FOCAL POINT IN CONVERSATION:
DISCOURSE-PRAGMATIC FUNCTIONS OF DISTAL
DEMONSTRATIVE HE IN TAIWANESE SOUTHERN MIN*

Miao-Hsia Chang
Huai-Tung Hsu
National Taiwan Normal University

ABSTRACT
This study examines the discourse-pragmatic functions of the distal demonstrative HE ‘that’ and its functional equivalents in Taiwanese Southern Min (TSM) conversation. The analysis shows that an overwhelming proportion of HE tokens are used to denote a referent that is assumed by the speaker to be identifiable based on community knowledge, shared background knowledge, inference, or evoked information. Such uses are argued to emerge from the negotiation of the meaning of the referent via the interactional contexts (cf. Tao 1999; Huang 2013). They signify the speaker’s belief toward the hearer regarding the identifiability of the referent in the process of information exchanging and negotiating. The marking of a referent with HE brings the NP at issue to an activated state which then serves as the focal point of interest in the succeeding exchange of talk. Meanwhile, the speaker might convey an emotional tone or viewpoint distancing from the referent. The major uses of HE mark NPs that are otherwise conceptually distant from the interlocutors’ consciousness.

Key words: distal demonstrative, Taiwanese Southern Min, conversation, focal point

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1. MOTIVATION AND GOALS

Distal demonstratives are a type of deictic expressions associated with various linguistic forms for a speaker to refer to objects, persons, entities, or events that are distant from a speaker in the spatial-temporal context, in a text, or in a co-text (Lyons 1977:668-9). Traditional approaches to distal demonstratives emphasize their semantic meanings and syntactic properties, and the studies are restricted to interpretations of their deictic and anaphoric functions (e.g., Bühler 1934; Quirk et al. 1972). More recent studies investigate distal demonstratives on the discourse level and explore their pragmatic and interactional functions (e.g., Levinson 1983; Cheshire 1996; Himmelmann 1996; Diessel 1999). Among these studies, Cheshire (1996) adopts a corpus-based approach and shows that *that* involves speaker-addressee cooperation in managing “the cognitive and social constraints on their joint creation of discourse...where a shared perspective is assumed to exist” (p.369). Demonstratives in Chinese have also been extensively investigated both using the traditional approach (e.g., Chao 1968; Cheng 1989), and from a pragmatic perspective (e.g., Biq 1990, 2007; Huang 1999, Tao 1999). Drawing on data from spontaneous discourse, Huang (1999) argues that the Mandarin distal demonstrative *na*(ge) is emerging as a definite article in discourse. Tao (1999) compares the indexical ground involved in the use of proximal and distal demonstratives in Mandarin conversation. In the light of Huang’s (1999) finding, Biq (2007) examines the *na* -phrases (*nazhong* and *zai nabian*) and notes that they express meanings of vagueness and indicates the speaker’s stance. Lee (1999), in her study of demonstratives *TSE* (proximal) ‘this’ and *HE* (distal) ‘that’ in Taiwanese Southern Min (hereafter TSM) conversation also finds that these demonstratives have both referential and non-referential uses, with *TSE* used for speaker involvement and *HE* as an attention-getter to indicate addressee involvement. While these studies point out the importance of distal demonstratives in natural conversation, most of them focus on English or Mandarin discourse. Only Lee discusses the functions of the distal demonstrative *HE* in TSM natural conversation. Compared to Lee’s findings, our observation shows that apart from functioning as an attention getter, *HE* is employed to manage referent information under a
certain conversational topic and to express the speakers’ stance and attitude. In this paper, we attempt to provide a unitary account for how speakers employ the distal demonstrative HE to highlight a given entity or idea that is otherwise not in speakers’ current focus of attention or something that is in their more remote memory. In particular, we will show that the use of a distal demonstrative portrays the subjective and affective aspects of speaker meaning with regard to the current topic of talk. We will also compare utterances with and without HE to see how HE contributes to the evaluative dimension of meaning.

The organization of this study is as follows. Section 2 provides an overview of the distal demonstrative system in TSM. Section 3 reviews previous research on distal demonstratives in terms of their canonical and non-canonical uses. In Section 4, we address the issue of ambiguity and vagueness in the classification of HE in TSM. Section 5 describes the data used for the study. Section 6 discusses the functions of distal demonstrative HE in our TSM conversation corpus. Section 7 is a conclusion.

2. DISTAL DEMONSTRATIVE SYSTEM IN TSM

There are five different types of distal demonstratives in TSM utilized to refer to entities or ideas that are situationally or textually distant from the speakers: *hia*/*hiah-ni ‘so; that’ (*遙*), *hia* ‘there’ (*遙*), *hia*-ê ‘those’ (*遙個*), *hit* ‘that’ (*彼*), and *he* ‘that; those’ (*彼*), in contrast to the proximal counterparts *tsia* ‘here’ (*遮*), *tsiah/tsiah-ni ‘so’ (*遮爾*), *tsia* ‘these’ (*遮*), *tsia*-ê ‘these’ (*遮個*), *tsi* ‘this’, and *tse* ‘this’. Among them, *hiah/hiah-ni ‘so, that* is a bound adverb used to modify a degree adjective (Cheng 1989:10). *Hia* ‘there’ is a nominal deixis used for spatial reference. *Hia* combined with the general classifier ê forms a

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1 In this paper, the capitalized form HE ‘that’ is used throughout to refer to the distal demonstrative and its variants in TSM. The functional and syntactic equivalents of variants of HE, i.e., *hit*/*hit* (*hit*), will be included in the discussion, e.g., *我是講你有看 e 你共我買,置* (*hit*). If you see the American ginsen, please buy some for me*, where *hit* can be replaced by *he* or *hit* *lo* *hit* *le* without changing the meaning (See Section 2 for a detailed discussion of distal demonstrative system in TSM).
plural deixis, *hia-ê ‘those*. Examples of *hiâh/hiâh-ni, hia, hia-ê* are given in (1a-c).\(^2\)

Also a bound morpheme, *hit ‘that’* occurs pre-nominally as a determinant for distal reference. Several characteristics can be observed of the use of *hit*. First, the nouns that can follow *hit* form a closed set, including numerals, the general classifier *ê* (个), specific classifiers, such as *tè ‘piece’* (塊) and *hô ‘sort’* (號) (*hô* usually pronounced as *lô*, Li 1998: 355), *pûn* (本), *khuân ‘type’* (款), and units of time such as *jit/kang ‘day’* (日/工) and *ni ‘year’* (年), to denote the quality or type of an NP or a past or future period of time. Second, the non-temporal *hit-N phrase* can be further followed by an NP, e.g., *hit king tshû ‘that house’* 彼間厝. Third, a non-referential generic noun such as *lâng ‘person’* (人) and *ting ‘lamp’* (燈) cannot directly follow *hit*. Fourth, while most of the *hit-N compounds* can stand alone without a succeeding noun, *hit hô (hit lô)* is a bound form and requires a modified noun for its meaning to be complete (cf. Cheng 1989: 10, 144-145; Yang 1991; Chen 1990; Li 1998; Douglas 1873: 134). (1d-h) illustrate the different uses of *hit*:

\(^2\) The tonal marks used in this study follow those adopted by the Ministry of Education’s dictionaries (TSM: *Dictionary of Frequently-Used Taiwan Minnan*; Mandarin: MOE’S online transfer system, http://crptransfer.moe.gov.tw/). There are seven different tones in TSM: 1\(^{st}\) tone (high level)—*he ‘that’*, 2\(^{nd}\) tone (high fall)—*bé ‘to buy’*, 3\(^{rd}\) tone (low fall)—*tè ‘piece’*, 4\(^{th}\) tone (low entering tone, with a stop sound at the end of the morpheme)—*hit ‘that’*, 5\(^{th}\) tone (rising)—*ê* (classifier); 7\(^{th}\) tone (mid level)—*tsê ‘to sit’*, 8\(^{th}\) tone (high entering tone)—*tsiâh ‘eat’*. The 6\(^{th}\) tone is merged with the 2\(^{nd}\) tone. There are four tones in Mandarin: 1\(^{st}\) tone (high level)—*mâ ‘mother’*, 2\(^{nd}\) tone (rising)—*má ‘hemp’*, 3\(^{rd}\) tone: (fall rise)—*mâ ‘horse’*, 4\(^{th}\) tone (high fall): *má ‘scold’, and the neutral tone—*ma* (particle). The neutral tones in TSM and Mandarin are not indicated with any tonal marks. They are used in some functional words. The tones indicated in the examples cited here refer to the citation tone of each morpheme.
(1) a. Degree adverb: *hia̍h-ni tīg ‘that/so long’*
   b. Spatial deixis: hia ‘there’
   c. Plural deixis: hia-ê ‘those people’
   d. General classifier: hit ‘that (person)’
   e. Specific classifier: hit pūn (tsheh) ‘that (book)’
   f. Temporal unit: hit tsūn ‘that time’
   g. Numerals: hit nn̄g lâng ‘those two people’
   h. hit hō lâng (hit lō lâng) ‘that person’

The distal demonstrative HE can be used pronominally or pre-nominally. Phonologically, HE seems to be a fused form of hit and ê with the reduction of the final stop in hit and the merging of the vowel i and ê. Functionally, it is similar to hit-ê when used pronominally or pre-nominally (See Section 6.1 for details). The pronominal HE refers to a conceptually distant entity, event, concept, situation, or reason, and it can be a subject, an object, or a complement in the sentence, e.g., *He mī sī lî ê ‘That is not yours’* (Cheng 1989; Yang 1991; Chen 1990). The pre-nominal HE also marks an NP that is conceptually distant from the speaker (and from the addressee), e.g., *He lângkè bēh lâi ā ‘That guest is coming’*. It slightly differs from the determiner-classifier sequence hit-ê in that hit-ê, when preceding lângkè, refers to a specific guest whereas HE may refer to both a specific guest or a guest that can only be vaguely identified (See Section 6.1 for details). Since the phonological change requires an in-depth

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*Abbreviations:
1S, first person singular; 1P, first person plural; 2S, second person singular; 2P, second person plural; 3S, third person singular; 3P, third person plural; AC, associative morpheme; ASP, aspect marker; CL, classifier; COM, complementizer; COP, copula; CRS, currently relevant state; EX, exclamation; KA: the morpheme ka; NEG, negative morpheme; NOM, nominalizer; PAR, utterance-initial particle; PN, proper name; PRG, progressive; RT, reactive token; TSM: Taiwanese Southern Min; UFP, utterance final particle.*

4 We thank one of the reviewers for pointing this out.
investigation of the historical development of the morphemes in question (Yang 1991:218), we will not delve into this issue here.

One important characteristic of hit-ê (sometimes pronounced as hit lê) and hit hō (usually pronounced as hit-lō, hit-lō hereafter) is their pause-marking or filler function. However, most previous studies in TSM have focused on introspective data and have largely ignored such an interactional function. Examination of our TSM conversation corpus shows that hit-ê and hit-lō are frequently used to hold the modified NP in suspension when the speaker is introducing a referent into the discourse while encountering difficulty in finding an appropriate expression for the referent. The excerpts of (2) and (3) illustrate the use of hit-ê and hit-lō as a filler to bridge the interactional gap. Note that hit-ê and hit-lō are usually interchangeable with HE in the disfluent segments in (2) and (3) (see also Douglas 1873: 121), all of which occur pre-nominally before an exact expression is available to the speaker. As for hiâ-hiâ-ni ‘so; that’ (遜(爾)), hia ‘there’ (遜), hit ‘that’ before non-ê classifier (e.g., hit-khuán ‘that kind’ (彼款)), and hia-ê ‘those’ (遜個), according to their uses in the database, they function respectively as a degree modifier, as a place adverb, as a bound morpheme before a classifier, and to refer to a specific plural entity. Due to the scope of this paper, these specific demonstratives, as well as the proximal demonstratives, will be excluded from our analysis.

(2) 彼 e 彼 e 彼 e 色 會 去 透 著 就 著 啦.
     hitê hitê hitê siak ê khi tōo tiōh tō tiōh la
     that that that color will go taint reach then right UFP
     ‘Anyway, (it will be) stained by the color.’

5 Because of the flapping of the final stop /t/ of hit in hit-ê, it is difficult to distinguish hit-e and hit-le in actual pronunciation. Therefore, hit-le and hit-e are treated as the same use. The form hit-e will be used throughout the discussion except in the examples cited and when the variant with the lexical tone ê is referred to. The exact distinction between the two variants requires a prosodic and acoustic analysis, which is beyond the scope of the current paper.
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(3) A: 買一百塊個彼 lo,
    bé tsiptah khou ê hito
    buy one.hundred CL CL that

A: 彼啥?
    he sănn
    that what

B: 海瓜子.
    háikuetsi
    short-necked clam

A: I bought the, what do you call it, er, for 100 dollars.
B: Short-necked clams.

A further point emerging from the above analysis concerns the usage type attributed to a given demonstrative. That is, hit-e and hit-lo display the speaker’s uncertainty (cf. Tao 1999:76 on na) about the identifiability of the referent, which is characteristic of a recognitional demonstrative, a demonstrative that involves a referent based on remotely shared knowledge (cf. Section 6.4). The uncertainty meaning also gives rise to the problem of distinguishing a pause-marking demonstrative and a recognitional one. We will turn to this issue in Section 4.

3. PREVIOUS STUDIES

Studies on the functional types of distal demonstratives have classified these expressions with regard to the type of entity or event referred to by the demonstratives. Based on the typicality of the referring functions, they can be distinguished into two major categories: the canonical and the non-canonical uses. The canonical uses include the situational and the anaphoric uses which are typical of deixis. Demonstratives in the non-canonical group are interactionally motivated, which include the discourse deictic, recognitional, connective and filler uses. The discourse deictic use relies on an earlier co-text for identification of the reference; the recognitional use involves knowledge shared by members of the same community, and the connective and filler
uses are related to connection of preceding and succeeding discourse. The discussion below focuses on studies in Mandarin and TSM.

3.1 Canonical Uses

The most canonical function of a distal demonstrative is the situational use, also called the gestural use, which refers to the use of deictic expressions to index an entity that is distant from a speaker in the immediate situational context. A moment by moment monitoring of some physical aspects is necessary for the interpretation of the expression (e.g., Lyons 1977; Quirk et al. 1972; Chao 1968; Teng 1981; Huang 1999; Tao 1999; Lee 1999). In (4), for example, *na*, in Mandarin, can be used by a speaker to refer to an entity which is in the here-and-now situation but which is far from the speaker. As for (5), the TSM *HE* is used by the speaker to refer to a vegetable that the speaker sees in the kitchen but that is distant from her:

(4) 那 是 誰 的 大 靈? (Mandarin) (Chao 1968:650)

\[ nà \text{ shì héide dà.chǎng } \]

*that COP whose big.overcoat*

‘Whose overcoat is that?’

(5) 您 彼 愛 間 炒 hio? (TSM) (Lee 1999:47)*

\[ lín hé ài koh tsháh hiò \]

2P *that have.to have.to stir.fry UFP*

‘You want to fry that (fish), don’t you?’

Additionally, the referents denoted can be ambiguous between here-and-now and past situations:

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* Lee (1999) uses slightly different Chinese characters and Romanized characters to transcribe her TSM data. In the examples cited from Lee, modifications are made to be consistent with the Chinese characters and Romanization used in this paper.
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(6) He sat in 那里 (adapted from Tao 1999:77)

\begin{align*}
\text{tā} & \quad \text{zuò} \quad \text{zài} \quad \text{nàlǐ} \\
3S & \quad \text{sit} \quad \text{at} \quad \text{there} \\
\text{‘He sat there.’}
\end{align*}

In (6), the place denoted by nàlǐ can refer to a here-and-now location in the speech context. However, nàlǐ can also refer to a situation in a past event reported by the speaker.

Another canonical use of the distal demonstrative is the anaphoric/endophoric use, sometimes referred to as the tracking use (Himmelmann 1996; Tao 1999). In Mandarin, while the proximal demonstrative zhè(i) can be either anaphoric or cataphoric, the distal demonstrative can only be used anaphorically (Teng 1981; Huang 1999). TSM also has a similar constraint. However, a cataphoric reference in TSM is denoted by the proximal deixis, anne, instead of the proximal demonstrative tsit-ê (cf. Cheng 1989:266). In cataphoric cases in Mandarin and TSM, replacing zhè(i) and anne respectively with na and HE would yield ungrammatical sentences. Example (7a)-(7d) illustrate the anaphoric and cataphoric uses:

(7)

a. Anaphoric (Distal/Proximal demonstrative in Mandarin) (zhè added here) (Liu et al. 1996:44)

\begin{align*}
\text{“不要再跟他来往”} & \quad \text{lanlan听了立刻回答说：} \\
\text{bùyào} & \quad \text{zài} \quad \text{gēn} \quad \text{tā} \quad \text{lái} \quad \text{wǎng} \\
\text{lanlan} & \quad \text{tīng} \quad \text{lǐkè} \quad \text{huídá} \quad \text{shuō} \\
\text{“那/这办不到!”} & \\
\text{nà/zhè} & \quad \text{bàn} \quad \text{bù} \quad \text{dào} \\
\text{that} & \quad \text{do} \quad \text{NEG} \quad \text{reach} \\
\text{“Do not date him anymore.”} & \quad \text{After hearing this, lanlan immediately responded, “That’s impossible!”}
\end{align*}

b. Anaphoric (TSM Distal/Proximal demonstrative, with HE added here.) (Cheng 1989:264)

\begin{align*}
\text{先栽苗才沃水，} & \quad \text{tsi/hè} \quad \text{也} \quad \text{会使} \\
\text{sian} & \quad \text{tsai} \quad \text{biâu} \quad \text{tsiah} \quad \text{aktsui} \quad \text{tse/he} \quad \text{ā} \quad \text{ēsái} \\
\text{first plant seedling then water this/that also work} \\
\text{‘Plant the seedling before you water it. This/that is workable, too.’}
\end{align*}
c. Cataphoric (Proximal in Mandarin) (Liu et al. 1996:46)

咱們就這樣著吧, 先到小王家集合, 

*zánmen jiù zhème/xǐmèi/name zhe ba xǐn dào xiǎowáng jiā jìhé 1P then this.way ASP UFP first go PN house gather*

然後一起出發。

*ránhòu yīqǐ chūfā then together set.out*

‘How about this: let’s gather at Wang’s house and then set off together.’

d. Cataphoric (Anne in TSM) (Example constructed by the authors)

按呢/*按 啦, 咱先來王仔您兜集合, 才鬥陣出發。

*anne/he là lán xian lái ōngē in tou tsiáphíaitsiah táoúfíntshuthuat this.way UFP 1P first come PN 3P house gather then together set.off*

‘How about this: let’s gather at Wang’s house first and set off together.’

As shown in (7a-b), the proximal demonstratives refer to the proposition stated in the previous sentence, i.e., “not dating him” and “planting the seedling before watering it”, respectively. In each case, the proximal and distal demonstratives can be replaced by each other while still referring to a previous proposition. In (7c-d), however, only a proximal demonstrative is legitimate, referring to the proposition “gathering at Wang’s house first before setting off”.

Apart from performing a typical referential function, *HE* also coordinates the speaker’s and the addressee’s attention to the conversation topic and their personal orientation. In other words, *HE* is used to “involve” the addressee in the conversation. This is different from the proximal demonstrative which is mainly used for “speaker involvement” (Lee 1999:93).

### 3.2 Non-canonical Uses

The non-canonical uses include the recognitional, the discourse deictic, connective, and the filler uses; the connective and the filler demonstratives do not designate any entity or idea in the discourse but they display discourse coherent functions. As noted in Section 3, non-canonical demonstratives differ from the canonical group in that their functions are interactionally motivated and rely on shared
knowledge and assumption for referent identification. In addition, one needs to examine the sequential role of a demonstrative for a fuller understanding of its meaning.

**The Recognitional Use**

A recognitional demonstrative refers to something that is identifiable through “specific, ‘personalized’ knowledge that is assumed to be shared by the communicating parties due to a common interactional history of supposedly shared experiences” (Himmelmann 1996:233, see also Gundel et al. 1993; Chen 1990). Tao (1999:76) further notes that such “referents are introduced with a demonstrative to show some degrees of uncertainty”. In other words, the intended referent is believed by the speaker to be stored in the hearer’s memory but may be inactivated information to the hearer (Chafe 1987; 1994). Due to the diversity of experience/knowledge that is required for the identification of the referent, the recognitional use is used in a wider variety of contexts and can be further divided into several subgroups. Huang (1999), for example, distinguishes three categories of na “that” in Mandarin: the “unavailable” use, the “identifying” use, and the “referent-introducing” use. The “unavailable use” establishes a referent which would otherwise be “unavailable” to the addressee if without an accompanying relative clause or noun complement (Huang 1999:81, see also Cheng 1989:144, and Lee 1999:72, where such a referent is termed “non-canonical” and “new and identifiable”). The “identifying use” tracks a referent whose identifiability relies on “mutual knowledge based on community membership” (Huang 1999:84). The “referent-introducing” use introduces “a familiar but new object, usually of topic significance into the discourse”, through nage. In Teng’s term (1981:12), such a reference is a “virtual” one. Although Huang only notes that the “identifying” use is equal to Himmelmann’s (1996) recognitional use, according to the definition above, the other two functions in Huang can actually be subsumed under the “recognitional” type. Examples of these various uses are given below:
(8) a. new and identifiable (TSM) (Lee 1999:72)

'Ah, kōng kēi ka khan he siān mah thng PAR COM go KA do that what soup, ah, ànné ūkāu hōtsiāh e PAR how very delicious AC

'Then I did what soup? That soup really tasted very good.'

b. Unavailable use (Mandarin) (Huang 1999:81)

'hǎoxiàng niē zhe bīzi nàzhǒng shēngyīn seem pinch nose that kind sound

'It seems like the sounds you make when you pinch your nose.'

c. Noun complement modifier (Mandarin) (Cheng 1989:144)

'yīnshūchāng nà wèi tóng shì hái méi lái printing.firm that CL colleague still NEG come

'The colleague at the printing firm has not come yet.'

d. Identifying use (Mandarin) (Huang 1999:84)

'nàge lǐng bān that boss

'the head (of the troupe)'}

e. Referent-introducing use (Mandarin) (Huang 1999:82)

'xiàng jiāng dào nàge xītōu nàge jīngyíng hǎole like speak.of that PN that management ok

'Take, for example, the management of Xitou Forest.'

According to Lee (1999:73), the speaker in (8a) attempts to "keep the addressee’s attention" to the soup under discussion. However, it can also be seen that HE in such utterances displays the speaker’s intention to manage the information in the preceding and ongoing discourse. This will be the focus of discussion of the current study. As for (8b), na depicts a type of sound similar to that produced by a phonograph. Since it is unavailable to the addressee, a relative clause serves as the modifier.
for the hearer to identify the quality of sound expressed by the speaker. Comparatively, though modified by a noun complement, the referent in (8c) is more accessible to the addressee based on shared understanding about the printing house. A different kind of knowledge is involved for the identification of the referent in (8d), i.e., the community-shared knowledge, that a touring troupe always has a leader. As for (8e), the management of the Xitou Forest Recreational Area, a famous tourist attraction known to all Taiwanese, is introduced to the conversation via “evoked frames” (Hunag 1999:84; Prince 1981) shared among the speech participants. In all these examples, the familiarity is constructed because the referent was discussed before or because the interlocutors knew it from common knowledge, a previous encounter(s), or personal experience.

Given the three types of recognitional uses exemplified in (8b, d, e) because of the types of referring expressions they involve, Huang (1999) argues that na(ge) is evolving into a definite article. However, this claim does not seem to capture the interactional function intended by the speaker because a definite article does not give an NP a focal value. We will return to this issue in Section 6.

**The Discourse Deictic Use**

A discourse deictic use is also called a textual use (Tao 1999), which refers to a clause, a proposition (Webber 1991; Hemmelmann 1996; Tao 1999), or an event (Tao 1999) in the surrounding discourse. The segment introduced by the demonstrative may be a single clause, a whole story, or “a vague complex of ideas” (Lee 1999:74).

(9) A: Hey, management has reconsidered its position. They’ve promoted Fred to second vice president.
B: (a) That’s false.
(b) That’s a lie. (Diessel 1999:146)

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7 Lee (1999:74) does not give a specific term to this function in TSM but classifies it as a “non-canonical” demonstrative.
The use of *that* in (9) refers to the proposition conveyed by the second sentence in A’s talk. As for (10), quoting Cheshire’s account on English *that* (1996:380), Lee (1999:74) argues that *HE* in (10) is used “to communicate a common understanding and a shared perspective on the topic of conversation”. In other words, *HE* does not refer to a specific entity but the speaker wishes to involve the addressee in the discussion about language learning.

One noteworthy point in the discourse deictic use is that the proposition denoted by the distal demonstrative can be too vague for one to pick out the exact concept in the preceding discourse. This is in fact the context where *HE* is better interpreted as a connective or a filler, as we discuss in the following.

*The Connective Use*

As a connective, the distal demonstrative links the proposition in the preceding and the following discourse (Huang 1999; Lee 1999; Tao 1999; Biq 1990; Yang 1992). It is also believed to be an extension of the discourse deictic (Lee 1999:29). An earlier insight of this semantic link
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is provided by Hopper and Traugott (1993). In their discussion of *gunu* ‘that’ in Gunwingu, the authors treat the connective as an “extension of deictic reference from entities referred to in the non-linguistic world to anaphors and cataphors of NPs and then to anaphors and cataphors or propositions (clauses)...to achieve overt linking of clauses” (p.178). The clause linkage markers enable speakers to be clear and informative, giving direction to hearers for the interpretation of clauses. As argued by Lee (1999:103-107), a connective *HE* can signal local coherence to connect adjacent propositional units or global coherence to connect two higher units of discourse. Similar functions are also found in Mandarin (Biq 1990). The demonstrative *na* ‘that’ in (11a) connects two adjacent clauses, whereas *HE* in (11b) connects two IUs before *HE* and two that follow it:

(11) Mandarin (Biq 1990:189) (local)

a. 如果 每 個 人 都 識 心 臟, 那 感 冒 誰 治 呢?
   rúguǒ měigerén dōu dú xīnzàng nà gǎnmào shéi zhī ne
   ‘If everybody all study cardiology then cold who cure’ UFP
b. 啊 你 看 這個 面, 哎 喔 圓 圓 偕 古 雄 leh,
   ah lí khuânn tsit ê bîn áio innînm guă kôtui leh
   PAR 2S look this CL face EX round how pretty
   he ná bēhiáu kông âi 1i ê tsapoo honn
   that if NEG.know COM love 2S AC man UFP
   ‘(You see), how pretty this (your) face is. Those who don’t like you are really stupid.’

*Pause Filler*

A non-referential distal demonstrative can also be used to fill a pause when the speaker is incapable of thinking of an appropriate expression to describe the intended referent (Himmelmann 1996:234; Huang 1999:88).
Both Mandarin and TSM distal demonstratives have this expletive use. Example (12) is from our corpus.\(^8\)

\[\text{(12) Filler}\]
704 M:恁姊夫餓佮十一二點轉來才吃暗時。
lin tsēhuāu kah tsāpītjītām tīglāi tsiāh tsiāh âmsīe
2P brother.in.law starve till 11.to.12pm return then eat dinner
705 T: 他
he
706 T: 他傷離譜啦。
ī he siumn lîphōo la
3S that too outrageous UFP
704 M: Your brother-in-law (usually) starves himself to midnight before he eats his dinner.
705-706 T: That, that is such a bad habit.

The above discussion has presented a brief overview of the usage types of distal demonstratives, especially in Mandarin and TSM. Drawing on these arguments, we will provide a unitary account of the TSM distal demonstrative \textit{HE}. The study differs from previous studies in the following respects. First, the current study is among the few attempts, except Lee (1999), that explore the use of distal demonstratives in natural conversation in TSM. Second, we will show that the distal demonstrative \textit{HE} is different from a definite article (Huang 1999) in that the latter does not give the following NP a focal status. Third, although Lee (1999) claims that \textit{HE} in TSM is used for addressee involvement, she does not clearly discuss the interactional contingencies and dynamics of the use of the distal demonstrative in TSM. Nor does she provide a unitary account of the relation between \textit{HE} and its surrounding discourse. In the current study, we will show \textit{HE} acts as a linguistic resource for speakers to establish a new reference or idea which is not in the addressee’s focal consciousness. It serves to make assessment or evaluation about a newly introduced referent or idea. In particular, the absence of \textit{HE} in the same context would fail to imply

\(^8\) Lee (1999) does not have this category in her study.
such communicative effect. Before we discuss the functions of HE in our TSM corpus, it is necessary to tackle the issue of ambiguity which arises in the classification of HE and the criteria we adopt in our classification. We turn to this in Section 4.

4. CLASSIFICATION OF HE: AMBIGUITY AND VAGUENESS

We have mentioned briefly at the end of Section 2 about the vague boundary among different functional types of HE (see also Biq 2007 about the vagueness of na in Mandarin). Consider (11b) and (12) again. When we analyze one example without considering the other, it seems easy to assign a connective use and a filler use HE in (11b) and (12) respectively. However, when we examine HE in line 705 and 706 in (12) again and compare them with that in (11b), the distinction among the connective, filler, and discourse deictic category becomes blurred. On the one hand, the glottal stop in line 705 suggests that HE is used to hold the floor before the exact NP is uttered, hence a pause marker/filler. However, it can be also treated as a false start of HE in 706, which refers to the propositional idea that the brother-in-law has an unhealthy late dinner habit, hence a discourse deictic. On the other hand, we can say that HE in 705 is used to connect M’s talk and T’s succeeding utterance so as to introduce T’s comment about the bad eating habit, hence a connective. A further example is given in (13), which illustrates the dual function of the demonstratives—a pause marker and a recognitional—as well as the interchangeability of hit-lō and HE. Specifically, hit-lō and HE are pause fillers used to hold the floor before a real referent is available to the speaker, hence its pause marking function. However, they are also used to introduce the type of airplanes used in Grand Canyon air tours, which is known to the addressee (the neighbor) because the addressee shares the knowledge about helicopter service at this tourist spot. The exact referent, “the helicopter for 10 or so people served at Grand Canyon”, however, is not accessed until line 131, after a long pause. In view of such referential intent, we can say that HE in line 129 is the recognitional use because it prefaces the NP “the helicopter at Grand Canyon”. Despite such ambiguity between categories, we code
hit-lō and HE as pause fillers because of the hesitation and disfluency shown by lengthening of HE (symbol “=”) and truncation (“--“).

(13) (The speaker is talking to his neighbor about airline service. The neighbor is also familiar with the air tours at Grand Canyon.)

128 欲 = 美国 統一
    beh bikok he
    if U.S. that
129 个 = 个--
    hitlō ê he he
    that CL that that
130 根本 就 没服务 哦。
    kinpūn tō bō hōkbū o
    fundamentally then NEG service UFP
131 大峡谷 个 纲 座 个 就 没服务 e.
    tāikiapkok he tsāp guā tsē ê tō bō hōkbū e
    Grand.Canyon that 10.or.so seat NOM then NEG service NOM
128-131: As for the American, uh, uh, the helicopter for 10 or so passengers at Grand Canyon does not have service at all.

With the difficulty of providing a precise definition of a given type of distal demonstrative and since the purpose of this paper is to provide a unitary account of HE across different functional types, we will not delve into the classification issue further in this paper. Instead, in the following discussion, where a given functional type is attributed to a given HE, no claim is made about its exclusive referring function but the classification only indicates the main usage type of the token of HE (and its variants) under discussion.

5. DATA AND METHOD

The data used for analysis has a total length of four hours comprising 29 episodes of natural conversation contributed by 45 different speakers (29 females and 16 males), aged between 15-70 years old. The TSM dialects included TSM sub-dialects in northern, middle and southern
Taiwan. These conversations were recorded by the authors and two research assistants with audio cassettes (1995-1997; 2005-2007) or digital recorders (2009-2012). About 2.5 hours of the data were collected during 1995-1997, 15 minutes of them were acquired during 2005-2007, and the remaining conversations were obtained between 2009-2012. The conversations took place in the researchers’ or their friends’ homes. The topics of the talk include family life, health problems, household chores, daily routines, entertainment and business matters. All the data was transcribed into intonation units (henceforth IUs) by the authors and the research assistants using the notations proposed by Du Bois et al. (1993). Where necessary, the transcribers would consult the speech participants of a given episode for clarification of the content. The Romanization of TSM follows the system that is adopted by the ROC Ministry of Education’s Dictionary of Frequently-Used Taiwan Minnan. The total number of occurrence of HE is 1,133 tokens in the 4-hour database, i.e., each minute contains an average of 4.7 tokens of HE, showing that it is a frequently used expression in TSM conversation.

6. INTERACTIONAL FUNCTIONS OF HE AND ITS VARIANTS

This section discusses the various interactional functions of the distal demonstratives HE, hit-e and hit-lo in TSM. Section 6.1 presents the token and functional distribution in terms of the type of referential relation associated with these demonstratives. Sections 6.2-6.7 discuss each of their discourse-pragmatic functions. Section 6.7 is a summary. Note that the discussion is based on results from a data-driven analysis. Therefore, no claim is made about the exhaustiveness of the functions and tones of the demonstratives in question, especially because the tones do not exhibit consistent behaviors that conform to the tone sandhi rules in TSM (cf. Cheng and Cheng 1977). The details are presented in Section 6.1.

9 http://twblg.dict.edu.tw/holodict_new/index.html
6.1 Distribution of Distal Demonstratives in the TSM Corpus

As we have found in the conversations in our database, HE, hit-ê, and hit-lô are pronounced in various tones. The demonstrative HE always takes a high level tone, which is different from the lexical tone of the classifier ê. Hit-ê (hit-lê) has hit always taking the high entering tone and ê taking the fifth (i.e., lexical) tone (ê), the seventh (i.e., sandhi) tone ē, or the high-level tone. As for hitlô, interestingly, it only takes the lexical tone, the seventh tone. In Table 1, we present the token and function distribution of these three demonstratives with their tonal values indicated.

Table 1. Distribution of HE/Hit-e/Hit-lo in the database

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>he</th>
<th>hit-le/ hit-e</th>
<th>hit-lô</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Canonicality &amp;</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situational</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Referentiality</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>13.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anaphoric</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Can. Ref</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>14.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dis. deictic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recognitional</td>
<td>622</td>
<td>63.8</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>724</td>
<td>63.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Ref. Filler</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connective</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>975</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Several interesting facts about the use of HE, hit-ê, and hit-lô are revealed in Table 1. Regarding the token distribution, HE is the most frequent demonstrative (86.1%, 975/1133) among all. Second, and surprisingly, hit-ê (彼) ‘that one’, e.g., 彼个是 我 个 ‘That one is mine’, the prototypical demonstrative-classifier NP use where the classifier carries the lexical tone used to refer to a specific entity or concept either anaphorically or situationally, is not found in the database. Instead, whenever hit-e is used, e always carries the sandhi tone (mid-level tone) or the high level tone. Among the three demonstratives, hit-lô, where the classifier always takes the 7th, lexical tone, is used least frequently.

hit-ê and hit-lô: zero occurrence in the database.
With regard to the functional distribution, it can be seen that the recognitional use accounts for the majority of all the uses, followed by discourse deictic, anaphoric, filler, situational and connective. This result agrees with previous finding (e.g., Huang 1999, Tao 1999 and Lee 1999) that spatial distinction is not the only factor that determines the use of demonstratives. \(^\text{11}\) As for the functions of the three variants in Table 1, the filler use is mainly performed by *hit-e* and *hit-lō*. The connective use, by contrast, is only found in the use of *HE*. Overall, however, *HE* is the most frequent and general form of NP-referring distal demonstrative with the most diverse use.

In terms of the interchangeability of *HE*, *hit-e* and *hit-lō*, a detailed analysis reveals that first, a majority of the uses of *HE*, when occurring before an NP as a modifier, are interchangeable with *hit-ē* (*ē* pronounced in a sandhi tone), whereas when with the other functions, most of the uses of *HE* can be replaced by *hit-e* (*ē* pronounced in a high level tone); the pronominal *hit-e* has both morphemes taking a tonal feature close to that of a high level tone, which is neither the lexical or sandhi tone of the classifier *ē* (个). Second, all occurrences *hit-lo* can be replaced by *HE* without changing the meaning. For example, in (14a), the pronominal *hit-ē* is a free variant of *HE*; in (14b), the pronominal *HE* can be substituted by *hit-e* without changing the meaning (and vice versa); similarly, *hit-lō* has *HE* as its variant (and vice versa), as in (14c):

(14) a. 你一工俗暗 直直看 於/於-ē 角仔冊 敢著?
    lí tsit.kang.kah.âm tittit khuâm *he/hit-e* angâtsheh kám ūh 2S day.to.night constantly read *that* artoon.books dare right
    ‘Is it appropriate for you to read cartoon books like *those* all day long?’

\(^\text{11}\) The discourse deictic use can also be extended to the indication of a verbal predication, e.g., 伊就愈沒愛和人*hit lue*. ‘(The more she refrains from going out), the less she is willing (to interact with people)’, where *hitlue* implies the action of interacting with people. Since there is only a small percentage of the verbal use of *HE* (19 tokens), they are excluded from the analysis.
b. A: 您 習 个 彼/彼-e 啊。
   lin hip ê he/hit-e a
   2P shoot NOM that UFP
   ‘The (photo) that you took.’

c. 買 一 包 彼 lo/彼 八十五 塊 欲 來 泡。
   bé tsit pao hitlo/HE petsápgōo kho bēh lài pāo
   buy one pack hit-lo/HE eighty-five dollar want come soak
   ‘(I) bought an 85-dollar pack (of rice powder) to make a drink.’

A smaller percentage of the use of HE (19.1%) and hit-e (29.4%), however, are not interchangeable with each other. Analysis of the referential value of the NP referred to yields the following findings:

(i) Hit-e is not interchangeable with HE when it functions as filler. In all the other uses of hit-e, replacing hit-e with HE does not change the meaning.

(ii) Except in the following semantic or structural environments, most of the uses of HE can be replaced by hit-ê or hit-lō:
   a. before a question word, e.g., sànn (啥) ‘what’.
   b. before a general or type-referring noun, e.g., tsuâ (蛇) ‘snake’.
   c. before a proper name or a unique person, e.g., kootiūnn (姑丈) ‘uncle’
   d. as a discourse deictic, without specific reference
   e. as a connective

One general tendency is revealed by the results presented above regarding the referring type of HE. That is, the uninterchangeable cases of HE seem to concentrate on occurrences when (i) the modified NPs have either vague/unspecific reference, or (ii) when it is semantically void, i.e., the connective use. In fact, as indicated in Table 1, HE is the exclusive form for a connective function. On the other hand, hit-e and hit-lo are almost exclusively employed for the recognitional or filler function (cf. Table 1). The wider variety of functions of HE and the more limited uses of hit-e and hit-lo seem to be an important factor for the high incidence of HE and the much lower frequency of hit-e and hit-lō.
Due to the scope of this paper, we focus mainly on the functions of \textit{HE} since it is the most frequent demonstrative in the database. The discussion of \textit{hit-e} and \textit{hit-lo} will be primarily on the filler function. Their tonal variations, which cannot be easily captured by the sandhi rule of TSM, will not be further discussed but we leave this issue to future investigations.

6.2 The Situational Use

In TSM, a situational \textit{HE} can be used as a determiner or as a pronoun. It constitutes only a small part in the database (25, 2.2\%). Observe example (15).

(A and B are mother and son. A just came back from work. B is lying on the couch reading comic books he borrowed from the library.)

\begin{verbatim}
108 A: 兩 榖一工佮暗 直直看 彼 旭仔冊
   ah í tsit.kang.kah.âm tittí tânn he angâtsheh
   PAR 2S day.to.night kânhí tênh
   dare tîôh
   dare right

109 B:...(8) 哪 有\niá ù,
   where exist

110 B: (0) 彼 是=,_
   he sî=,_
   that is

111 B:... 借 幾 本 爾= 啦\n   tsioh kui pûn niâ= lah.
   borrow several CL only UFP

108 A: Is it appropriate for you to read cartoon books like \textbf{those} all day long?

109-111 B: I didn’t. I just borrowed a few (cartoon books).
\end{verbatim}

Before the conversation shown in (15), the son reported that he went to the library and borrowed some books. Seeing the son reading a
cartoon book, the mother throws a rhetorical question to remind him not to read them so often. Here the demonstrative refers exophorically to the cartoon book situated in the immediate environment. Although *HE* is omissible and the sentence remains grammatical, without *HE*, the utterance would sound like a general criticism about the son’s indulgence:

(15a) Without *HE*

啊你一工佮暗常常看尪仔冊敢著?
‘Is it appropriate for you to read cartoon books all day long?’

In contrast, by referring to the book that the son is reading with *HE*, the event is actualized and instantiated, which in turn yields a stronger critical effect of the mother’s opposition against the son’s bad habit.

6.3 The Anaphoric Use

The anaphoric use helps the hearer keep track of a participant in the preceding discourse. In TSM, the distal demonstrative *HE* also serves this function. For example,

(16) (Three neighbors are talking about how to cook fish head soup.)

16 C:魚頭 煮 湯,
li thâu tsú thng
fishhead cook soup

17 C:你就彼豆腐共買一下就好啊,
li tō he tâuhú ka bé tsitē tō hōo a.
you then that tofu KA buy once then good UFP

18 A:啊薑啊=._
ah kiunn a
PAR ginger UFP

19 B:你若欲煮miso湯是母免._
li nā bēh tsú misoo thng sī m̄ biān.
you if want cook miso soup is NEG NEG
The topic of (16) is how to cook soup with fish head and what type of soup tastes better, miso fish soup or Chinese fish broth. While speakers B and C are interested in the addition of bean curd in the soup, A is more concerned about whether the box of miso paste at her house is still fresh enough to be eaten, probably because she wants to try cooking this soup herself. In this case, the anaphoric demonstrative and the antecedent are within a single turn. Although TSM allows zero anaphora, namely, \textit{HE} can be omitted in line 24, the addition of \textit{HE} enhances A's worry about whether the miso paste she bought has passed its shelf life or not.
Extract (17) demonstrates another case of an anaphoric *HE*, used to refer to an entity whose name the speaker A cannot recall at the moment of speech. It takes two occurrences of *HE* before the exact name is uttered (Jumbo Wave) with B’s collaboration.

(17) (A is B’s niece. B has a young daughter, named Akuai. A is talking about a thrilling on-water roller coaster ride which Akuai took. She knew about Akuai’s experience because of an earlier conversation with her and because of a photo which showed Akuai standing by the roller coaster.)

552 A: 我 感覺 阿乖 足 大膽 e 喏,_
  guá kámkak akuai tsíok tuáttánn e le
  1S feel PN very brave AC UFP
553 A: (0) 伊 真 細漢 就 敢 坐 彼 喏,\t
  ī tsín sêhán tō kánn tsē he sănn
  3S very small then dare sit that what
554 A: …(1.0) 彼==，
  he that
555 A:…(1.8)<M 雲霄飛車 M>._
  yûnxíao抢劫
  roller.coaster
556 A: e= <M 那個 那個 什麼 M>?_
  e náge náge shénme
  PAR that that what
→ 557 A: 位 頂頭 接呢衝 落來 嘴 真 濟 水 彼 無,\t
  uí tingtāu ânne tshiong lóhái phùn tsín tsē tsuí he bō
  from top thus dash down spray very plenty water that NEG
558 B: <M 轟浪 M> 喔?\t
  hōnglàng o
  Jumbo.Wave UFP
(Four lines are omitted here.)
→ 563 A: 伊 彼 工 我 共 問 <Q 你有 坐 彼 無 Q>:\t
  ī hit kàng guá ka mnīg lî ū tsē he bō
  3S that day 1S KA ask 2S ASP sit that NEG
(38 IUs are omitted here, in which A and B continued the topic.)
602 A: <E Debbie E> 就講遮有 一 張 相片
debbie tō kōng tsia ū tsit tiunn siângphinn
PN then say here have one CL photo
603 A: 有 喔?
ū o
exist UFP
604 A: 恁 留 个 站 啊.
lin hip ê he a
2P shoot NOM that UFP
605 B: 而且 伊 你 邊 待 喊= 看.
jîtshiánn ī tī hia uá tih khuànn
and 3S stay there lean ASP watch

552-553 A: I feel that Akuai is very brave, (because) when she was very small, she dared to take the kind of ride, er, what do you call it?
554-556 A: The roller coaster-like thing, or something.
557 A: Isn’t there a (kind of ride) with which you slide down (a water channel) from a very high place.
558 B: (You mean) Jumbo Wave?
563 A: That day, I asked her, “Did you take that (water slide)?”,
602-603 A: Debbie said that there was a photo, right?
604-605 A: The (photo) that you took. She (=Akuai) was standing by the Jumbo Wave looking at it.

In (17), A is telling her aunt (B) that B’s 5-year-old daughter (Akuai) told A that she had taken a water roller coaster ride in an amusement park. At first, speaker A did not believe this until she saw a photo of Akuai standing by the roller coaster. Since the photo is important evidence for A to be convinced about the ride, after the first mention of the photo in line 602, an anaphoric link is then established between HE in line 604 and its first mention. From the exchange of talk, we can see that speaker A is eager to praise Akuai for daring to try such an exciting game. The event is heightened by the use of HE to refer to the roller coaster (line 563) and the photo taken that day (line 604). These referents are not in the hearer’s current focal consciousness. With HE, the referents are brought forward from the hearer’s remote memory and
become the current conversation topic since the roller coaster and the photo are the crucial entities that make this ride memorable and worth mentioning.

A more intriguing point about (17), however, is that in addition to the anaphoric use, HE is actually recurring in different IUs in this excerpt, with HE in lines 553, 554, 557, 563 referring to the roller-coaster-like thing (i.e., the Jumbo Wave), and in line 604 to the photo with Akuai standing by the roller coaster. These different usages of HE fall into different types in terms of their referential status. However, they share the common function of marking important entities involved in the main topic of talk of (17)—the water roller coaster and the photo which shows that Akuai did take the ride. Furthermore, they involve both first-mentioned (e.g., line 553) and second-mentioned entities (e.g., line 557). Therefore, what concerns us here is not the source of identity of the distal demonstrative but the central interactional function it performs in spontaneous discourse, i.e., the participants or entities with which the conversational topic is most related.

To further appreciate the significance of the occurrence of HE, we can make two comparisons: (a) the use of HE and its absence in the same context; (b) its distinction from the proximal demonstrative TSE ‘this’ in the same context. First, if HE was omitted, then lines 557, 563 and 604 would have slightly different readings:

a. <M 那個 那個什麼 M>？位頂頭按呢衝落來嘅真濟水_無. (cf. line 557)
   ‘What is that? Isn’t there something which slides down (a water channel) from a very high place?’

b. 伊彼工我共問<Q 你有坐_無 Q>. (cf. line 563)
   ‘That day, I asked her, “Did you take any ride?’

c. 恥翕個_啊. (cf. line 604)
   ‘(The photo) was taken by you.’

That is, the roller coaster would not be clearly expressed and the speaker would sound like s/he is asking about the existence of any water coaster facility. Second, if HE was replaced by TSE ‘this’, lines 557, 563 and 604 would yield different readings as well:


Distal demonstrative HE in Taiwanese Southern Min

d. 位頂頭 按呢衝落來噴真濟水 TSE 無. (from line 557)
   ‘Isn’t this (the ride) which slides down (a water channel) from a very high place?’

e. 伊彼工我共問 Q 你有坐 TSE 無 Q>. (from line 563)
   ‘That day, I asked her, “Did you take this ride?”

f. 悉翕个 TSE 啊. (from line 604)
   ‘(I mean) this (photo), which was taken by you.’

Here, if put in line 557 and in 563, TSE would sound like a situational deixis with which A is checking with B whether the facility referred to is the roller coaster. At the same time, it would require the presence of an on-site coaster, e.g., one shown on a TV program or on a photo the speakers are reviewing at the time of the talk. A similar interpretation holds with the substitution of TSE for HE in line 604, namely, there needs to be a photo at the immediate situation for TSE to be a legitimate use. In short, the above comparison shows that HE and TSE have different pragmatic purposes in conversation.

6.4 The Recognitional Use

A recognitional demonstrative indexes an NP that is identifiable based on some specific knowledge shared by the interlocutors. This means that the speaker presumes that the hearer is familiar with the referent since the referent has been stored in the hearer’s memory owing to certain community knowledge or a shared personal experience. A main context where a recognitional demonstrative emerges is when the speaker anticipates that the hearer might have problem identifying the intended referent with respect to the information given (Himmelmann 1996:230-231). In TSM, a recognitional distal demonstrative can be placed pre-nominally or pronominally. As indicated in Table 1, the recognitional use is the most frequent usage of HE in TSM (63.9%).

Observe example (18), where HE takes a pre-nominal position:

(18) (G is telling her granddaughter B about a snake bite when G was a child and the hospitalization because of the accident.)
138 G: 一改 母 才 去 予 咬 著。
    tsit kái mūsiāh kā hōo kā tiōh
    one time therefore go give bite reach
139 B: 咬 著。
    ka tiōh
    bite reach

(Eight IUs are omitted here, in which the story continued.)
148 G: 毒 蛇 就 見 咬 著 放 起來。
    tōk tsūā tō kinn kā tiōh lōng tsīng khīlāi
    poisonous snake then see bite reach all swollen up
149 G: (0) 轉來 到 稻 埤 達。
    tīnglāi kāu tiū tiānn hīa
    return arrive rice drying.field there
150 G: 我 講<Q 阿爸 我 去 予 彼 蛇 咬 著 Q>。
    guā kóng apah guā kē hōo he tsūā kā tiōh
    1S say dad 1S go give that snake bite reach
151 G: <Q 龜殼花 彼 啥 Q>。
    kukhakhue he sānn
    Chinese.habu that what
152 G: (0)<Q 你 這個 查某囡仔 講 嘿糊 龜殼花 咬 Q>！
    li tsit ē tsābōogīna kōng hāusiāu kukhakhue kā
    2S this CL girl say lie Chinese.habu bite
153 G: 我 講<Q 真正 e 啥 Q>。
    guā kóng tsintsiānn e la.
    1S say real AC UFP
138 G: (I) was once bitten by a snake.
139 B: Bitten (by a snake)?
148 G: Whenever (you) are bitten by a poisonous snake, (you) get a
    swelling.
149-151 G: When I returned to the rice drying field, I said, “Dad, I was
    bitten by a snake, something like a Chinese habu.”
152 G: “Bitten by a snake? You are lying, little girl!”
153 G: I said, “It’s true!”

The excerpt (18) is about a grandmother’s childhood experience. First, the grandmother tells B about a snake-bite accident that led to her hospitalization. The story reaches the climax when G told her father that
she had been bitten by a snake. The intended referent (the snake) is a first mention at the moment when G mentioned the bite, which is marked by HE (line 150 and line 151). It is known to almost all Chinese people, including the father, that a snakebite could be lethal. Therefore, the snake, marked by HE, plus the predication about this animal, is sufficient to bring its associated event to the father’s focal consciousness and highlight the seriousness of the event, which in fact led to G’s 10-day hospitalization.

The extract in (19) is another case of a recognitional HE with a first-mentioned NP:

(19) (M is telling F about a field trip with his kindergarten-aged children to a grassland called Qingtiangang.)
229 M: 啊<陈幼稚园 M>咱 去<陈擎天岗 M> 搬 去<陈草原 M>._
   ah yóuzhīyuán lán qǐngtiāngāng lóng qǐ cǎoyuán
   PAR kindergarten 1P go PN all go grassland
230 F: 哼哼 [哼]_
   hng hng hng
   RT RT RT
231 M: [啊 我] 就 放 伊 去 遊 奄 啊,
   ah guá tō páng ī khi hia sīng ā
   PAR 1S then let 3S go there play UFP
(Three IUs are omitted here, in which the narrative continued.)
235 M: <F 一下仔久 爾 講 人 怵 F>--
   tsitēakú niá kóng lāng in
   a.short.while only say people 3P
⇒236 M: <F 捎 彼 <陈飛盤 M> 端 過 射 来 射 去 F>./
   sa he fēipán tiān hia sī lái sī ā kēi
   fetch that Frisbee stay there shoot come shoot go
237 M: <F 我 講 奇怪 F>._
   guá kóng kîkuài
   1S say strange
238 M: 阮 就 無 紮=_
   guán tō bó tsah
   1P then NEG bring
(Seven IUs are omitted here, where F continued the Frisbee topic.)

\[247\] M:(0) 啊 彼 <M 飛盤 M> 麼.

ah he fēipán honn
PAR that Frisbee UFP

(Two IUs omitted here.)

\[250\] M: 彼 <M 色彩 M> 擺 足 <M ^鮮豔 M> e [著 毋 著]?

he sekcai lòng tsiok xianyân e tiōh m̃ tiōh
that color all very bright AC right NEG

right
\[251\] F:[<@ 嘿 嘿 @>]._

hennh hennh
RT RT

\[252\] M:(0) 伊 彼 毋 ^是._

ī he m̃ sī
3S that NEG be

\[253\] M: 伊 彼 ^是%._

ī he sī
3S that be

\[254\] M: ...真正 是 <M 土黃色 M> e.\n
tsintsia̍n sī tūhuângsê e
truly BE brownish.yellow AC

(13 IUs omitted here, about M’s kids inviting him to join their game.)

\[267\] M:<@ m 是 <M 飛盤 M> 嘢,\n
m̃ sī fēipán la
NEG be Frisbee UFP

\[268\] M: 是 牛 尿 嘢 @>!\n
sī gû sá̍i la
be cattle manure UFP

\[229\] M: As the kids are in their kindergarten years, whenever we go to Qingtiangang, we always play on the grassland there.

\[230\] F: Hm hm.

\[231\] M: And I just let them play there.

\[235-236\] M: It turned out that they took a Frisbee and started to play (with it).

\[237-238\] M: I felt strange, because we didn’t bring (a Frisbee) with us.

110
247-250 M: And Frisbees are usually in bright colors, right?
251 F: Huh huh.
252 M: The one (that they were playing with) did not (have fresh colors.)
253-254 M: (But) it was in brownish yellow.
267-268 M: (It turned out that) It was not a Frisbee. It was a (piece of) cattle manure!

In (19), speaker M narrates an anecdote about his children playing with a flying disc on a grassland during an excursion. It turned out that the Frisbee-like object was a piece of dried cattle manure that the kids picked up from the ground. The recognitional demonstrative HE in line 236 marks the entity Frisbee, which is known to be a plate-shaped object that can be played with in games. Hence, identifiability of the referent can be achieved with the background knowledge or general lexical knowledge shared by the interlocutors. The exchange that follows elaborates on further details accompanied by more occurrences of HE (lines 247, 250, 252 and 253) to maintain the current conversation topic of the funny fact about a Frisbee-shaped substance. With the preface of HE, the general nominal status of the Frisbee is promoted to a particularized status because it is made of cattle manure, which is an unexpected, funny entity, and the narration is thus led to a climactic point. We argue that HE, instead of always signaling topic shift (cf. Huang 1999; Lee 1999), marks the saliency of a referent which the speaker considers interesting and worthy of the hearer’s note. Without HE, the conversation would contain only simple statements about kids playing with a makeshift Frisbee. With HE, however, the manure disc is rendered a focal status in the narrative.

The occurrence of a recognitional HE along with various occurrences of HE which center around a focal topic of talk to show the speaker’s stance can be further manifested through the following conversation between two sisters:
(20) (F is telling her sister S about another sister’s (Bihun) weight loss because of Bihun’s radical diet control after being diagnosed with breast cancer. Bihun has also suffered from depression mainly because the doctor said her disease is a serious one.)

124 F: 喔!
   ooh
   EX
125 F: 美雲瘦偌濟你知無?
   bìhûn săn guā tsē lî tsâi bo
   PN lose.weight very much 2S know UFP
126 S: 按呢喔?
   ánne ooh
   this.way UFP
127 F: 瘦九公斤.
   sán káu kongkin
   lose.weight nine kg
(41 IUs are omitted here, during which the same topic continued.)
169 F: 喔=!
   ooh
   EX
→170 F: 彼遐肉毋知消去叨位去齁?
   he hia bah mî tsâi siaukhi touû khi honn
   that there flesh NEG know shrink where go UFP
171 S: 啊你共看伊就足瘦c就著啦.
   ah lî ka khuânn ī tô tsïok săn e tô tiôh la.
   PAR 2S KA watch 3S then very thin AC then right UFP
172 F: 啊就瘦八九公斤.
   ah tô săn peh kâu kongkin
   PAR then lose.weight eight nine kg
→173 F: 彼就是按怎,
   he tô sî sî ântsûânm
   that then be be how
174 F: 醫生齁,
   ising honn
   doctor UFP
175 S: 嘿\n    henn
    RT
176 F: 没 醫德 a.\n    bô  itiak a
    NEG ethics UFP
(148 IUs are omitted here)
325 F: 講 一下 傷 嚴重,_
    kông tsitê siunn giâmtoông
    say once too serious
(413 IUs are omitted here, during which F blamed the doctor for giving a grim diagnosis and led to Bihun’s depression.)
739 F: 講 伊 看 e 衣 撲 秆 穿 去,\n    kông ĭ hia e sann lông bê tsîng khi
    say 3S there AC clothes all NEG wear go
740 SF: ((signing))
741 S: 實在 有影\n    si̍ ttsāi ūiánn
    really true
742 S: 嘭\n    honn
    UFP
→ 743 S: 啊 彼 八 九 公斤 傧 濟 a lió.\n    ah he peh káu kongkin guâ tsē a liō
    PAR that eight nine kg very much UFP UFP
(76 lines are omitted here. The topic continued.)
→ 820 F: 有影 彼 八 九 公斤 彼 真正,\n    ūiánn he peh káu kongkin he tsíntsiānn
    true that eight nine kg really
→ 821 F: 彼 加 足 瘦 e 呢.\n    he ke tsiók sàn e ne
    that add very thin AC UFP
822 F: 啊._
    ah
    PAR
(189 IUs are omitted here, during which F and S talked about Bihun’s son’s ignorance of his mother’s weight loss.)

114

1012 F: 喔!
   oh
   EX

1013 F: 彼瘦八九公斤, _
   he săn peh káu kongkin
   that lose.weight eight nine kg
(Six IUs omitted here.)

1020 F: 加得一個 <M 憂鬱症 M> 啲 Q>
   ke tit tsit ê yōuyūzhèng la
   add contract one CL depression UFP

124-125 F: Alas! Do you know that Bihun has lost a lot of weight?
126 S: Is that so?
127 F: (She) has lost eight to nine kg.
169-170 F: Alas! I wonder where that muscle tissue (originally in her body) has gone!
171 S: You just need to see her to know what I mean. She is so skinny.
172 F: She has lost eight to nine kg, (I know).
173 F: You know why it is so?
175 S: Yeah.
174, 176 F: The doctor was unethical (because he told Bihun that her cancer was very serious, which led to her depression).
325 F: (The doctor) said that her (cancer) was very serious.
739 F: (She) said that none of her clothes fit her now.
740-743 S: It is indeed excruciating (to see her suffer). Alas! (The body part which weighs) eight to nine kg is a lot of weight!
820-822 F: That drastic weight change makes her look much skinnier.
1012-1013 F: Alas! She has lost eight to nine kilograms.
1020 F: And she has also suffered from depression.

As shown in (20), F and S’s main concern is their sister Bihun’s health and her psychological problem. In fact, before their talk, F and S have known very well that Bihun has breast cancer and that she has undergone chemotherapy although the word “cancer” is not mentioned in
their talk. In the excerpt above, F starts with her report to S about the rapid weight loss. As F and S love their sister very much, they have an extended discussion about the weight loss (8-9 kilograms) and the depression the sister has developed because of the doctor’s warning during her chemotherapy (line 325), which in turn leads to her withdrawal from the public. The first use of HE in (20) (line 170) illustrates a recognitional use, referring to Bihun’s muscle tissue, which was not mentioned in the previous discourse but inferable because of F and S’s shared knowledge about their sister’s health. In line 173, HE is a discourse deictic which refers to the general idea of Bihun’s weight loss and can be inferred from the preceding context (lines 124-127). Afterwards, F continues with the same topic. In fact, in the above exchange of conversation, which extends over 1000 IUs, the grave concern about the weight loss issue is brought up at least six times (lines 127, 172, 743, 820, 821 and 1013). These utterances exhibit F’s intense worry about Bihun and the occurrences of HE reinforce F’s vexation and distress about her sister’s condition. Without HE, these utterances would sound more like general story telling without much emotion imbued in it.

The use of HE in TSM with a first-mentioned NP differs from the English indefinite article a, the definite article the, or the distal demonstrative that. For example, in English, the snake in line 150 of (18) would be marked by an indefinite article (I was bitten by “a” snake) since it is a first-mentioned general noun. However, “a snake” only serves to introduce a referent but does not in itself entail a focal status of the referent. On the other hand, I was bitten by the/that snake is anomalous as that would suggest a specific snake which the father could identify. Likewise, the English version of line 236 in (19) It turned out that they took a Frisbee and started to play (with it) there fails to signal the prominent status of the Frisbee indicated by HE. These uses clearly demonstrate the functional difference between TSM HE and a, the, or that in English, in that the purpose of TSM HE is to signify the topical status of the referent. Such functional nuances cannot be captured simply by the argument that the distal demonstrative is evolving into a definite article (Huang 1999).12 Put differently, although both a definite article

12 Huang (1999: 90) argues that the “unavailable use”, the “identifying use”, and the “topic introducing use” of Mandarin nage, which are all subtypes of the recognitional use
and a distal demonstrative track a referent identifiable via community shared knowledge or shared personal experience, a definite article simply tracks an identifiable referent without displaying any stance, whereas the referent marked by *HE* acquires a topical status.

### 6.5 The Discourse Deictic Use

A discourse deictic *HE* makes reference to a proposition(s) or an event(s) in the previous discourse. As shown in Table 1, this usage type ranks second of all the uses of *HE* (169, 14.9%). The observed TSM data shows that the associated proposition is usually composed of various IUs, and *HE* is not always adjacent to them. This “detached” phenomenon seems contrary to Himmelmann’s (1996: 224) argument that the segment pointed at is always adjacent. Observe (21):

(21) (M and her daughter T are talking about how T does her laundry.)

```
115 T: ...(1.7)^ 我 撒 無 咩 聽.
guada long bó teh lu,
1S all NEG PRG scrub
116 T:...撓 共 落 去 洗衫機._
lóng ka tán loh khi sésannki.
   all KA throw down go washing.machine
117 T:...(2.1) 撒 無 咩 看._
lóng bó teh khuànn.
   all NEG ASP look
118 M:... 今 學 了 貧懶 母._
tann o̍h liáu pintuānn mī
   now learn complete lazy NEG
119 T:...<MRC 哪 有 許 開= MRC>._
nà ū hiāh īng
   how have that free
```

(see discussion in Section 3.2), are evidence of the development of *nage* into a definite article because a definite article also tracks entities which are identifiable via community shared knowledge or personal experience shared by the speakers.
The discourse deictic HE in line 120 of (21) refers back to the proposition expressed by lines 115-117, that the daughter T has all of her laundry done by the washing machine rather than by hand. Here, HE is used by T to reactivate and refer back to the proposition of the mother’s blame and refute it. Then, after establishing the thematic status of how T deals with her laundry, T continues with this topic and reasserts her uncompromising stance that doing hand washing is a waste of time.
After line 120, T continues to refute her mother’s accusation with several other uses of *HE*, by referring to T’s dirty laundry (line 124), or a better use of the time saved (lines 128 and 135). These different uses of *HE* convey T’s strong reaction and oppositional stance against her mother’s reproach.

The scope of the propositions indicated by a discourse deictic *HE* can be even greater, spanning across various turns. Consider (22).

(22) (M is talking about her daughter T’s friend’s improper diet.)

482 M:...^ 食 愛 控制。^  
   tsiāh āi khōngtsè.  
   eat need control

483 M:...毋好 合意食 就 直直 食。  
   mhó kahi tsiāh tō tittit tsiāh  
   should not like eat then continuously eat

484 T:(0)嗯 [^ 我 有 共^ 講 啊].  
   hennh guá ū ka kóng ā  
   yes 1S ASP KA say UFP

485 M:[啊 無 ^合意 就 無 愛 食。]  
   ah bō kahi tō bō āi tsiāh  
   PAR NEG like then NEG love eat

(Nine IUs are omitted here, with M continuing her comment about diet control.)

482-483, 485 M: (He) has to control (his) diet and he cannot just eat things (he) loves without any limit or be picky about food.

484 T: Yes, I also told him so.

495 M: (With) such (a bad habit), it will affect his stomach.

The distal demonstrative *HE* in line 495 refers back to the proposition containing the reasons for T’s friend’s stomachache. The segments pointed at are distributed in several turns including lines such as 483 and 485, which are farther away from the demonstrative than in
The use of *HE* in line 495 recapitulates all the related propositions in the earlier discourse and presents M’s reproof of T’s friend’s incorrigible dietary habits, functioning as a conclusive remark of her comment about the bad habit.

### 6.6 Connective and Filler Use

In addition to the above functions, when the speaker only has a vague concept in mind and cannot think of an exact identity, *HE* is used to fill the speaker’s silence before an exact referent is uttered. When *HE* occurs in the initial position, it functions like a connective to link the previous talk with the following utterance, whereas when it occurs in the other positions in the sentence, it functions like a filler. As discussed in Section 3, connective *HE* can be regarded as an extension of the recognitional or the discourse deictic use, each of which involves a vague referential status of an intended concept or entity. Therefore, these two functions are discussed together in this section. (23) and (24) illustrate the connective use and the filler use respectively.

(23) (A is asking her son what his sister bought for him on their way home.)

198 A: ... (1.3) 姐姐 敢 有 買 什 予 你。

> tsétsé kám ū bé sànn hōo lì older.sister dare ASP buy what give 2S

199 B: ...(1.4) hmm._

> hmm RT

200 B: 本來 欲 買 <M 小籠包 M>。

> pún lái bē bē xiāolóngbāo originally want buy little.steamed.bun

201 B: 啊 但是 彼 賣 了。\n
> ah tānsī he bē liáu PAR but that sell finish

(Six IUs are omitted here, in which A and B continued the topic.)

⇒ 208 B: 彼... 

> he that
209 B: 看著人真少就去买。
    khuânn tiōh lâng tsin tsió tō khi bé
    see reach people very few then go buy
210 B: 原來是賣了啊。
    guân lâi sī bē liâu a
    originally be sell finish UFP
211 B: …(1.5)共人騙。
    ka lâng phiàn
    KA people fool
(Three IUs are omitted here, where B showed his anger.)
215 B: …真受氣啦。
    tsin siūkhì la
    very angry UFP

197-198 A: Did your sister buy you anything on your way home?
199-201 B: Hmm. Originally, we wanted to buy little steamed buns. But they were sold out.
208-211 B: Since we saw that there were few people standing in line, we went inside. But it turned out that (they) were sold out. (I) was fooled.
215 B: (I) was really annoyed!

From the situational and textual context shown in (23), it seems only possible to identify a vague referent, if any, of HE (line 208). If the demonstrative HE referred to the store, it would be the subject of the predicate khuânn tiōh ‘saw’, which is, however, semantically anomalous. Assigning the steamed buns as the referent yields an equally semantically undesirable sentence, i.e., the buns being the experiencer of the verb of seeing in line 209. Rather than performing referring tasks, therefore, HE can be said to mark the following utterance as the culminating point of the information exchange, that B was fooled by the small line at the bun store. While the omission of the distal demonstrative does not affect the original meaning, it is odd to replace HE with other connectives such as the global connective a (啊) (Li et al. 1998) to still retain the close topical link between the current utterance.
and the previous one. On the other hand, while Lee (1999) contends that the demonstrative connective makes the conversation more coherent and organized, she does not explain why the distal demonstrative is especially enlisted to achieve proposition linking. Here, we argue that the demonstrative is both retrospective and prospective in that it brings the hearer’s attention (Kirsner 1979; Tao 1999) and marks the following utterance as the focus of the proposition that the speaker wishes to express. Meanwhile, it accentuates the speaker’s exasperation about the futile attempt to get the food he loved.

The talk in (24) contains a succession of HE/HITLE functioning as a filler to give time for the speaker to hold the floor while searching in his/her memory for the name of a pharmacy:

(24) (C and R are dealers of vitamins sold to pharmacies. They are discussing the prices of their products. In the talk below, C asks R whether he has investigated the price of similar products in other pharmacies.)

\[\text{(24)}\]

\[
\text{216 C: (0) 啊 le 彼 le=}\
\text{ah hitle hitle PAR that that}
\]

\[
\text{217 C: (H)}\
\text{218 C: 彼 le ？}\text{\hype{}}\
\text{hitle sànn that what}
\]

\[
\text{219 C: [彼 le]}—\
\text{hitle that}
\]

\[
\text{220 R:[hm]?/ hmite RT}
\]

\[
\text{221 C: 彼 le 新竹 彼 le 啊}\
\text{hitle sintiak hitle a that PN that UFP}
\]

\[\text{Li et al. (1998) analyze the discourse functions of the utterance-initial connective/particle a and argue that it is a global linker or it serves to mark an “unusual response” or as a floor holder (p.163).}\]
The demonstrative *hit-le* in lines 216, 218 and 219 mark C’s attempt to retrieve the name of the pharmacy. They function as a filler and floor holder to give the speaker time to think of the name before R collaborates and spells it out. The store is brought forward as a focal point of talk because C is eager to know whether R has investigated the price of a similar product sold in that pharmacy.

In the above two occurrences of *hit-le*, the demonstrative does not have a typical determiner or pronoun usage; rather it serves as a prelude for the speaker to prepare the ground for an important message C wishes to deliver. It also displays C’s eagerness to know more about the price issue. In other words, the pharmacy acquires a focal status in the conversation, which in fact is also the topic of the conversation that follows.

### 6.7 Summary

The above analysis shows one core function of *HE* that predominates in its occurrences, when it is used to track a referential item, to track a proposition, as a vague referent marker, or even as a semantically
bleached connective or filler. That is, *HE* is used to spotlight a piece of information that the current speaker believes is central to the point the speaker wishes to make, or to the development of a story. It may also mark the climax of a narrative or a conversational topic. The entity or idea marked is one that is identifiable but is currently not in the speaker’s focus of attention. The employment of *HE* enables the speaker to bring an otherwise distant referent or ideational content to the hearer’s focal consciousness. The usage differs from a pronoun used for referring to an existing entity, from an indefinite article used for a first-mentioned, non-specific entity, or from a definite article used for second mention or for an entity inferable from community knowledge. Therefore, we argue that the most important function of *HE* is not whether it refers to an entity, a proposition, or a discourse unit, or whether it functions as a connective or a filler. Rather, the demonstrative is used to convey the speaker’s stance and boost the visibility or to highlight the noteworthiness of the message which the speaker is stressing (cf. García 1975, Kirsner 1979, Hanks 1989 and Tao 1999) or which will be elaborated in the succeeding talk. With *HE*, the exchange and negotiation of ideas is rendered more effective.

7. CONCLUSION

This study discusses the interactional functions of the distal demonstrative *HE* ‘that’ in TSM spontaneous conversation. The results show that interactional factors influence the use of the distal demonstrative in TSM. The use of the distal demonstrative serves to highlight a given entity or a piece of information which is conceptually distant from the speaker’s current state of mind but which the speaker believes is worth noting. This study is significant in that it provides a unitary account of *HE* in spite of its varying referring functions. Due to the limit of scope, there are several topics that could be of interest to researchers. First, the speech material used in this study is restricted to synchronic data; historical data is required for one to understand the diachronic development of demonstratives and what bearing they have on the interactional functions of *HE*. Second, we have not delved into the
tonal variations of *HE*, *hit-ê* and *hit-lō*, which cannot be directly accounted for by the TSM tone sandhi rules. Third, we have limited our discussion to the distal demonstrative *HE* and its functional equivalents in TSM. The spatial demonstrative *hia*, the use of *hit* with non-ê classifier, the degree modifier *hia̍h/hia̍h-ni* ‘so, that’ and other types of demonstratives such as plural demonstratives are yet to be explored. Fourth, we do not discuss the differences between pre-nominal and pronominal demonstratives. All these issues await future study.
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Distal demonstrative HE in Taiwanese Southern Min

Miao-Hsia Chang
Department of English
National Taiwan Normal University
Taipei, Taiwan 116, ROC
mhchang@ntnu.edu.tw

Huai-Tung Hsu
Department of English
National Taiwan Normal University
Taipei, Taiwan 116, ROC
huaitunghsu@gmail.com
APPENDIX: TRANSCRIPTION NOTATIONS

-- truncated intonation unit
: speaker identity
[(N)] speech overlap
.. short pause (<0.3 sec.)
… medium pause (0.3-0.6 sec.)
…(N) long pause (≥0.7 sec.)
. final
, Continuing
? Appeal
! Exclamation
_ level terminal pitch
/ rising terminal pitch
\ falling terminal pitch
^ primary accent
= Lengthening
@ Laughter
<E E> code-switching to English
<F F> fast tempo
<L L> Loudness
<M M> code-switching to Mandarin
<Q Q> quotation quality
<MRC MRC> each word distinct and emphasized
(0) Latching
% glottal stop
(H) Inhalation
本文討論台灣閩南話遠指詞《彼》及其近似詞在自然對話中的篇章語用功能。研究顯示，談話者大多可透過推論、社群知識或談話者所共有的背景知識等方式辨識而出《彼》所指涉的事物。這些用法乃是由互動中，透過說話者的語意協商浮現而出。《彼》表達了說話者對所指涉事物可辨識程度的看法。通常《彼》被使用在指涉一個說話者想要強調的焦點訊息，藉由此指示詞，引出並活化了原存在於談話者的較久遠記憶內的事物，成為談話焦點。同時，《彼》亦可表達談話者對談話主題的觀點、情緒、立場或態度。

關鍵字：遠指詞、台灣閩南話、對話、焦點訊息