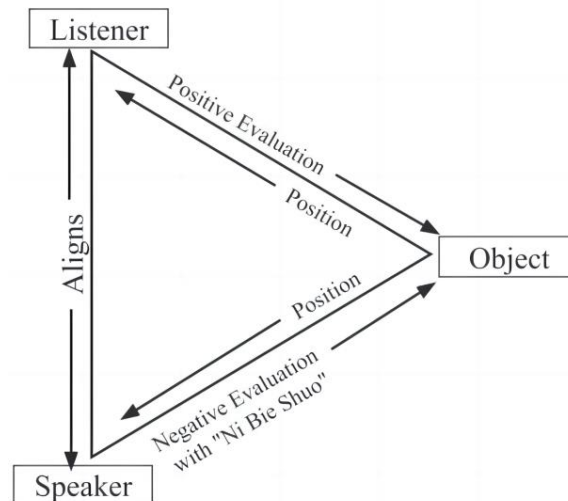


Figure 2 Caption: The opposing stance expression function

Figure 2 Alt Text: The opposing stance triangle model showing the relationship among listener, speaker and object

3. The Stance Types of “Ni Bie Shuo” and Its Variants

“Ni Bie Shuo” can express consistent and opposing stance, which can be further subdivided based on the different interactive situations and verbal communication behaviors.

3.1 Types of consistent stance

3.1.1 Affirmation stance

In the affirmation stance, one side first expresses his views on the object and expects recognition from the other side. The other side responds with “Ni Bie Shuo” to draw forth a positive viewpoint to show his agreement; thus, they construct a affirmation stance. For example:

(5) (Context: Hu Tiancheng showed Secretary Li Xiangyi around.)

Hu Tiancheng: Secretary, thanks for coming. There’s nothing to entertain. The air here is good, only some fresh air to entertain you. (书记大驾光临, 没什么好招待的, 这里空气好哇, 只有招待你些新鲜空气了。)

Li Xiangyi: Nice, nice! **Ni Bie Shuo**, this place is really good. (不错, 不错, 你别说, 这里还真不错呢。)

Hu Tiancheng: “While picking asters neath the Eastern fence, my gaze upon the Southern mountain rests”. It’s really admirable. (采菊东篱下, 悠然见南山, 真叫人羡慕啊。)(Li Peifu, *The Gate of Sheep*)

In this example, Hu Tiancheng began the conversation and gave a positive evaluation of “the air”. Li Xiangyi used the word “good” twice to express his agreement with the former. Before coming, Li Xiangyi may not have had any special impression of this place, but after experiencing the fresh air by himself, he not only sincerely agreed with Hu Tiancheng’s view that the air here was good but also strengthened the consistent stance with “Ni Bie Shuo”. Therefore, they built an affirmation stance.

3.1.2 Confirmation stance

In the confirmation stance, one side makes reasonable guesses about the object and expects confirmation from the other. The other side responds with “Ni Bie Shuo” to draw forth his affirmation of the speculation, thus constructing a confirmation stance. For example:

(6) (Context: They are discussing night duty.)

A: Are you still here at night? Aren’t you afraid? (你晚上还在?你不怕吗?)

B: I stay there for a long time, **Ni Bie Shuo**, It’s really a bit scary. (长期驻守, 你别说, 还真有点怕。)

A: I really admire you! You can stay for a long time. (我太佩服你了, 竟然能长期驻守。)(BCC Corpus)

In Example (6), A asked B, “Aren’t you afraid?” The anticipation is that B was afraid. Before the conversation, B did not consider whether he would be afraid or not. It was only after A raising a speculative question that B realized he was actually “a bit afraid”, so B responded with “Ni Bie Shuo”, which was both an affirmation of A’s guess and an affirmation of his own viewpoint.

3.1.3 Acceptation stance

In the acceptance stance, One side makes a request or suggestion and then expects the other side to accept it. The other shows acceptance and recognition and interacts with “Ni Bie Shuo”, such as:

(7) (Context: They are discussing Mrs Niu’s Speech.)

Li Dongbao: Hello, sir! Hello, teacher! Hello to all families! Hello, everyone!---- although we spoke these words, it didn’t last a minute. (大人好! 老师好! 全家好! 谁都好----这也混不过一分钟呵。)

Ge Ling: Ah! Where are so many words we use in daily life? When we talk about the speech, you couldn’t have any good idea. One minute beats a hero. (真是的。平时那么多词哪去了, 说正经的全不行了, 一分钟难倒英雄汉。)

Liu Shuyou: Actually, It’s very simple. You can slow down the broadcast speed appropriately and make it at the obituary notice speed, and add some modal particles such as “hum”, “oh”, “ah”. In this way, a speech for two minutes is no problem. (其实很简单, 播音速度可以适当放慢, 按广告那个速度, 再加点哼呀呀哟的, 两分钟没问题。)

Ge ling: **Ni Hai Zhen Bie Shuo**, what Lao Liu said is a very nice idea. (你别说, 老刘说的还真不失为一条妙计。)(Wang Shuo, *Ignorance*)

In Example (7), they were discussing what content could make up a one minute speech. Ge Ling believed that the methods discussed were not acceptable, and the words “Ah” and “beats a hero” showed her dissatisfaction and disappointment. In the third turn, Liu Shuyou gave appropriate suggestions. Ge Ling suddenly heard a pretty good suggestion, so she expressed surprise and satisfaction with “Ni Hai Zhen Bie Shuo”, which drew forth praise and affirmation for Lao Liu’s suggestion; thus, they reached an acceptance stance. The combination of “Ni Bie Shuo” and “hai zhen” highlights Ge Ling’s surprise.

3.1.4 Approval stance

The stances of both sides are different at the beginning of the conversation, but after the communication, one’s attitude towards the object changes and expresses the recognition of the other’s viewpoint, and marks the change with “Ni Bie Shuo”. They construct an approval stance. For example:

(8) (Context: “I” and my friend are going shopping.)

I: This dress looks nice, it fits you very well. (这条裙子还不错, 挺适合你。)

Friend: Is it suitable? I never wear such short skirts, which makes my legs look thick. (哪里适合了, 我从来都不穿短裙, 显得腿粗。)

I: Just have a try. (你试试看嘛?)

Friend: Wow! Look, **Ni Zhen Bie Shuo**, this dress brings my figure to advantage. (你看, 哎, 你还真别说, 这裙子显得我身材贼好。)

I: My advice is right. (听我的没错吧。)(BCC Corpus)

In example (8), “I” and my friend held different views on “this dress” at first. In the third turn, “I” proposed a suggestion for my friend to try it on. She followed my suggestion and changed her view after trying. She drew forth the viewpoint that this dress brought her figure to advantage with “Ni Zhen Bie Shuo”, which was opposite to the speaker’s expectation that short skirts made her legs look thick, indicating an unexpected agreement with “me”. “Wow” and “Hai Zhen” even highlighted the surprise of “friend”.

3.2 Types of expression of opposing positions

3.2.1 Rebuttal stance

In the rebuttal stance, one side states a fact or makes some comments on an object. The other side uses “Ni Bie Shuo” to raise a different opinion and refute the former’s viewpoint, such as:

(9) (Context: An injured soldier always smiles when he feels boring.)

Soldier 1: ... Ah! Since we live in the world, why not smile when you’re happy? Although I will die one day, I won’t cry either... (

.....^{ài rénshēng zài shì gāoxìng le gàn ma bù xiào kě zhēn sǐ le wǒ yě bù kū}
哎，人生在世，高兴了干嘛不笑？可真死了，我也不哭.....)

Soldier 2: Can you cry if you die? Of course, no one can cry. (^{sǐ le nǐ hái néng kū ma dāng rán shuí yě bù kū}
 死了你还能哭嘛？当然谁也不哭。)

Soldier 1: **Ni Bie Shuo**, there are plenty of crying ghosts. If I were to die and became a ghost, I wouldn’t cry. (^{nǐ bié shuō kū kū rǎngǎng}
^{tāo mìng de sǐ guǐ yǒu de shì yào shì wǒ sǐ le ya zuò guǐ yě bù hēng shēng ér}
 讨命的死鬼有的是。要是我死了呀，做鬼也不哼声儿。)

Soldier 2: Who knows, at that time. (^{shuí zhī dào nà ge shí hòu}
 谁知道，那个时候。)(Xiaomi, Mom, I Only Understood When You Grew Old)

In example (9), Soldier 1 indicated his view on life that he would not cry if he died at the beginning of the conversation. Soldier 2 questioned this and believed that no one would cry after dying. In the third turn, faced with the questioning from Soldier 2, Soldier 1 insisted on his own opinion and used “Ni Bie Shuo” to draw the other’s attention to his rebuttal view, which was if he were to die and became a ghost, he wouldn’t cry. The viewpoints of both sides were inconsistent from the beginning. With communication going further, both sides tried to make the other accept their own views, but the fact was that the conflict between them intensified. Soldier 1 realized the fact, so he used “Ni Bie Shuo” to emphasize his opposing views.

3.2.2 Refusal stance

In the refusal stance, one side proposes suggestions and requests and expects the other side to accept them. The other side uses “Ni Bie Shuo” to express his refusal view, such as:

(10) (Context: Yingying’s computer doesn’t work.)

Yingying: I don’t know what’s wrong with my computer, it doesn’t work. (^{wǒ zhè diànnǎo bù zhī zěn me de yì zhí hēi píng}
 我这电脑不知怎么的，一直黑屏。)

Xiaolei: You can restart it a few more times, it will definitely be fine. That’s how I deal with my computer. (^{nǐ zài duō chóng qǐ jǐ cì kěn}
^{dìng jiù hǎo le wǒ diànnǎo jiù shì zhè yàng}
 定就好了，我电脑就是这样。)

Yingying: **Ni Bie Shuo**, this method really doesn’t work on my computer. My computer model is Apple, which is different from yours. (^{nǐ dào yě bié shuō zhè fāng fǎ duì wǒ de diànnǎo zhēn bù guǎn yòng wǒ zhè shì píngguǒ de diànnǎo hé nǐ de bù yí yàng}
 你倒也别说，这方法对我的电脑真不管用，我这是苹果的电脑，和你的不一样。)

Xiaolei: No matter what kind of model, It will definitely work. Have it a try. (别管啥品牌的电脑，这样试试准没错。)(Natural conversation corpus)

In example (10), Yingying complained to Xiaolei about the problem with her computer, and then Xiaolei gave the suggestion of “restarting it a few more times”. What’s more, she expressed her high certainty about the suggestion by saying, “It will definitely be fine”, expecting Yingying’s acceptance. However, Yingying used “Ni Bie Shuo” to draw forth her own refusal viewpoint, indicating her rejection of Xiaolei’s suggestion, so they formed a refusal stance at last.

3.2.3 Questioning stance

In the questioning stance, one side states a fact or makes some comments on an object. The other side expresses doubts about it by using “Ni Bie Shuo” to draw forth a questioning opinion. For example:

(11) (Context: Lanlan wants to read my diary.)

Lanlan: Ah! Forget it, forget it. You are such a stingy person. What does it matter to read your diary? (^{āi suàn le suàn le nǐ zhè ge rén zhēn}
^{xiǎo qì kàn kàn rì jì yǒu yǒu shén me guān xi ne}
 小气。看看日记又有什么关系呢？)

I: Ah, **Ni Bie Shuo**, what if I read your diary? (^{āi nǐ bié shuō rú guǒ wǒ yào kàn nǐ de rì jì ne}
 哎，你别说，如果我要看你的日记呢？)

Lanlan: Hmm! Actually, if you wanted to read my diary, I wouldn’t mind. (^{hēng běn lái ma nǐ yào kàn wǒ de rì jì de huà wǒ yě wú suǒ wèi}
 哼！本来嘛，你要看我的日记的话，我也无所谓.....)

(Jing Bute, Always Keep the Head Down)

In example (11), Lanlan complained about “I” being stingy, expressing her opinion that reading other’s diary was not a big deal in a rhetorical tone. “I” first expressed my dissatisfaction with the modal particle “ah”, and then raised rhetorical questions by using “Ni Bie Shuo” to show “my” doubts about “Lanlan wanting to read my diary”. In this conversation, Lanlan tried to persuade “I” to show her “my” diary, but “I” tried to tell her that she should not read others’ diaries. Until the end of the conversation, both speakers’ intentions could not be realized, and they failed to reach consensus.

4. Construal of the Stance Expression Process of “Ni Bie Shuo” and Its Variants

“Ni Bie Shuo” is closely related to the expectations of both sides. In affirmation, confirmation, and acceptance stances, “Ni Bie Shuo” is a conforming expectation marker for both sides. In the approval stance, “Ni Bie Shuo” is a conforming expectation marker for the listener and a counter-expectation marker for the speaker. In rebuttal, refusal, and questioning stances, “Ni Bie Shuo” is a counter-expectation marker for both sides. As shown in Picture 3:

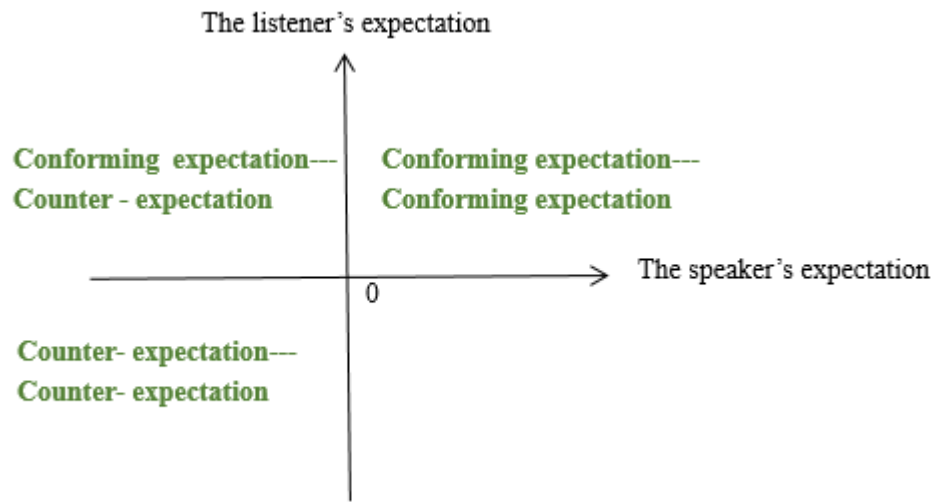


Figure 32 Caption: Expectation and The categories of “Ni Bie Shuo” stance

Figure 3 Alt Text: The Coordinate axis showing the three types of “Ni Bie Shuo” stance---“confirming expectation --- confirming expectation”, “counter- expectation --- confirming expectation,” and “counter- expectation --- counter- expectation” based on the cognitive expectation

The fourth quadrant represents “conforming expectation--- counter- expectation”, which does not exist. Because at the beginning of the conversation, the speaker has already clearly expressed his viewpoint and attempted to persuade the listener to change his opinion and accept the speaker’s viewpoint, and such is the case. The development direction and outcome of the dialogue completely meets the expectation of the speaker, so the speaker cannot use “Ni Bie Shuo” which has the unexpected meaning to highlight his view.

4.1 Construal of the “Confirming Expectation --- Confirming Expectation” Stance

“Confirming expectation - confirming expectation” is the cognitive foundation of affirmation, confirmation, and acceptance stance expression. From the speaker’s perspective, “Ni Bie Shuo” emphasizes the speaker’s agreement, confirmation with or acceptance of the listener’s viewpoint, evaluation, or suggestion. From the listener’s perspective, “Ni Bie Shuo” also indicates the realization of the listener’s own expectations. For example:

(12) (Context: A doesn’t want to work overtime.)

A: Can we get double pay for overtime work? (加班有双倍工资吗?)

B: Haha, triple salary! When you think of the high salary, doesn’t you feel fantastic? (嘿嘿, 三倍工资哦! 是不是一想到工资, 心情瞬间就好了许多?)

A: **Ni Bie Shuo**, really! My disease has been half cured! (你别说, 真的! 病都好了一半!)

² “>0” indicates “Conformation - expectation”, “<0” indicates “Counter - expectation”.

B: But you need to pay attention to your health, Don't work too hard! (那你也^{nà nǐ yě yào zhùyì shēn tǐ}要注意^{bié tài xīn kǔ le a}身体, 别太辛苦^a了啊!) (Huizhi Shuyuan, *Communication Power: A Super Chat Method for Instantly Enhancing Popularity*)

A asked B, "Can we get double salary?" B not only answered "triple salary", but also predicted that a high salary would bring a good mood to A. For A, "triple salary" completely met and exceeded his expectations. Therefore, A used "Ni Bie Shuo" to indicate a positive evaluation of B's prediction. As a result, they resolved their differences in overtime work and reached a confirmation stance.

4.2 Construal of the "Counter - Expectation --- Confirming Expectation" stance

"Counter- expectation --- confirming expectation" is the cognitive foundation of approval stance expression. From the perspective of the speaker, "Ni Bie Shuo" highlights the change in the speaker's viewpoint and the recognition of the other side's viewpoint. From the listener's perspective, "Ni Bie Shuo" also indicates that the listener's expectations have been fulfilled, such as: (13) (Context: "I" Asks "Mom" about the secret to how can balsam pears taste sweet.)

Mom: Actually, there's no secret. Because I've eaten it a few times before, so now I'm used to this taste. You can try it again. (其实^{qí shí yě méi yǒu shén me mì jué}也没有^{zhǐ shì wǒ yǐ qián chī guò jǐ cì}什么^{suǒ yǐ xiàn zài xí guàn zhè ge wèi dào le}秘诀^{nǐ zài cháng yì cháng}, 只是^a我以前^a吃过^a几次^a, 所以^a现在^a习惯^a这个^a味道^a了, 你再^a尝^a一^a尝^a。)

I: It always tastes bitter no matter how you taste it. And after eating balsam pear, Ham sausage becomes bitter. (怎么^{zěn me cháng dōu shì kǔ}尝^a都是^a苦^a的^a, 而且^a吃了^a苦瓜^a, 火腿^a肠^a都^a变^a苦^a了。)

Mom: Take a few more slices and you'll change your view. (再^{zài duō chī jǐ piàn}多吃^a几^a片^a, 你^{nǐ}就^{jiù}能^{néng}吃^{chī}出^{chū}一^{yí}点^{diǎn}儿^{ér}甜^{tián}味^{wèi}来^{lái}了。)

I: **Ni Bie Shuo**, there has been a change. I really feel a bit tasty and refreshing. (你^{nǐ}别^{bié}说^{shuō}, 还^{hái}真^{zhēn}有^{yǒu}变^{biàn}化^{huà}呢^{ne}, 我^{wǒ}真^{zhēn}感^{gǎn}觉^{jué}有^{yǒu}些^{xiē}甜^{tián}了^{le}, 还^{hái}很^{hěn}爽^{shuǎng}口^{kǒu}。)

(BCC Corpus)
"I" thought that balsam pear tasted bitter, but "Mum" predicted that "I" could taste a bit sweet after "I" ate a few more slices. As "Mum" said, the fact was that "I" tasted sweetness and felt them tasty and refreshing. For "I", "Tasting sweetness" completely deviated from my initial expectations. Therefore, "I" used "Ni Bie Shuo" to convey a positive confirmation with the prediction of "Mum", and they reached a consensus.

4.3 Construal of the "Counter - Expectation --- Counter - Expectation" Stance

"Counter- expectation --- counter- expectation" is the cognitive basis of rebuttal, refusal, and questioning stance. From the perspective of the speaker, "Ni Bie Shuo" highlights the speaker's rebuttal, refusal, and questioning of the other side's views, suggestions or comments. From the listener's perspective, "Ni Bie Shuo" also indicates that the listener's own expectations have not been met. For example:

(14) (Context: Xiaoliang thinks Weiwei cooks dinner slowly.)

Xiaoliang: Your cooking speed is too slow! You only cooked two dishes in an hour. (你^{nǐ}做^{zuò}饭^{fàn}也^{yě}太^{tài}慢^{man}了^{le}吧^{ba}, 一^{yí}个^{gè}小^{xiǎo}时^{shí}才^{cái}炒^{chǎo}了^{le}两^{liǎng}个^{gè}菜^{cài}。)

Weiwei: You don't cook, so you don't know how tiring and time-consuming it is. (你^{nǐ}不^{bù}做^{zuò}饭^{fàn}, 是^{shì}不^{bù}知^{zhī}道^{dào}炒^{chǎo}菜^{cài}有^{yǒu}多^{duō}累^{lèi}, 费^{fèi}时^{shí}又^{yòu}费^{fèi}力^{lì}。)

Xiaoliang: But you just need to stir fry. Is it so tiring? (不^{bù}就^{jiù}翻^{fān}炒^{chǎo}几^{jǐ}下^{xià}嘛^{ma}? 这^{zhè}有^{yǒu}什^{shí}么^{me}累^{lèi}的^{de}啊^a!)

Weiwei: Ah! **Ni Hai Zhen Bie Shuo**, you cook the dinner if you have the ability! You just speak sarcastically and do nothing! (啊^a哟^{yōu}, 你^{nǐ}还^{hái}真^{zhēn}别^{bié}说^{shuō}, 有^{yǒu}本^{běn}事^{shì}你^{nǐ}来^{lái}炒^{chǎo}啊^a? 就^{jiù}会^{huì}说^{shuō}风^{fēng}凉^{liáng}话^{huà}。)

Weiwei believed that cooking needed much time and effort, but Xiaoliang argued that it was not tiring. Both of them attempted to prove the correctness of their own viewpoints and persuade the other, but the conflict intensified with the communication going on, so their attempts to persuade the other were not realized. Therefore, Weiwei used "Ni Bie Shuo" to indicate a skeptical evaluation of Xiaoliang's viewpoint. What's more, the modal particle "Ah" was used to indicate her dissatisfaction. The conflicts between the two sides intensified, forming an opposing stance.

We will illustrate the stance expression process of these three types as follows:

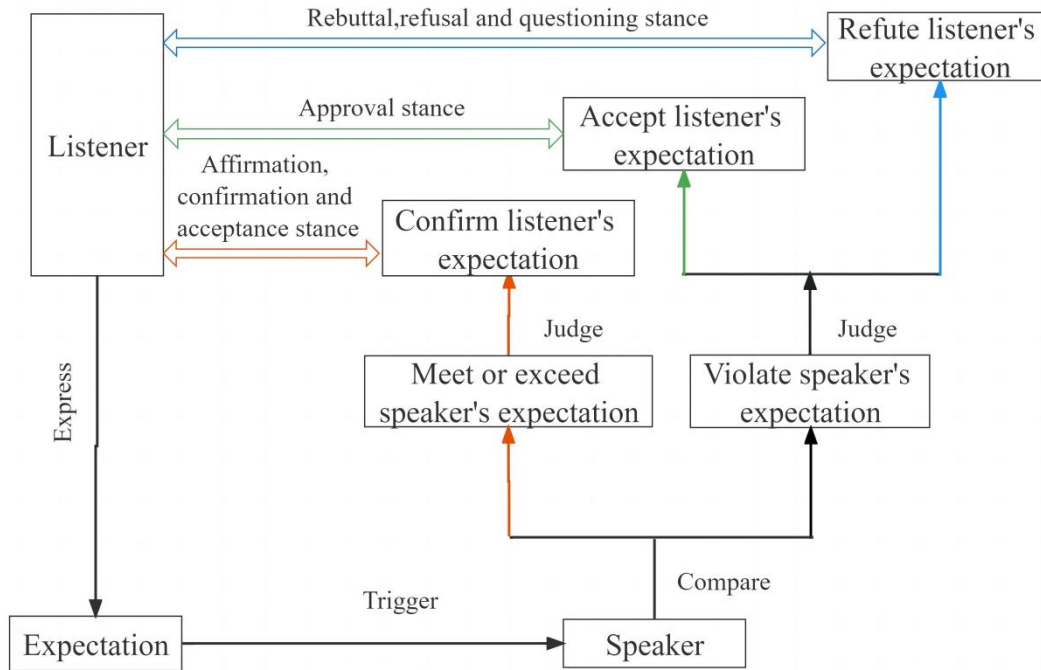


Figure 4 Caption: Construal of the stance expression process

Figure 4 Alt Text: The consistent and opposing stance expression process, including triggering, comparing and judging

5. Conclusion

This paper analyzes the stance expression of the discourse marker “Ni Bie Shuo” and its variants and draws the following conclusions: firstly, “Ni Bie Shuo” has the consistent and opposing stance expression function; Secondly, based on the different interactive situations and verbal communication behaviors, the consistent stance can be divided into affirmation, confirmation, acceptance, and approval types, while opposing stance can be divided into rebuttal, refutation, and questioning types; Thirdly, the stance expression process of “Ni Bie Shuo” is closely related to the expectations of both sides. The expression process can be divided into three categories --- “confirming expectation --- confirming expectation”, “counter- expectation --- confirming expectation,” and “counter- expectation --- counter- expectation” to construe. The above conclusions are all drawn from the perspective of both sides involved in the dialogue, stemming from their attention to the other’s words. This reflects the intersubjectivity of “Ni Bie Shuo”.

The contribution of this paper is seeing stance expression as a dynamic verbal communication process, which is a new attempt to combine “Ni Bie Shuo” with discourse stance, providing a new theoretical perspective for exploring the pragmatic function of “Ni Bie Shuo”. However, there are still some shortcomings. For example, communication interaction involves social distance, emotional reaction and other factors of both sides. Do these factors affect stance expression? What is the difference between “Ni Bie Shuo” and other similar discourse markers like “Bu Shi Wo Shuo”? Can we construct a discourse stance expression system for these similar discourse markers? These issues are worth further research.

Figures

Figure 1	Figure 1 Caption : The consistent stance expression function
	Figure 1 Alt Text: The consistent stance triangle model showing the relationship among listener, speaker and object
Figure 2	Figure 2 Caption: The opposing stance expression function
	Figure 2 Alt Text: The opposing stance triangle model showing the relationship among listener, speaker and object
Figure 3	Figure 3 Caption: Expectation and The categories of "Ni Bie Shuo" stance
	Figure 3 Alt Text: The Coordinate axis showing the three types of "Ni Bie Shuo" stance--- "confirming expectation --- confirming expectation", "counter- expectation --- confirming expectation" and "counter- expectation --- counter- expectation" based on the cognitive expectation
Figure 4	Figure 4 Caption: Construal of the stance expression process
	Figure 4 Alt Text: The consistent and opposing stance expression process, including triggering, comparing and judging

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