

How the Deictic and Anaphoric Role of *Na* in Filipino Functions as a Cohesive Device in Classroom Interaction

Miren Montoya Morales
De La Salle University, Manila

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to find out how *na* functions as a discourse deixis or anaphora in classroom conversational turn-taking as a linguistic device in achieving cohesion for classroom interaction. The data involve the transcription of student-teacher exchanges of a one class session on Philippine Literature taught in Filipino. The study uses Levinson's categories as a framework for the discourse analysis to incorporate a more dynamic situational approach where particular emphasis is made on the intra-text or extra-text polarities that identify deictic with anaphoric functions. Levinson's model shows that demonstratives as a discourse deixis are intra-text but has a deictic function and vice-versa. Results of the discourse analysis confirm the multifarious nature of *na*. The word *na* has several grammatical purposes in Filipino: it may be a demonstrative, an adverb, relative pronoun, an infinitive, and even an equivalent of the English perfect tense. In fact, this study exhibits that *na* in its deictic and anaphoric function further demonstrates this multifarious identity. The use of *na* as a deixis applies in its function as a demonstrative pronoun (exophoric symbolic) and spatial/temporal adverb deixes; whereas, the anaphoric use of *na* is shown in its function as a relative pronoun as well as the non-deictic *na* use which shows a necessity for grammatical well-formedness of the utterance. These findings support Levinson's view that the deictic usage varies across languages because the formation of deictic relations is largely a cultural construct. The language teacher's awareness of these deictic and anaphoric functions and principles will be particularly useful in how they engage their students' classroom interaction in terms of organization of ideas and its comprehensibility in bilingual and multilingual settings.

Keywords: deictic usage, discourse deixis, exophora, endophora

Introduction

A number of studies have identified the role of deixis use as an essential element to consider in the success of both mutual comprehension and turn-taking between interlocutors of the conversation which depend on the agreed identification of deictic uses (Huang, 2007; Ögeyik, 2007; Methven, 2006; Lyons, 1995). Huang (2007) affirms that “Deixis is a universal linguistic phenomenon, that is, all human languages contain deictic terms” (p.132) and that “a language without deictics cannot serve the communication needs of its users as effectively and efficiently as a language that does have them (p.132).” Deictic expressions then are basic elements in human communication that function as grammatical markers to establish the cohesion of spoken discourses. However, much of what is understood about deictic use is that there are clear divisions among its categories; in fact, Hindmarch and Health (2000) pointed out that “traditional understanding of deixis and reference ignores the socially situated and collaborative organization of referential practice” (p. 1856). Thus, the aim of this paper is to incorporate a more contextual approach in the study of deixis categories by applying both deictic and anaphoric use of demonstratives following Levinson’s (2004) more dynamic situational approach where “a number of clear distinctions between different ways in which deictic expressions may be used” (p.30). Particular emphasis is made on the intra-text or extra-text polarities that identify deictic with anaphoric functions. Levinson shows that these divisions may overlap when applied in actual utterances. The pragmatic concept of anaphora is also a referential grammatical device whose function rests on deictic notions (Levinson, 1983) and thus will be included in clarifying deictic usage, particularly discourse deixis.

The present study explores the deictic and anaphoric uses of the Filipino word *na* in a spoken classroom discourse of Filipino tertiary students by applying Stephen Levinson’s deictic categories including his distinct uses of demonstratives. The content of the teacher-student interaction is Philippine Literature in Filipino. The purpose of this study is to find out how *na* functions as a deixis or anaphora in classroom conversational turn-taking as a linguistic device in achieving cohesion for classroom interaction on literature.

Previous studies on the analysis of deixis use in other languages show that deictic functions are socio-culturally situated which is consistent with Levinson's view. In Ögeyik's (2007) study of Turkish oral narratives, his analysis showed that the way a person interprets the textual meaning may vary and deictic expressions are the clues for describing and interpreting texts. He further explains that "the reception and the interpretation of deictic forms in the context of utterances by the receivers may change depending on the receivers' world knowledge, cultural background, life style, the community in which they live, the language level etc." (p.16). Another relevant study was made by Methven (2006) in which he also applied Levinson's social deixis in comparing Chinese and English deictic forms and concluded that cultural connotations which go beyond mere context determine the differences in pragmatic uses of deictic categories.

Particularly insightful for the purpose of this study is the research by Ribera (2007), where a clear distinction between endophoric and exophoric uses of demonstratives have been studied and applied in comprehending literary texts. Ribera concludes that discourse deixis functions as "a metaphorical referential device which maps the ground of utterance onto the text, thus combining the referential properties of deixis and anaphora" (p.165). This relates to Ögeyik's (2007) study previously mentioned where he explored how deictic expressions in Turkey may be analyzed to assist the cultivation "of textual and contextual understanding and to determine the point of view in narrative texts" (p.8).

The primary goal of any spoken and written communication is to be able to transmit or transact messages comprehensively. In Pragmatics, one essential aspect that contributes to comprehensibility of spoken and written utterances would be the use of deixis and anaphora particularly in achieving textual cohesion. This study will focus on discourse deixis which Huang (2007) defines as "concerned with the use of a linguistic expression within some utterance to point to the current, preceding or following utterances in the same spoken or written discourse" (p.172). Specifically, this study focuses on discourse deixis which refers to demonstratives. One of the most prominent figures who studied the role of deixis in general and discourse deixis as part of that general theory of Pragmatics is Levinson. Many studies have applied Levinson's model (1983) for its

astuteness in bringing to the fore both endophoric and exophoric uses of demonstratives. According to Levinson (2004), when deixis refers to the world outside a text, then reference to the context surrounding an utterance is often referred to as primary deixis, exophoric deixis or simply deixis alone. Primary deixis is used to point to a situation outside a text (situational deixis) or to the speaker's and hearer's (shared) knowledge of the world (knowledge deixis) whereas contextual use of deictic expressions is known as secondary deixis, textual deixis or endophoric deixis. Such expressions can refer either backwards or forwards to other elements in a text. The perceptive aspect about Levinson's model is that although demonstratives as a discourse deixis are intra-text, it has a deictic function and vice-versa. This study, applying Levinson's pragmatic approach, would then show these clear distinctions of deictic and anaphoric uses in the Filipino demonstrative *na*.

Methodology

Data and Participants

This study uses a discourse analysis method in analyzing deictic and anaphoric features of student-teacher classroom exchange of a Literature class which used a student storytelling format as a way to discuss the short story of Carlos Bulosan's "*My Father's Tragedy*" (translated into Filipino by Honorato I. Cabrera, Jr.). The participants are 50 students and one female Filipino teacher. The data consist of a one hour and 20 minute class (Literature class in Filipino) which was audio recorded by the teacher herself to enhance the natural flow of communication which may be jeopardized if the researcher were visible. The audio recording was later transcribed by the researcher. The limitation of the study is that the suprasegmental features and non-verbal cues such as facial expression, gestures, and movements were variables that were not included in the framework and data analysis.

According to Levinson (2004) "meaning is relational, and the meaning of an indexical is characterized as the relation between utterance/resource situations and described situations" (p.16) as such the points of reference may not be easily predetermined but its

establishment as a reference depends largely on pragmatic context as was demonstrated in the Levinsonian categories below.

Analytical Framework and Categories

This study will apply Levinson's deictic categories to this classroom dialogue between the teacher and students to demonstrate the main assertions which Levinson (2004) makes about the functions of discourse deixis, namely:

- (1) "That indexicality (deixis reference) exceeds the bounds of the built-in indexical expressions in any language" (p.21).
- (2) "The field of indexical expressions is in the last resort not clearly delimited, because in so far as most referring expressions are not fully individuating solely by virtue of their semantic content, but rather depend for success on states of mutual knowledge holding between participants in the discourse, the great majority of successful acts of reference depend on indexical conditions" (p.21).

These two Levinsonian tenets stated above is seen through the understanding of Levinson's discourse deictics which are used based on the following pragmatic features. The first principle deals with basic deictic properties. For Levinson, there is a clear class of indexical expressions referred to as deictics, which have an inbuilt variable whose value is instantiated in the context. In other words when deictics function as a reference to point out relationships of grammatical features within a speech event, the reference may only be correctly interpreted by taking into consideration what he calls relevant index referring to the speaker, time and place of speaking. This type of indexicality is also known among pragmatists as pure indexicals. However, Levinson includes another set of indexical expressions where a deictic function requires additional semantic conditions in order to interpret the reference correctly. The following examples show these two types of deictic functions:

<u>Pure Indexicals:</u>	<u>relevant index</u>
I	speaker
now	time
here	place

Indexical expressions which also expresses additional semantic conditions

we	speaker + one person
today	the diurnal span which contains the coding time
nearby	a place distinct from here but close to here

Nearly all deictics are heavily dependent on pragmatic resolution where – “Come here” may mean come to this sofa or come to this city according to context.

The second feature is referred to as “Distinct Demonstrative Uses” (Levinson, 2004, p.23) where discourse deixis is intra-text but deictic in function. In the context of the actual data on the contextual use of *na*, only the following distinct uses apply:

(3) “I like **this** city.” (exophoric symbolic: does not require gesture)

(8) “The cowboy entered. **This** man was not someone to mess with.” (anaphoric)

In Filipino, the word *na* has several uses in different utterances. The first set of pragmatic use that will be applied in this study is the deictic uses, listed below, which correspond to Levinson’s categories; the second set will be the uses of *na* as an anaphor which is a textual reference to relative pronouns functioning as adjective clauses. Examples were drawn from the transcribed data and translated into English.

A. Deictic Uses

(1) Spatial/temporal adverb deixis which signal a context reference of time or space. The examples below all refer to time in relation to the speaker as proximate time.

“now” = *Magbabalik aral* na *tayo!*

(Let us now review our lessons.)

“already” = *Alam* na *niya* [*tungkol kay Burick*].

(He already found out.)

“about to” = *Malapit ka* na *sa Panggasinan*.

(You are about to arrive in Panggasinan)

If the word *na* is omitted as in *Malapit ka sa Panggasinan*

The meaning of the utterance will change to “You are near Panggasinan” since *malapit* means “near”.

(2) Tense temporal deixis (relative temporal deixis) is a reference to verb tense:

a. After a verb in the past tense, *na* is equivalent to the English perfect tense “has” / “have”

Passive voice

Ubos na *lahat* [*ung manok*].

The entire rooster has been consumed.

b. Had; past tense of have. Generally rendered by the past tense of the Tagalog verb followed by *na*

Active voice

Wala na *yung manok* [*ng dumating si tatay*].

The rooster had disappeared when Father arrived.

(3) Subordinate conjunction “when” which is a reference to during which time. Rendered by its ligature “na

Indicative clause

Pagnatapos na *siya sa kanyang ulat...*

when she finishes her report...

By removing *na* in the utterance, the mood of the clause would become conditional (subjunctive):

Pagnatapos *siya sa kanyang ulat...*

If she finishes her report...

(4) *Na* connects modifier with word modified which may be considered parallel but not equivalent to the English that-clause.

Mahirap na *tao*

A person that is poor

But notice that this structure is rarely used in English, rather the nominal phrase “a poor person” or “a poor man” is more likely to be used.

It is also possible for this ligature (connective) *na* to take the form of *-ng* attached to the vowel sound ending of the word it follows or if the word ends in *n*; however when the descriptive word such as *mahirap* ends with a consonant /*p*/ sound an *-ng* form cannot be attached. That is why *mahirap na tao* is considered the correct form or the structure is reversed *taong mahirap* (still considered less preferred, that is, colloquial form). Although *mayamang tao* or *mayamang pamilya* is acceptable because *mayaman* (which means wealthy) ends with *n*.

B. Uses of *na* as an anaphor

1. Who. Expressed by the ligature *na*
May isang lalaki na lumapit sa kanya para mikapagkasundo.
 There was a man who came near him to make a deal.
2. Whose; of whom; of which
Ang manok na si Burick
 The cock whose name is Burick
 - a. Which
Ang manok na panabong ni tatay
 The rooster which your father owns for cockfighting.
 - b. That; Whom
*Iyon ang bahay na ginawa ni Juan.*¹
 That is the house that John built.

Results and Discussion

The results of the present study have shown what kinds of deictic and anaphoric features of *na* actually appear in the learners' classroom interaction with their teacher as they discuss the short story in order to arrive at a deeper appreciation of the story's narrative

elements. The analysis proves that indeed *na* has multifarious pragmatic uses as a cohesive device for the smooth flow of the delivery of oral exchanges and as prompts for appropriate turn-taking responses.

The first set of *na*-function refers to deictic uses, which have four subtypes, namely: (1) Levinson's (2004) distinct demonstrative use that is the exophoric symbolic use. This deictic function does not require a gesture to establish its reference or index. For example, in the phrase *Sa araw [na] ito* which means *on [this] day* in English, here *na* is used as a demonstrative *this*. Even though this deictic function requires a reference point of the time and day of the speaker's utterance yet a physical gesture or physical indication is not required for establishing its semantic content. This deictic use was identified in Ribera's (2007) metaphorical discourse where the situational conditions for establishing reference were transposed from the natural to the textual (non-gestural). This was the process used in the class to reach both literal and inferential comprehension of a piece of literature (narrative short story). A difference of exophoric structure in English and Filipino appears in *na*. The word *na* is used both as a deixis and simultaneously as a linker of linguistic elements, unlike the English *this/that* which simply act as a deixis. To illustrate, the literal translation of *this day* in Filipino would be *itong araw* where the *na* is omitted. This is taken as an awkward form.

(2) The second subtype is *na* used as an adverb in *Magsiupo na*. If we are to translate *na* as used in this phrase as meaning *now* then it could be considered as a pure indexical. However, in Filipino *na* is not an equivalent meaning with *now*. Instead it may be taken to mean as a command or the synonym of *[let us] be seated*. Consider the following illustrations: In S15 (pre-lesson teacher discourse), Prof. Esquivel's utterance: "*Mahirap [na] iyong magbigay tayo ng sarili nating haka-haka ng hindi talaga nating alam kung ano ang nangyayari.*" This spoken utterance may have two senses depending on the "intent" of the speaker manifested by her suprasegmental effects such as juncture, length of pause, and other non-verbal cues such as facial expression or gesture used in the utterance. This example confirms Levinson's (2004) deictic description: "The field of indexical expressions is in the last resort not clearly delimited, because in so far as most referring expressions are not fully individuating solely by virtue of their semantic content, but rather depend for success on states of mutual

knowledge holding between participants in the discourse, the great majority of successful acts of reference depend on indexical conditions" (p.21).

Sense 1: *Mahirap na / iyong magbigay tayo ng sarili nating haka-haka...*¹

In this case, *na* expresses the speaker's perspective of emphatic use of *mahirap* which is a polysemous word in Filipino which may denote/connote varied meanings depending on how it was used in the sentence or utterance. *Mahirap na* expresses levels of analogical or metaphorical difficulty as in: a) it is dangerous, b) it is rash, or c) it is wrong or unethical which are all possible interpretations that may have a synonymous sense to the Filipino slang *sasabit tayo diyan* (the English translation is *there might be a glitch*) which is an equivalent semantic content to *mahirap na*.

Sense 2: *Mahirap / na [iyong] + magbigay tayo ng sarili nating haka-haka...*

In this second sense, the *na* will function as a linker as in *na magbigay*. This second sense uses *na* as an infinitive structure comparable to English that means *to give*. This will alter the illocutionary act of the statement. Sense 1 emphasizes on the harm of unfounded conclusions while Sense 2 shifts the emphasis on the act of the verb which is *na magbigay* which doesn't literally mean *to give* as one donates a gift but more appropriately means *to convey*. Unlike Prof. Esquivel's other statement: *Sasamantalahin ko itong pagkakataong ito na paaalalahanan kayo...* The use of *na* here has one unequivocal sense of *na* as linker *to*-preposition as in *to warn* since the preceding word to *na* is *ito* which cannot be used as *ito na* in a meaningful way in that particular context. *Na* in this utterance functions as an infinitive.

(3) The third subtype is *na* used as an adverb "already" as in *Tapos na* (It is done) indicating a prior elapsed time to that of the speaker's present utterance.

Examples:

1. *Niluluto na ng asawa niya yung manok.*

(The rooster is already being cooked.)

2. *Ngayon palang natatawa na kayo pero...*

(At this point, you are already finding it funny, what more...)

The first two examples indicate a proximate time in reference to the speaker. However, the use of *na* as *already* may also indicate a prior

elapsed time from a contextual time reference, for instance, in example 3, an historical time reference was applied.

Example 3: *Mayroon na silang sariling literatura.*

(They already own a native literature.)

(4) The fourth subtype uses *na* as a linker for the modifier with the word modified which may be considered parallel but not equivalent to the English *that*-clause. A valuable illustration of this deictic use is the phrase *kapatid na babae* which is translated literally in English as *a sibling that is female* or *a female sister*. On one hand, specific gender distinctive terms in English do not have a counterpart in Filipino, for example, the pronouns *he* and *she* in English do not exist in Filipino; only the generic *siya* is used. Likewise, there is no equivalent Filipino word for the English kinship reference *sister* or *brother*. On the other hand, there is a hierarchical kinship term for elder brother (*kuya*) or elder sister (*ate*) not found in English.

There are also two other instances from the extract that is noteworthy in showing the importance of *na* as a linker in Filipino which would have no equivalent structure in English. In the second example, *na* is used to link the two elements *susunod* (next) and *linggo* (Sunday or a week's time).

Example 2

Student (Bernice): *Naka. Nakatakda yoong laban nila sa susunod na linggo.*

English Translation: *The cockfight would be scheduled next week.*

Example 3:

Student (Leonard): *Nakapagtapos mam [referring to Carlos Bulosan's life], at maging ano, maging ganap na manunulat.*

English Translation: *He was able to graduate in order to be an exemplary writer.*

These four subtypes of *na* deictic uses verify its extensive function as a deixis in Filipino and these deictic functions in turn would be the basis for its effectiveness as a cohesive device for both classroom spoken interaction and in narrative structure. This effectiveness would be further supported by the anaphoric uses discussed below.

The second set of *na* function refers to anaphoric uses which are of two subtypes: (1) subordinate clause connective word and (2)

relative pronoun uses. This first anaphoric use appeared frequently in the data analysis.

(1) Clause connector

- a. ...*isa na naming araw* → [*na*] *ipinagkaloob mo sa amin*].
- b. ...*salamat po* → [*na*] *isa nanamang linggong katatapos naming*].
- c. ...*sa lahat* → [*na*] *lagi kaming nagsisikap at lagging gumagawa*].
- d. ...*kung totoo* → [*na*] *taga sa atin ang a namatay*]...
- e. ...*ipakita natin* → [*na*] *meron mang nagyaring ganito*]....
- f. ...*palatandaan* → [*na*] *malapit ka na sa Pangasinan*]...
- g. ...*uulitin ko uli* → [*na*] *sa paguulat ay kinakailangan*]...
- h. ...*sinabi ni Bernice* → [*na*] *si Carlos Bulosan ay nagmula*]...
- i. ...*binasa ni Bernice* → [*na*] *karamihan sa kuwento ni Carlos*]...
- j. ...*mga insect na lumilipad* → [*na*] *kumakain ng palay*]...
- k. ...*ipagpalagay*... → [*na*] *ang nagkukuento nito ay mismong may akda*]...

In Filipino, the non-deictic *na* use shows a necessity for grammatical well-formedness of the utterance which connects the matrix clause to the subordinate one as a relative pronoun functioning as an adjective clause. The speaker uses the non-deictic *na* as an anaphor for textual cohesiveness.

(2) Anaphor: relative pronoun usages.

This second subtype has an equivalent use of relative pronouns in English where *na* is used either as *who* (human) or *which* (non-human) when modifying the noun beside it.

Examples:

1. *mga kaibigan* [*na*] *hindi kayo ipapahamak*
= relative pronoun who
(friends [who] would not bring you to harm's way)
2. *Lahat lahat ng palay sinira ng mga baling* [*na*] *galing sa karatig bayan.*
= relative pronoun which
(All the rice grain was eaten by the insects [which] came from the nearby town.)

Conclusion

In Filipino, the word *na* may be used not merely as a demonstrative but may also function as an infinitive (the counterpart of the English infinitive *to*), an adverb, a relative pronoun, and even an equivalent of the English perfect tense categories. Because of the multifarious nature of *na*, it is a word that frequently appears in spoken discourses. This study showed that *na* in its deictic and anaphoric function further demonstrates this multifarious identity. The use of *na* as a deixis applies in its function as a demonstrative pronoun (exophoric symbolic) and spatial/temporal adverb deixis. Whereas the anaphoric use of *na* is shown in its function as a relative pronoun and the non-deictic *na* use. The latter anaphoric function is necessary in Filipino to achieve grammatical well-formedness of certain utterances. This non-deictic *na* use connects the matrix clause to the subordinate one as a relative pronoun functioning as an adjective clause.

In Filipino spoken usage, it appears that deictic categories are less definite. The interlocutors are able to know the point of reference through focusing not on the agents themselves but on the action, event, or ideas spoken about. There is a tendency for Filipino utterances to exhibit the speakers' self-effacing attitude. In Filipino, the action is stated first before the agent (deictic I or me). The findings of this study show that deictic and anaphoric categories have a distinct application, situational interpretation and structure in Filipino and may be used as a method of descriptive analysis for comparative study of deictic and anaphoric use for future research.

As language teachers in a bilingual or even multilingual context, there is a need for these teachers to grasp and use the pragmatic component in language learning and language acquisition. In the Philippine context, the mother tongue of the majority of students nationwide is not Filipino but their regional language. In addition, the bilingual policy in Philippine schools requires both Filipino and English as the medium of instruction. Thus, learning two target languages, which in many instances are rarely used outside of the classroom, is quite a feat. Viewed from this perspective, pragmatics is a useful tool in deciding language learning approaches, styles, and strategies, realizing that pragmatic components, when

applied in different languages vary in form, order and function which are largely a cultural construct.

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Endnote

¹ This example in the analytic framework for indicated anaphoric uses were taken from the *Tagalog-English Dictionary* authored by Leo James English (1986) because the anaphoric use of *whom* was not applied in the discourse analysis transcription data used in the study.

² Slash [/] is the symbol used to represent a juncture and the horizontal arrow [->] is the symbol for subordinate clause marker.

About the Author

Miren M. Morales is presently pursuing a Ph.D in Applied Linguistics at De La Salle University, Manila, Philippines. She earned two degrees from the University of the Philippines, Diliman; namely, Bachelor of Secondary Education and M.A. English Studies: Language. She has taught English, Communication, and Language Education courses for nine years in both private and public tertiary level schools in the Philippines. Her research interests include pragmatics, dramaturgy, World Englishes, and Bilingual Education. (e-mail addresses: miren.morales@dlsu.edu.ph; poshimoochie@yahoo.com)