

FORMS AND MEANINGS OF THE THAI PARTICLE *na*

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0. SUMMARY OF ARTICLE

The form *na* belongs to the class of sentential postposition particles. It has five primary variants, /ná/, /nâ/, /náa/, /nâa/ and /naa/, each of which signals the message that some response is desired or expected by the speaker, and each of which also signals some distinctive meaning of its own. These five primary variants can also be subjected to secondary modifications involving changes in volume, pitch, extra vowel length and terminal /h/, thus expressing things such as semantic intensification, hostility and personal concern. This paper describes and exemplifies in some detail the meaning and usage of each of the primary variants, and also briefly discusses the nature and effect of the secondary modifications.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 FOCUS OF STUDY

This article¹ provides a fairly detailed study of the varied forms and meanings of a single Thai particle *na*,² a form which signals a speaker's desire for or expectation of a response from the addressee. This paper is also, in effect, a continuation of the similar one dealing with the particle *si* (signalling an expectable response). And both papers were, in turn, originally conceived as parts of a still larger whole – as precursors to a more general investigation of the whole sentence-final particle system, with each paper providing a part of the necessary database of detailed information on the different particles within that system.

This larger investigation of the particle system has since been completed (see the monograph above), but the present paper, along with the previous one on *si*, provides a more detailed picture of the relevant phenomena than was possible in the wider study. I therefore present this paper as a fuller and more narrowly focused view of the behaviour and usage of this one particle. And I also present it as a sort of microcosm of the kinds of patterns and processes to be encountered in the larger particle system.

1.2 SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A large part of my data and conclusions has been derived from direct questioning and discussion with native speakers of Thai.³ I have also gleaned examples of usage from novels and short stories, but this usage has in turn been checked against that of native speakers whom I have questioned. In addition I have consulted such few scholarly works⁴ as were available at the time I conducted my research, but these have figured only minimally in the present work – partly because this paper is primarily data oriented, and partly also because I have already discussed the relevant literature elsewhere (1979).

1.3 GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF *na*

The form *na* belongs to the class of sentential postposition particles, and it is one of a pair of such forms (the other being *si*) that belong in a class by themselves, for these two forms are subject to more, and more clearly defined, variation in form and meaning than any other postposition particle except the speaker-addressee-relationship particle *wa*.

The variations of *na*, upon which this paper is large focused, may be viewed in terms of primary variants on the one hand, and secondary modifications on the other. The primary variants are /ná/, /nâ/, /náa/, /nâa/ and /naa/,⁵ and all of these convey the message that the speaker wants or expects some response from the addressee, whether by way of action (or non-action), agreement, acquiescence, confirmation of information. Each particular variant conveys some additional shade of meaning that distinguishes it from any of the others. The secondary modifications are elements of volume, pitch, vowel length and terminal /h/ that can occur with the primary variants to further modify or add to their meanings, expressing things such as impatience, urgency, deepened concern.

1.4 PROPOSED TREATMENT OF SUBJECT MATTER

My approach in handling the phenomena at hand will be first to discuss, in turn, each of the primary variants, to provide examples of occurrences in various types of usage, and to account for the meaning each shares with other variants and for that which distinguishes them. Then I shall discuss the secondary modifications, and I shall conclude with a general summary that attempts to pull the phenomena together in a reasonably comprehensive and coherent manner.

2. THE PRIMARY VARIANT /ná/

Of all the primary variants mentioned above, /ná/ is undoubtedly the most common; it also occurs in the widest variety of kinds or contexts of usage. It will be helpful, therefore, to take this variant first.

2.1 USAGE OF /ná/ IN VARIOUS CONTEXTS

This may be illustrated by examples 1-37 below. These examples are arranged according to four fairly well defined types of usage: action-inducement utterances (examples 1-15); statements eliciting agreement or acquiescence (16-25); questions (26-30); and vocatives (31-37).

In all types of usage, the occurrence of /ná/ signals the general meaning (shared with other variants of *na*) that the speaker wants and calls for a given response from the addressee. In addition, most occurrences convey the sense of a mild question in which the speaker asks for a given response by way of action, acknowledgment, agreement or acquiescence. Such occurrences also imply that the speaker does, in fact, expect the response in question and often simply assumes that that response will be forthcoming. The general effect of the /ná/ in most of its occurrences is very similar to that of English expressions such as, 'okay?', 'huh?', 'won't you?', 'would you (please)?', 'isn't it?', 'did you get that?', 'are you with me?'.

There are, however, cases where the /ná/ conveys hostility, irritation or rebuke. In such usage the addressee is or has been showing some resistance to or neglect of the speaker's wishes, and the latter expresses himself or herself accordingly. Often, too, the speaker conveys his or her displeasure by raising the volume and perhaps also the pitch of the utterance.⁶

In the examples cited below, and throughout this paper, each vocabulary item in a given Thai sentence is identified by a subscript number, and the sentence is accompanied by a translation that includes glosses to match each numbered item. However, particles (whose meanings are often vague and difficult to handle) are neither numbered nor glossed. Also, in cases where the English translation leaves no satisfactory place for providing particular numbered glosses, a literal translation of the given sentence, or a relevant part thereof is provided within parentheses, and this literal translation is accompanied by the appropriate numbered glosses. Square brackets mark information as to possible situations in which the given utterance might occur. Where more than one such situation is specified, the different possibilities are identified as a, b, c etc.

As for the English renderings of the Thai examples cited here and throughout the paper, it will be noted that I have often provided colloquial speech translations. This reflects the fact that the Thai utterances themselves have or may have a colloquial flavour. Furthermore, in a number of cases I have found it necessary to render a given sentence in American colloquial speech, since this is the only colloquial I can handle with sensitivity. This means, unfortunately, that some of my renderings may lack clarity or stylistic acceptability for readers who are not at home with American colloquial speech. If so, I can only apologise in advance for any resulting obscurities and infelicities.

2.1.1 ACTION-INDUCEMENT UTTERANCES WITH /ná/

These are utterances of various kinds in which the speaker is prompting the addressee to perform, or not perform, some particular action. They include commands (examples 1a, 1b, 2a, 3a, 4a, 5a), instructions or warnings (1c, 2b, 3b, 3c, 4b, 5b, 5c, 6, 7), requests (8-12) and invitations (13-15).

2.1.1.1 EXAMPLES OF ACTION-INDUCEMENT UTTERANCES

(1) /pàet pratuu ná./

1 2

'Open the door!' 'Hey, open the door!' '(Now) open the door. Got it?'

1 2

[a. A child has deliberately locked the door against his mother, and the latter is expressing her impatience. b. A parent is demanding for the second or third time that the child do as he is told. c. Speaker is giving one of a series of instructions for setting up a trap.]

- (2) /yàa dđu ná./

1 2
 'Don't be (so) stubborn!' 'Don't act up now, okay?'

1 2
 [a. Parent rebukes a child for refusing to do as she is told. b. Parent is leaving daughter with a babysitter and gives the child a good-natured warning to behave herself.]

- (3) /pay rewrew ná./

1 2
 (go quickly) 'Hurry up and get going?' 'Be as quick as you can, okay?'

1 2
 'Hurry back now.'

[a. Parent is rebuking child for dawdling. b. Mother is sending child off on an errand and urges him to hurry. c. A friend is off to buy something that both he and the speaker need.]

- (4) /yàa càp ná dđaw tòk tèek./

1 2 3 4 5
 (don't grasp, in a minute (it will) fall break) 'Don't touch that, you'll break it.'

1 2 3 4 5
 [a. Adult angrily warns child for the umpteenth time not to touch a fragile vase. b. Adult gives child a first-time, good-natured warning.]

- (5) /sày sđa tua deej ná./

1 2 3
 'Put (that) red shirt on (right now)!' 'Wear the red shirt, okay?'

1 3 2 1 3 2
 [a. Child is refusing to do as he is told. b. Child has raised the question as to what shirt to wear, and Mother tells him what she wants. c. Wife tells husband what she wants him to wear for the special occasion she is planning.]

- (6) /loj pây nđa ná./

1 2 3
 'Get off at the next stop, okay?'

1 3 2
 [Bus driver or fellow passenger instructs someone where to get off the bus.]

- (7) /dđe:n trøj pay thaaj nđi ná. phoò thđj sđi yêek ná, léew líaw sáy ná.../

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
 (walk straight going this way, when reach intersection, then turn left.)

1 2 3 5 4 6 7 8,9 10 11 12
 'Walk straight ahead this way, okay? And when you reach the intersection, turn left. Got it?...'

[Speaker gives directions to addressee.]

(Note, here, that the /ná/ is added at the end of each one of a series of sentences or clauses. Note too, however, that the members of such a series need not all be action-inducement utterances.)

- (8) /khǒo nāŋ dūay khon ná./
 1 2 3 4
 (request sit with (you) (one) person) ‘May I join you?’ ‘May I have a seat?’
 1 2 3 4
 [Speaker checks before seating himself with a friend or acquaintance.]
- (9) /khǒo námsôm nōy ná./
 1 2 3
 (request orange-juice just-this-little-thing)
 1 2 3
 ‘May I?’ ‘Is it okay if I help myself to some orange juice?’ ‘May I have some orange juice?’
 [a. Speaker checks before helping himself. b. Speaker asks his neighbour to fill his glass for him.]
 (Note that if the speaker were making the request of someone standing there for the express purpose of serving, he would use the particle /sí/ or perhaps /thǎ?/.)
- (10) /khǒo khanǒm ná, ná, ná, ná./
 1 2
 (request pastry) ‘Can I have a cookie, huh? Please? Huh? Huh?’
 1 2
 [Child begs mother, who is either refusing or not listening.]
- (11) /chūay pǎet línchák hāy thii ná./
 1 2 3 4 5
 (help open drawer for (me) (just this one) time)
 1 2 3 4 5
 ‘Would you mind opening the drawer for me, please?’
- (12) /yìp dīnsǎo hāy phǒm ná./
 1 2 3 4
 (grasp pencil for me)
 1 2 3 4
 ‘Hand me the pencil, would you?’
 [Friend or employee is close to the pencil, and speaker asks him/her to pass it.]
- (13) /chǎen nāŋ ná./
 1 2
 (invite sit) ‘Please, won’t you have a seat.’
 1 2
 [Hostess is called out of the room just as guest arrives, and she wants the latter to make himself comfortable while he is waiting.]
- (14) /chǎen maa thǎaw kan ʔiik ná./
 1 2 3 4 5
 (invite come visit together again)
 1 2 3 4 5
 ‘Do come again, won’t you?’ ‘You all come again, huh?’

(15) /chəən taam sabaay ná./

1 2 3
(invite follow comfortable) 'Please make yourself at home.'

1 2 3
[Host or hostess leaving guest to his own devices.]

2.1.1.2 DISCUSSION OF ACTION-INDUCEMENT UTTERANCES

With the above examples at hand, we are now in a position to take a closer look at the various types of usage of action-inducement utterances (hereafter referred to as AIU's) with /ná/. I shall therefore discuss these in turn, taking them up in more or less the order they have been exemplified above.

Command usage (see examples 1-5) involves issuing a direct order or flat demand to the addressee that the latter act in accordance with the speaker's desire or wish. It also implies that the addressee is or has been acting, or is about to act, contrary to the speaker's wishes, either as previously expressed, or as those wishes should have been known and understood. It therefore always comes across as aggressive, impatient, hostile, demanding, and this hostility is very often, though not always, expressed by a raising of the pitch and volume of the utterance in question. In effect the speaker is saying, 'You do this (or else...)!', 'Get busy and do as I tell you!', 'I told you to do this. Now do it!', 'Don't you do that! You hear?'.

Note, further, that any AIU with /ná/ that does not clearly come across as instruction (including good-natured warnings), or as a request or an invitation, will be understood in this hostile, demanding sense. It will not be taken as a good-natured and friendly suggestion. For example, an utterance such as item (1) above ('Open the door!'), will almost invariably convey hostility and impatience, for the sentence as it stands lacks any such words as /nɔ̃y/ '(just this) little (thing)' or /chəən/ 'please' to mark it as a request or invitation. Furthermore, very few contexts come readily to mind that might mark it as instructional. (Context (1c) is one such instructional context, though I must confess that I took a very long time fishing for it before I found it.) But when such a sentence does occur in a clearly instructional context there need be no implication of impatience or hostile demand.

Instructional utterances (see relevant contexts in examples 1-7) presuppose that the addressee is in the position of being directed or admonished in some manner, whether as a pupil by a teacher, a child by a parent, an employee by an employer, or as a person temporarily open to receive directions from another (as when one asks for directions or voluntarily undertakes an errand for a friend). They are of two general types: first, simple instructions telling the addressee what to do (examples 5b, 5c, 6), or how to proceed in a sequence of actions (examples 1c, 7); and second, admonitions. These latter may involve prompting the addressee to do in a desirable manner (quickly, well, carefully etc.) some action that he or she is already committed to do (example 3b, 3c), or they may involve admonishing or warning the addressee not to do something he or she is about to do, or perhaps has done in similar circumstances in the past (examples 2b, 4b).

Ordinarily, instructional usage comes across as friendly and concerned (otherwise it would cease to be instruction and instead become hostile command). And frequently, also, it conveys the sense that the speaker is checking with the addressee to make sure that the latter hears or understands the instructions and will act accordingly. The general effect approximates that of English expressions such as 'okay?', 'are you with me?', 'got that?', '(you'll do it) won't you, huh?'.

Note also, in passing, that instructions with /ná/, and commands too, may be either positive or negative. When they are negative, however, they are always preventive rather than corrective. That is, the speaker is seeking to prevent the addressee from doing something he has not yet done, not to correct or rebuke him for doing what he is already doing. Thus example 4 above ('Don't touch that!') would be impossible if the child had already picked up the vase; rather, in such a case, the speaker would use the particle /sî/, or else he would issue a positive command such as plòy ná/ 'Let go of it!'.

Requests (examples 3-12), as the term implies, involve asking the addressee for something: for help, food, a desired object; for permission; or perhaps for acquiescence in something the speaker wants to do. Ordinarily such utterances will be signalled by words such as the following: /chûay/ 'to help' (i.e. 'please help me by ...'); /khǎo/ 'to request' (i.e. 'I request (something)', 'I request permission to...'); /nòy/ 'a little', 'just this little request'; /thii/ '(one) time', '(just this) once'; or even (in relaxed, superior-to-inferior or intimate-to-intimate situations) just the word /hây/ 'for (me)'.

Usually requests with /ná/ convey relaxed friendliness, with the expectation that the request will be granted. But they may also be raised in pitch and volume to express impatience, and occasionally a speaker, usually a child, will express insistence by repeating the /ná/ over and over again if his request is not granted (example 10).

Invitations involve the offer of some kindness to the addressee, usually in a host-to-guest situation. It should be noted, however, that /ná/ only occurs with what I call deferred-hospitality invitations. These are invitations in which the speaker is inviting someone to enjoy some act of hospitality at a later time (example 14) or ones in which the speaker wishes to extend hospitality, but for the moment cannot fulfill his/her office as a host/hostess or friend (examples 13, 15). An instance of the latter type of invitation might occur if the phone were to ring just as a hostess was opening the door to a guest, and so she invites him in, leaving him to his own resources as she goes to answer the phone. Or perhaps a hostess might invite a guest to be seated while she leaves to fix some drinks. In invitations, then, of the kinds described above, the particle /ná/ could be used, but it would not ordinarily be used if the host or hostess were simply inviting a guest to come in, or be seated, or have a drink, under more normal circumstances.⁷

2.1.1.3 COMPARISON OF /ná/ WITH OTHER AIU PARTICLES

In order to clarify the meaning and function of /ná/ in AIU situations it may be helpful to compare its usage with that of a couple of other particles which likewise function in AIU contexts: the particle /thəʔ/, which signals the speaker's call for desirable response; and the particle /sî/, which signals expectable response. The form /ná/, then, calls for some action that the speaker wants or wishes the addressee to perform. The form /thəʔ/ calls for an action that the speaker feels is good, desirable, the thing to do. And the form /sî/ calls for an action that anyone might urge or expect the addressee to do under the circumstances. Any one of the forms might convey its distinctive message in the form of commands, prompts, requests or invitations.

Thus any of the three forms might be used, for example, in urging someone to 'open the door'. The form /ná/ (as we have seen in example (1) above) might occur in the following situations: a. Father is making the demand of a child who has deliberately closed the door against him; b. Child has ignored or failed to respond to an earlier request or command (which, incidentally, might have been issued using the particle /sî/); c. Speaker gives one of a series of instructions for setting up a trap with a door.

SEMANTIC SUMMARY		/ná/	/thàʔ/	/sî/
	Basic Meaning	Response desired by speaker: 'I want you to...'	Desirable response called for: 'I urge you to do the desirable thing.'	Expectable response called for: 'You should do the expectable thing.'
	General flavour	From mild and friendly to hostile and demanding	Non-aggressive and usually friendly	Expects proper response; may be bossy or critical
TYPES OF USAGE	COMMANDS Strong	Very aggressive and demanding: 'I demand that you do as I wish/say!'	(None)	Aggressive and bossy: 'Why don't you do as you ought!' 'Why don't you do as you're told!'
	Mild	Instructing or admonishing; friendly and concerned	Urging: '(It's desirable/ time to do it, so) go ahead and...' 'I think you should...'	Suggesting, urging; especially for some good reason beneficial to addressee
	Positive vs. Negative	Freely occurs, both positive and negative	Almost always positive. Negative only with verbs expressing negative emotions: 'Don't worry', 'Don't feel hurt' etc.	Freely occurs positive. Negatives are corrective or must point to good reason for negative preventive command.
	Corrective vs. Preventive	Negatives must be preventive*; positives may be corrective.	Only corrective: 'I think you should...' 'I urge you to desist from...'	Often corrective; preventive only if compelling reason is given.
	'Let's...'	'Let's..., okay?'	'Let's...' 'I think we should...now' 'Why don't we...'	'Let's...' (since it's time to do it; since it's the thing to do)
	Requests	'Would you (please) give me the help/ permission I need.' 'May I?' 'It's okay if I..., isn't it?'	'I think it would be good if you give me the help/permission I need' 'I urge you (please) to...'	'I assume (under the circumstances) you will give me the help/ permission I need.'
	Invitations	Only deferred-hospitality invitations*: '(I can't take care of you now, so) please...' '(Sometime) please...'	'I encourage you to...' 'Please go ahead and ...'	'I invite you to meet your obvious present need.' (No need to hold back.)
	Non-AIU	Signals desire for response and occurs with statements, questions, vocatives	(None)	Signals <i>speaker's</i> expectable or assured response to statements, questions, noteworthy phenomena; or signals inferential utterance

* Note that this limitation upon the occurrence of /ná/ in this context applies only to the variant /ná/, not to any of the other primary variants.

FIGURE A: A COMPARISON OF AIU PARTICLES /ná/, /thàʔ/ AND /sî/

By way of contrast, the form /thəʔ/ might occur as follows: a. Employer notices it is time to open the store to the public and politely tells employee to open the door; b. Speaker notices that someone is suffering from heat and instructs addressee to let some air in to relieve that person; c. Addressee has shown indications that he is afraid the speaker won't like having the door open, and the latter urges him to go ahead; d. Parent instructs child to open the door of a cage in order to release a wild bird the child has imprisoned. Note that in each of the above situations the speaker perceives something that in his judgement is desirable, or needs to be done, and then calls for an action response.

Finally, /sī/ might be used in the following situations: a. It is the employee's regular, assigned duty to open the store at a given time, and the employer sees that time has come but the employee hasn't acted yet; b. Speaker, whose hands are full, approaches closed door and addressee is right there (speaker may either be calling attention to his need, or he may be rebuking addressee for not noticing and responding); c. Addressee has just complained about how hot the room is.

Obviously it would be possible to multiply examples of the sort given above, and if we did so we would certainly find an almost infinite variety of situations calling for a choice between the three particles I am comparing.⁸ We would certainly find, also, that there were many cases where the choice seemed arbitrary. Unfortunately, I cannot hope to shed light on all problems of this sort, but in Figure A I have attempted to summarise some of the pertinent facts and distinctions with respect to the occurrence of these particles. I have, furthermore, attempted to make the figure self-explanatory, so without further comment I shall move on from my discussion of AIU's with /ná/ to a consideration of /ná/ in statements.

2.1.2 STATEMENTS WITH /ná/

These are utterances in which the speaker states a fact, expresses an opinion, tells about his expectations, provides an explanation, or whatever, and then (by his use of /ná/) conveys his expectation or request for agreement or acquiescence. The net result is a question much like English questions ending with 'huh?', 'isn't it?', 'right?', 'don't you think so?', 'okay?', 'are you with me?', 'did you get what I'm saying?' and so forth. Such utterances are usually relaxed and friendly, with the speaker fully expecting (though not demanding) the response he seeks. But they may sometimes express impatience, often signalled by raised volume (example 19); or the /ná/ may be repeated to express insistence (example 17).

Note that statements with /ná/ often accompany some other utterance which comprises either a direct or indirect AIU. Thus, for example, sentences 18A and 18B contain the same identical /ná/ statement: /dǐaw tòk tèek/ 'in a moment it will fall and break', but note that in 18A this is accompanied by a clear AIU, /yàa.../ 'don't...'; and in 18B it is accompanied by a 'why' question that really constitutes an oblique AIU asking the addressee to do something.

(16) /pəət pratuu ná./

1 2

'I'm opening the door, okay?' 'Mind if I open the door?'

1 2

[The room is hot, and the speaker checks with the addressee as he opens the door.

Cf. example 1, above.]

- (17) /nũu ca pay lên ná mề, ná, ná, ná./

1 2 3 4 5

'I'm going to go play, okay? Mom? Huh? Okay?'

1 2 3 4 5

[Child speaking to mother who is either not listening or shows signs of objecting.]

- (18A) /dĩaw tòk tèek ná. yàa càp ləəy./

1 2 3 4 5 6

(in a minute fall break, don't grasp)

1 2 3 4,6 5

'Watch out, it'll break. Don't touch it.' 'Don't touch that; you'll drop it and break it.'

- (18B) /dĩaw tòk tèek ná. thammay mây pay lên khốnlên ?àun./

1 2 3 4 5 6

'Whoa, next thing you're going to break that. Why don't you go play with some

1 2 3 4

other toy.'

6 5

- (19) /chán mây chòp ná. yàa hây chán càp dāay ?iik ná.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

(I not like, don't let me be able to catch again)

1 2 3 4 5 6 8 7 9

'You know, I didn't like that, (you hear?). Don't let me catch you doing it again.'

[Boss rebuking employee.]

- (20) /ʔaakàat dii ná. wannii pay thāw kan pen ɲay./

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

(weather good how would it be to go for pleasure together today)

1 2 8 7 4 5 6 3

'It's great weather, isn't it? What do you say we go off on a jaunt today?'

- (21) /pratuu ná./

1

'Door here!' 'Watch it, we're coming to a door.'

1

[Speaker is leading a blind man and warns him of approaching obstacle.]

- (22) /mề, phũuyĩŋ khon nán sũay ná./

1 2 3 4 5

'Oo, that girl is pretty, isn't she?'

1 3,4 2 5

- (23) /thəə ca pay nêe ná./

1 2 3 4

(you will go surely) 'You're going for sure, aren't you?'

1 2 3 4

[Host is counting on friend's help at party, and wants to make sure the latter will be there.]

- (24) /nǐi dèk phũuchaay ná. léew nân sǎa khǒŋ kháw ná. duu mǎan kamlan rǒŋ phleer ná./
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13
 'This is a boy, see? And that's his shirt. It looks like (he)'s singing, doesn't it?'
 1 2,3 4 5 7,8 6 9 10 11,12,13
 [Adult is explaining a picture of a boy to a child.]

- (25) /ʔəə ná, ləum pay./
 1 2 3
 'Oh, sure-enough! I'd forgotten about that.' 'Oh, that's right, isn't it! I forgot.'
 1 3 2
 [a. Speaker has just been reminded of an engagement. b. Mathematician has just been reminded of a forgotten minus sign.]

2.1.3 QUESTIONS WITH /ná/

These may be either yes/no questions (see examples 29, 30 below) or content questions (those that ask 'who?', 'what?', 'why?' etc. — see 26-28). Note, moreover, that these utterances already constitute questions before the particle /ná/ is added. In this respect they differ from the questions described and exemplified in section 2.1.2 above, for the latter are statements to begin with and only become questions with the addition of /ná/. In any event, when /ná/ is added to utterances that are already questions, it signals a question that is one of at least four main types.

The first type is the informal question, much like English questions ending in 'huh?' (see examples 26a, 27, 28a, 29a, 30). The second type is what we might call a 'please repeat' question. Here the addressee has just said something (either in the form of a statement or an answer to a previous question) that the speaker did not hear, is uncertain he heard or understood correctly, or is surprised or puzzled by, so he asks for a repetition. In such usage, then, /ná/ conveys much the same kind of thing as English does in questions with high intonation and terminal rise in pitch: 'What was it you wanted?', 'Who did you say you went with?', 'When was it you got home?' etc. (see examples 26b, 26c, 28b). Questions of this sort are usually also uttered in Thai with raised pitch.

A third type of question is the self-directed question, where something requiring an answer confronts the speaker, but that answer is not immediately available. In such usage the /ná/ question will ordinarily be a mild and momentary passing question, much like English questions introduced by the expression, 'Hm, I wonder (who/what/whether/etc.)...' (see examples 26d, 27, 28c, 29b).

The fourth type of question might be described as a bafflement-complaint question. This always involves an element of puzzlement or bafflement as the speaker comes up against a situation, an attitude, a behaviour that bothers him or that he does not understand. And it also involves an element of complaint, as the speaker asks why or how such a thing can be. Hence such questions are always how or why questions (rather than who, when, where etc.), and they are questions (whether directed to the addressee, to himself, or to no one in particular) to which the speaker does not really expect an answer. Rather, he is expressing his sense that some situation should not be as it is, and is reacting in complaint and puzzlement (see example 28d).

- (26) /pay nǎy ná./
 1 2
 'Where're you going, huh?' 'Where'd you say you were going?'
 2 1

'I wonder where he went.'

[a. Speaker asks a relaxed, informal question as addressee starts to leave. b. Speaker didn't quite hear what addressee said and asks for a repetition. c. Speaker can't quite believe his ears when addressee says a friend is going to Peking. d. Speaker notices someone leave the room and idly wonders to himself where the latter went.]

(27) /sǎŋ ʔaray ná./

1 2

'What's (that) noise?' 'I wonder what that noise is.'

2 1

(28) /thammay kháw mây tòp ná./

1 2 3 4

'Why doesn't he answer?'

1 3 2 4

'Do you happen to know why he doesn't answer?' 'Why did you say it was he didn't answer?' 'Hm, I wonder why he doesn't answer.' 'Why in the world doesn't he answer, anyway?'

[a. Speaker asks simple, friendly question. b. Speaker asks for repetition of information given by addressee. c. Speaker wonders, in passing, about the lack of response from the person in question. d. Speaker is baffled or annoyed by the lack of response and voices his complaint.]

(29) /nân khây kày rá khây pèt ná./

1 2 3 4 5

'Are those chicken eggs or duck eggs, huh?'

1 3 2 5 4

'Are those chicken eggs or duck eggs, I wonder?'

[a. Speaker asks informal question of addressee. b. Speaker momentarily tries to recall what he has previously learned about the difference between duck eggs and chicken eggs.]

(30) /thəə ca khít thǎŋ chán bāŋ máy ná./

1 2 3 4 5 6

(you will think about me some?)

1 2 3 4 5 6

'Are you going to miss me, huh?' [Speaker is about to go abroad.]

2.1.4 VOCATIVES WITH /ná/

The particle /ná/ can also occur following or, occasionally, bracketed by names, nouns and pronouns that are used as vocatives; the resulting vocative /ná/ phrase will ordinarily accompany a main clause or sentence that carries the burden of the speaker's message. This main clause may be an AIU (but not a command) (examples 31-34), a statement eliciting agreement or acquiescence (35, 36), or a bafflement-complaint question (but usually not any other kind of question) (example 37). Very often both the vocative phrase and the accompanying main clause will end in /ná/, and the implications of the /ná/ will be identical in both occurrences; that is, both will convey the message 'won't you please?', 'don't you agree?', 'huh?' or whatever. Then the vocative /ná/ phrase as a whole is used to

call the addressee's attention, to render the speaker's message more intimate and personal, or to highlight the speaker's baffled complaint.

In most cases, the vocative /ná/ phrase may either precede or follow the main clause it accompanies, but if the vocative phrase precedes, the effect of the vocative will be a little more forceful. Also, there will be an intensification of meaning if the vocative name, noun or pronoun brackets the /ná/ – that is, where the name, noun or pronoun is repeated both before and after the particle (see example 37).

- (31) /yàa d̥əu ná, t̥ɔy ná./

1 2 3
'Now don't be difficult, okay, Toy?'

1 2 3
[Parent is leaving child nicknamed Toy with babysitter.]

- (32) /pay rewrew ná, thəə ná./

1 2 3
(go quickly you) 'Hurry back now, okay?'

1 2 3
[Parent or friend is sending addressee off on errand.]

- (33) /nón̄ ná, sày s̥iia tua d̥eɛŋ ná./

1 2 3 4 5
'Sis, I want you to wear the red blouse, okay?'

1 2 4 5 3
[Older sister is instructing younger sister what to wear to a party.]

- (34) /d̥eɛŋ ná, ch̥uay yìp d̥ins̥ɔ̌ h̥ay n̄ɔy ná./

1 2 3 4 5 6
(red help grasp pencil for (me) this-small-request)

1 2 3 4 5 6
'Say Red, would you hand me the pencil, please.'

- (35) /ph̥uay̌ŋ khon nán̄ s̥uay ná, l̥ék ná./

1 2 3 4 5
'That girl is pretty, huh. Don't you think so, Lek?'

2,3 1 4

- (36) /m̄eə ná, chán̄ ca sày s̥iia tua n̄i ná./

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
'Hey, Mom, I'm going to wear this shirt, okay?'

1 2 3 4 6,7 5

- (37) /t̥ɔy ná t̥ɔy, tham̄may m̄ay bòok l̄a./

1 1 2 3 4 5
'Oh, Toy, why didn't you tell me!'

1 2,5 3 4

[Speaker shakes his head in annoyance and bafflement over Toy's failure. He might be speaking directly to Toy; or he might be speaking in Toy's absence, as if to Toy, employing what might be termed a displaced vocative usage.]

3. OTHER PRIMARY VARIANTS OF *na*

The remaining primary variants, /nâ/, /náa/, /nâa/ and /naa/, share with /ná/ the basic meaning or idea that the speaker wants some response from the addressee. In addition to this meaning, each variant conveys an additional meaning that distinguishes it from all the others. I now discuss each of these other variants in turn.

3.1 THE VARIANT /nâ/

This variant, like /ná/, may occur with AIU's, statements and vocatives, but, unlike /ná/, it never occurs affixed to questions of any kind.⁹ In all contexts it conveys the sense of momentary persuasion or urging. That is, the speaker is persuading or urging the addressee to act (or not to act) in a given way, or to heed, acknowledge, acquiesce to, respond to some statement, action, or need of the speaker, but the persuasion or urging is not sustained, pursued or pressed. It is fleeting, momentary. In many contexts, too, /nâ/ may convey a passing and moderate but restrained impatience. That is, the speaker is distressed or impatient about something, and reacts with brief and comparatively mild displeasure or annoyance, urging the relevant response from the addressee. But again, the urging is momentary rather than sustained; there is no begging or pressing for the response in question.

We can say, then, that /nâ/ is differentiated from /ná/ by the element of telling or urging, which the latter lacks. Thus in the context of commands, /nâ/ urges rather than demands; in the context of requests, it tells rather than asks the addressee what to do; and in the context of statements, it urges acquiescence, confirmation or whatever, rather than requesting or urging it.

3.1.1 ACTION-INDUCEMENT UTTERANCES WITH /nâ/

This variant may occur with a variety of AIU's, including commands, requests and even invitations. However, instructional usage, in the strict sense, does not occur, since utterances that might otherwise be instructions become mild commands as soon as /nâ/ is added. Unlike the case of /ná/, negative AIU's with /nâ/ may be either preventive or corrective.

(38) /chim duu nâ./

1 2
(taste see) 'Go ahead and taste it.'

1 2
[Speaker gently, unemphatically urges addressee to try a new dish he seems reluctant to sample.]

(39) /pəət pratuu nâ. yàa dâu læy./

1 2 3 4 5
'Okay now, open the door! Don't be (so) difficult!'

1 2 3,5 4
(The combination /yàa ... læy/ makes for a milder command than /yàa/ by itself.)

- (40) /ŋiáp ŋiáp nâ. phûu yàw kháw ca khuy kan./
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
 (be quiet, grownups they will chat together)
 1 2,3 4 5 6 7
 'Do be quiet, now. (We) grownups want to talk.'
- (41) /yàa klêɛŋ nâ. khon kamlaŋ pùat hǔa./
 1 2 3 4 5 6
 (don't pester, person is having aching head)
 1 2 3 4 5 6
 'Do quit pestering me. I have a headache.'
- (42) /yìp dɪnsǔw hǎy chán nòy nâ.
 1 2 3 4 5
 (grasp pencil for me a little)
 1 2 3 4 5
 'All right now, hand me the pencil.' 'Come on, give me that pencil, will you?'
- (43) /chœn nâŋ nâ./
 1 2
 'Come now, please sit down.'

3.1.2 STATEMENTS WITH /nâ/

These are of two kinds: statements that form the basis of some kind of inducement to action or non-action; and those that contradict something the addressee has said. In either case, the speaker is responding with restrained impatience to some contrary action, attitude, belief or opinion of the addressee, and is partly urging, partly expecting, the desired response. Note, also, that statements with /nâ/, unlike those with /ná/, remain statements after the particle is added; they do not change to become questions.

- (44) /yɛn léew nâ. raw tɔŋ pay cɪŋcɪŋ./
 1 2 3 4 5 6
 'It's evening already. We really have to go.'
 1 2 3 6 4 5
 [a. Host has been delaying the speaker and his wife beyond the time when they must leave. b. Speaker and addressee have gone to a party together, and the latter is lingering beyond departure time.]
- (45) /lûuk kamlaŋ mây sabaay nâ. pay plòp man nòy ná./
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8
 'Look dear, he doesn't feel good. Why don't you go comfort him, huh?' (this little thing)
 1 2,3 4 5 6 7 8
 [Father has been complaining about the child's whining, and Mother points out the problem, urging Father to comfort her.]

- (46) /khon kamlaŋ pùat hũa nâ. yàa maa klêɛŋ ləəy./
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8
 'Look, I've got a headache. Please don't come pestering me.'
 1 2 3,4 5,8 6 7
 (Cf. example 41 above.)
- (47) /kháw khon ca maa nâ. thəə mây tɔŋ wítòk./
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8
 'Look now, she's sure to come. No need to worry.' (you)
 1 2,3 4 6 7 8 5
- (48) /ʔəə nâ. yàa phũut mâak pay./
 1 2 3 4 5
 (all right, don't speak too much)
 1 2 3 4 5
 'All right, all right! Say no more.'
 [Addressee has been nagging speaker about something, and the speaker finally acquiesces.]
- (49) /mây hễn sũay ləəy. ʔiik khon sũay kwàa nâ./
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8
 'I don't think she's pretty at all! The other one is pretti-er.'
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8
- (50) /khon mây tòk nâ. hễn máy. phráʔaathít ʔòok maa léew./
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
 'Aw, it surely won't rain. See? The sun's coming out now.'
 1 2 3 4 5 6 8 7 9
 [Addressee has just expressed his opinion that it's going to rain.]

3.1.3 VOCATIVES WITH /nâ/

In all cases where vocatives occur with /nâ/ they are accompanied by AIU's, never by statements. And the action or non-action in question is urged upon the addressee over against some opposing behaviour that the speaker feels negative about. Also, again, the speaker is holding back his irritation by resorting to urging or persuasion, with the expectation that the response he desires will be forthcoming. Ordinarily, vocatives will precede the AIU that they accompany; their function is to call the addressee's attention to the action or non-action being called for. The /nâ/, then, in each case, has the same flavour as the /nâ/ of the accompanying AIU.

- (51) /lũuk nâ, pay rewrew nâ./
 1 2 3
 (child, go quickly) 'Here now, do hurry up.' 'Come dear, I want you to hurry.'
 1 2 3
 [a. Child is dawdling about getting off to school, and Mother is becoming impatient.
 b. Child has not responded to Mother's first request, and Mother is impatient at having to repeat it a second time.]

- (52) /pěw nâ, yàa maa kuan nâ./

1 2 3 4

(Paew, don't come bother) 'Please Paew, don't bother me!'

1 2 3 4

[Paew is bothering friend at a time when the latter is particularly busy, or perhaps doesn't feel good.]

- (53) /thəə nâ, sàʏ roŋtháaw kòon nâ.

1 2 3 4

(you, put on shoes first) 'Say there, do put your shoes on first.'

1 2 3 4

'Come on now, you just put your shoes on before you go out.'

[a. Younger sister knows she is expected to put her shoes on before going out, but she tries to sneak off without doing so, thus earning her older sister's admonishment.

b. Older sister is telling younger sister for the second time.]

- (54) ?uán nâ, yìp kradàat hây nòy nâ./

1 2 3 4 5

(Fat, grasp paper for me a little)

1 2 3 4 5

'Come on now Fats, reach me down that piece of paper.'

[Fats has been ignoring his friend's earlier request.]

3.2 THE VARIANT /náa/

This variant may occur with AIU's, statements, questions and vocatives. And it conveys a sense of fairly strong desire for the given response, and of pressing for that response in a seeking, pleading manner. It is like the mild, unaggressive /ná/ in that it asks rather than demands the desired response, but it differs from /ná/ in that it pleads or begs. It differs from /nâ/ in that it asks or begs rather than telling or urging, and it differs from both /ná/ and /nâ/ in that the call for the desired response involves sustained pressure or continuing seeking. Often, too, the utterance in which it occurs will be raised in pitch to express intensified concern, desire or pleading.

3.3.1 ACTION-INDUCEMENT UTTERANCES WITH /náa/

These always involve a plea, asking or begging some action or non-action. They therefore will never convey a sense or command, nor will they include simple instructions, but they will include admonitions, requests and invitations.

- (55) /ŋâp ŋâp náa./

1

'Oh, please be quiet, won't you?'

1

[a. Speaker is afraid that the addressee will attract their father's attention and their father will be angry about what they are doing. b. Mother is very tired and has a headache, so she begs for quiet.]

(56) /yàa càp náa./

1 2

'Ple-ease don't touch that!' 'Oh – oh, don't touch that, ple-ease.'

1 2

[a. Mother is afraid child will drop and break a precious vase. b. Mother is afraid child will scald himself handling the tea kettle.]

(57) /yàa kláp bân dèk náa./

1 2 3 4

'Don't be late getting home now, will you, huh?'

1 4 2 3

'I don't want you to stay out too late, okay?'

[Concerned father admonishes tennage daughter as she leaves for an evening out.]

(58) /khǒo khanǒm nòy náa, náa./

1 2 3

(request cookie just this small request) 'Could I ple-ease have a cookie, ple-ease?'

1 2 3

[Mother is not paying attention to child's request, or else she is acting reluctant to grant it.]

(Note that, here, there would probably not be more than the one extra repetition of the particle, whereas with /náa/, in a similar situation, there might be almost any number.)

(59) /chəən khâw maa náa./

1 2 3

'Aw, please do come in, won't you?'

1 2 3

3.2.2 STATEMENTS WITH /náa/

When a speaker adds /náa/ to a statement, he is usually begging or pleading for acquiescence or agreement. Often, also, he is making the statement as a basis for some plea for action or non-action. In both types of use the /náa/ utterance has the force of a question.

(60) /núu ca pay lên náa./

1 2 3 4

'I'm going to go play, okay, huh?'

1 2 3 4

'Are you listening, Mom, I'm going to go play now, okay?'

[Mother seems not to have heard her daughter's previous request, or she seems reluctant to acquiesce.]

(61) /dǎaw ʔaw maa hây náa. khooy dǎaw diaw./

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

'I'll bring it to you in a jiffy, oka-ay? Wait just a moment.'

2,3 4 1 5 7 6

[Parent tries to calm down and reassure child waiting for a treat he has been promised.]

- (62) /thəə ca pay nêe náa. sǎnyaa náa./
 1 2 3 4 5
 ‘You’re going to go for sure now, are you, huh? Promise, huh?’
 1 2 3 4 5
- (63) /fǒn ca tòk náa. yàa pay læəy./
 1 2 3 4 5 6
 ‘Aw, come on, it’s going to rain. Please don’t go.’
 2 1,3 4,6 5
 ‘Please don’t go. Can’t you see it’s going to rain?’
- (64) /lǔm lúk náa. khôykhôy dæən./
 1 2 3 4
 (deep hole, gradually walk)
 2 1 3 4
 ‘Whoa now, we’re coming to a pothole. Better watch your step.’
 [a. Speaker is leading a blind man or someone with a big load who can’t see where he
 is going. b. Speaker wants addressee to watch where he is going.]
- (65) /phūuyǐn khon nán sǎay náa. cǐp sǐ./
 1 2 3 4 5
 ‘Come on, don’t you think that girl’s a beauty? Why don’t you go make an approach?’
 2,3 1 4 5
 ‘Can’t you see how pretty she is? You ought to go spin her a line.’

3.2.3 QUESTIONS WITH /náa/

These include self-directed ‘I wonder’ questions and bafflement-complaint questions, but not informal questions or ‘please repeat’ questions. In other words, /náa/ never occurs with questions where the speaker is straightforwardly asking the addressee for an answer. They differ from comparable /ná/ questions in that questions with /náa/ signal greater desire and also more protracted or continuing concern. In the case of the self-directed ‘I wonder’ question with /náa/, the question pops into the speaker’s mind and is quite readily dismissed again or forgotten. But a /náa/ question lingers as the speaker puzzles and pursues the answer in his mind (or as he searches through the file drawer or whatever). In the case of bafflement-complaint questions with /náa/, the speaker is signalling a non-aggressive, seeking, almost wistful complaint: ‘Why, oh why did such a thing happen?’, ‘How could it be that such a thing should be so?’

- (66) /kháw pay nǎy náa./
 1 2 3
 ‘Where in the world is he going, I wonder?’ ‘I’d sure like to know where he went.’
 3 1 2
- (67) /nân tua mia rá tua phūu náa./
 1 2 3 4 5 6
 ‘Hmm. I wonder whether that’s a male or a female.’
 1 5,6 4 2,3
 ‘Which might that one be, I wonder. Male or female?’
 [Speaker is looking at an animal or bird whose sex he can’t identify.]

- (68) /yàak rúu ciŋ wãa thəə pay léəw nŋi ca khít thŋŋ chán máy náa./
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11
 'I'd sure like to know whether you'll think of me after you've gone.'
 3 1 2 4 8 9 10 11 5 7 6

3.2.4 VOCATIVES WITH /náa/

These, like vocatives with /ná/, may occur accompanied by AIU's, statements or questions. However, again, such utterances signal a stronger element of wishing or pleading for the desired response than do comparable expressions with /ná/.

- (69) /pay rewrew náa, ʔéet náa./
 1 2 3
 (go quickly, Aet) 'Do hurry, Aet, won't you please, huh?'
 1 2 3
- (70) /phŋuyŋŋ khon nán sŋay náa, khun náa./
 1 2 3 4 5
 'That girl's pretty, isn't she? Don't you think so, huh?'
 2,3 1 4 5
 [Speaker wants addressee to make an approach.]
- (71) /lŋuk náa lŋuk, thammay mây bòok lã./
 1 1 2 3 4 5
 'Oh, you! Why didn't you tell me, huh? Why?'
 1 2,5 3 4
 (/lŋuk/ means 'offspring') [Parent speaking to child.]

3.3 THE VARIANT /nãa/

This variant, like /nã/, occurs with AIU's, statements and vocatives, but not with questions. It conveys the idea of persuasion or applying continuing pressure. With respect to this element of persuasion it resembles both /nã/ and /nãa/, but it differs from /nã/ in that the persuasion is a continuing thing rather than a momentary reaction, so that it conveys a message something like, 'Aw, come on please, *do* (respond in the desired way)'. And it differs from /nãa/ in that it lacks much of the begging, pleading, asking element. It is not so much pleading or asking for a response as urging, pressuring, persuading. In other words, it is saying 'Aw, come on, do respond.', not 'Aw, please respond, won't you, huh?'. Thus it is more positive, more assertive than /nãa/. On the other hand, it lacks the aggressive, hostile note of commands with /ná/.

3.3.1 ACTION-INDUCEMENT UTTERANCES WITH /nãa/

These include persuasion utterances of various kinds, including pressure-applying requests and invitations, but not (in the strict sense, at any rate) instructions or admonitions.

- (72) /phûut kan diidii nâa. yâa mohôo./
 1 2 3 4 5
 ‘Aw, come on, talk nicely to each other. Don’t get mad!’
 1 3 2 4 5
- (73) /khâw maa kòon nâa. ca rîip pay nây./
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
 (enter first, will hurry go where)
 1,2 3 4 5 6 7
 ‘Aw, do come in! Where are you off to in such a hurry?’
- (74) /yâa pay læy nâa. klay ?òk./
 1 2 3 4 5
 (... very far) ‘Aw, come on, don’t go! It’s a **long**, long way!’
 5 4 1,3 2
- (75) /khôo bàat diaw thâwnán nâa, mēe./
 1 2 3 4 5
 (request single baht only-that, mother) ‘Ah, Mom, just let me have one baht!’
 1 3 2 4 5
- (76) /chûay ?àthíbaay ?ik thii nâa./
 1 2 3 4
 (help explain again (one) time) ‘Come on, please explain it one more time!’
 1 2 3 4

3.3.2 STATEMENTS WITH /nâa/

As in the case of /nâ/, these include both statements forming the basis of some plea to action or non-action and statements contradicting the addressee and calling for agreement. Again, as in the case of /nâ/ (but unlike the case of /ná/ or /náa/), the addition of the particle to the statement does not change the latter into a question. It remains a statement.

- (77) /yen léew nâa. chán tōṇ pay cīṇcīṇ./
 1 2 3 4 5 6
 ‘Aw, please now, it’s evening already. I really must go.’
 1 2 3 6 4 5
 [Host has been trying to keep speaker from leaving.]
- (78) /phǒm ca càt kaan ?eeṇ nâa. khun mây tōṇ hūaṇ./
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
 ‘There now, I’ll take care of things myself. You don’t have to worry.’
 1,2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
- (79) /chán ?eeṇ ròk nâa. yâa klua læy./
 1 2 3 4 5
 (I myself...) ‘Hold on, it’s just me! Don’t be afraid!’
 1 2 3,5 4

(80) /phǒm wâa sǎŋ nók rǒŋ nâa./

1 2 3 4 5

(I think noise bird calling) 'Aw, come on, that's got to be a bird.'

1 2 3 4 5

[Addressee has just argued that the sound they are hearing is a frog.]

3.3.3 VOCATIVES WITH /nâa/

(81) /phôo nâa, yàa phêŋ mohǒo nâa./

1 2 3 4

(... just yet ...) 'Aw, Dad, don't flare up so quick!'

3 1 2 4

(82) /kháw khoŋ mây sabaay nâa, thəə nâa./

1 2 3 4 5

(... you) 'Aw, come on. Surely it's because he's unwell.'

5 2 1 3 4

3.4 THE VARIANT /naa/

Like /ná/ and /náa/, this variant is used in all four of the types of contexts repeatedly exemplified above: AIU's, statements, questions and vocatives. Unfortunately, however, it turns out to be a little difficult to isolate any single meaning that applies to all contexts.

In AIU's and most statements with /naa/, the particle conveys the sense that the speaker wants the addressee to pay attention to some kind of situation and respond accordingly. Thus he may be warning, admonishing or requesting the addressee to act in a certain way, in view of certain needs or certain potential good or bad consequences. Or he may be making a statement that points up a fact or problem that in turn requires the addressee's attention and calls for him to respond in a certain way – whether to perform some action or to acquiesce or whatever. But in each case, there exists a need or problem, and also the call for the addressee's attention to and response to that problem. The speaker is, in effect, saying: 'pay attention, won't you, and respond accordingly.'

Then there are other /naa/ utterances where the speaker is not exactly (or not at all) calling for a response from the addressee. These comprise bafflement utterances (which may include both statements and questions) and 'I wonder' questions. Here the speaker is faced with a problem or question to which there is no answer, or to which he cannot at the moment find an answer, and so he complains to the addressee or to himself or to no one in particular, or he asks the 'I wonder' question. But his question or complaint lacks the seeking concern of similar questions with /náa/. He may indeed look for the answer to his 'I wonder' question, but if he cannot find it, he will give up and dismiss the question from his mind. In either case, whether with bafflement utterances or 'I wonder' questions, he shrugs his shoulders, so to speak, and goes on.

A consideration of these seemingly disparate uses of /naa/ leaves one hard put to pinpoint anything that these might have in common. But I feel a case can be made for postulating something like speaker non-involvement as the crucial element. Thus when a speaker calls the addressee's attention to a response that needs to be made, or warns about possible consequences, he is, in effect, withdrawing from the option of personal persuasion or begging or even demanding, and instead he is

leaving the addressee to respond to the situation. He is saying, 'This is the problem; this the response I want; now it's up to you to act accordingly'. Similarly, when a speaker makes a bafflement utterance with /naa/, or asks an 'I wonder' question, he is expressing his concern, but his emotions do not come across as deeply involved.

3.4.1 ACTION-INDUCEMENT UTTERANCES WITH /naa/

These very often comprise warnings and admonitions, hence they often urge some action or non-action on the basis of some undesirable consequence that may follow if the addressee does not respond as indicated (example 83). They thus often constitute threats. But they may also urge a response in view of desirable consequences to the addressee (example 86) or in view of consequences primarily relevant to the speaker himself (example 85). In any case, the speaker is saying, in effect, 'Here is the response you'd better make, in view of this situation or possible consequence'.

AIU's with /naa/ may also include requests, and here the speaker is making a point of attracting the addressee's attention, either because the addressee did not hear an earlier request (example 87a) or because there is something about the request that the latter needs to be aware of, for example if the speaker is leaving and needs special consideration (example 87b). But the speaker is not pleading for attention (as in the case of requests with /náa/); rather, he is notifying the addressee and leaving the response up to the latter.

So far as I know, true invitations with /naa/ do not occur, perhaps because the non-involvement element (leaving the response to the addressee) would be contradictory to the implications of a genuine invitation.

- (83) /pěw naa, rawaŋ naa. dǎw phôo tii ròk./

1 2 3 4 5

'(Paew be careful, in a minute Father hit.)

1 2 3 4 5

'Better watch out, Paew, or Father will spank you.'

[a. Father threatens child with spanking. b. Older sister warns younger sister.]

- (84) /yàa klàp bâan dèk naa./

1 2 3 4

'Better not get home too late, now, okay?'

1 2 3 4

[a. Father suspects daughter is going to be late home from a party. b. Host warns guest because of the danger of hold-ups in the neighbourhood late at night.]

- (85) /sèt léew ʔaw maa hây naa. mây ɲán phǒm thám ɲaan mây dâay./

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

'Be sure and bring it back (to me) when you're through, now, won't you?

3,4

5

1,2

Otherwise I can't get my work done.'

6,7 8 12 11

10 9

[Speaker is lending neighbour a tool.]

- (97) mûakfi hên thóŋ fáa cèm sǎy nî naa. fǒn tòk dâay yaŋŋay./
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
 (just-now saw...) 'Hey, a moment ago the sky was bright and clear.
 1 2 1 3,4 5 6
 How can it be raining now?'
 10 9 7,8
- (98) /rua tòk kàap sèt léew thiaw naa. mûakhuun phaayú? phát tèek pay thǎn lam./
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13
 (boat built nearly finished already really ...) 'Here the boat was just about finished,
 1 2 3 4 5 6
 and last-night the storm came and battered the whole thing to bits!'
 7 8 9 12 13 10,11

3.4.3 QUESTIONS WITH /naa/

These are similar to /náa/ questions, only weaker. That is, they comprise 'I wonder' questions directed chiefly toward oneself, whose answer is not immediately available, and bafflement questions to which the speaker does not really expect an answer. But they are unlike /náa/ questions in that with the latter the speaker is conveying a sense of sustained desire or longing. He really wishes he could find the answer to his self-directed question, and he complains longingly about the baffling situation, wishing it were otherwise than it is. With /naa/ questions, on the other hand, the longing is weakened. The speaker indeed wonders about the answer to his question, but he can shrug the matter aside. He objects to the baffling situation, but nevertheless fatalistically accepts it, since there is nothing that can be done about the matter. There is, therefore, in both types of /naa/ questions, an element of emotional non-involvement or reduced emotional involvement on the speaker's part.

Note, however, that /naa/ questions are stronger than comparable /ná/ questions. The latter are more momentary and passing, whereas /naa/ questions involve a deeper and more continuing concern. The former may come and go without much thought; the latter are at least serious enough to have to struggle off or make an unwilling peace with.

Note, further, that (as with /ná/ and /náa/ questions) these utterances are already questions before the /naa/ is added. The /naa/ then converts the questions into those of the sort just described above.

- (99) /khǎw khǎn hây khray naa./
 1 2 3 4
 'I wonder who he wrote to.' 'Well, who could he be writing to, I wonder?'
 4 1 2 3
- (100) /phôo naa. thammay kēe cháa naa./
 1 2 3 4
 'Hey, Dad, I can't understand why he should be so late.'
 1 2 3 4
 'Dad, I wonder why he's so late.'

[Note here that this question cannot be a straightforward request for information. It can only be an 'I wonder' question or a bafflement question. In either case, the child does not expect an informative response from his father.]

PRIMARY VARIANTS	/ná/	/ná/	/ná/	/ná/	/ná/
General semantic values	Response desired (unemphatic expectation of response)	Momentary persuasion and restrained impatience	Begging, pleading, longing, concern for response	Sustained pressure, coaxing, persuading	Reduced speaker involvement
SAMPLE SENTENCES					
1. /phút didii/	Friendly admonition				
'Talk nicely'	'... now, okay?'	'Okay now, you just...'	'Aw, please won't you...'	'Come on, do...'	Warning, threatening, advising, something to be heeded '(Careful now), you'd better...'
2. /khóo khañm/	Unassertive request (no imposition) 'May I...(please)'	'Okay now, let me...'	'Aw, please, may I...'	'Come on, do let me...'	Making sure request is heard, heeded (I want you to hear, heed my request)
3. /yen léew/	Calling attention (i.e. because we have to go now) 'Say, it's..., (isn't it)'	(Addr. is delaying or not listening) 'Look here, it's ...'	(Addr. is delaying or not listening) 'Aw, please, don't you see it's...?'	(Addr. is delaying or not listening) 'Come on now, (do...), it's ...'	(Addr. is delaying or not listening) 'Look here now, it's ... (don't you see?)'
4. /thammay kháw cháa/	Informal question a. 'Please repeat' question b. Momentary 'I wonder'				
'Why's he so late?'	Mild bafflement-complaint question		'I sure do wonder wh-...' 'Why, oh why (should this be)'		'Well, I wonder...' (moderate concern for information) 'I can't understand why (this should be)'

FIGURE B: CHART COMPARING PRIMARY VARIANTS OF ná

to women and children. When one of these does follow *na*, the added particle must occur in its question form variant, not its statement form: /pay ná khá/ 'I'm going, okay?' (woman speaking), not /pay ná khâ/.

It is true, of course, that the following particle would in any case limit the permissible range of occurrences of *na*. Thus if a woman speaker were showing the deference implied by the use of the polite /khá/, she could not then use any of the developed variants of *na*, whether one that conveys aggression or one that reveals any other, as it were undressed, emotional state. However, there *are* developed variants of *na* that would seem to be semantically consistent, for example, with the use of the endearing or intimate /cá/, or with the male non-restraint form /wá/. But still only the neutralised or undifferentiated form /ná/ or /na/ is permissible when *na* is immediately followed by either of these, or by any other such particle.

5.1.2 TERMINAL /h/

Either of the short vowel forms, /ná/ and /nâ/, may be pronounced with a terminal /h/. This occurrence of terminal /h/, incidentally, is characteristic of a number of other sentential postposition particles, all of which are distinct from most other comparable syllables in the language. The fact is that most syllables never terminate with /h/ under any circumstances. The only possible modification in pronunciation of such forms is a terminal glottal stop which occurs when the syllable in question is stressed. Contrariwise, the particle *na*, like some (but not all) sentential postposition particles, cannot occur with terminal glottal stop, only with terminal /h/.

The significance of this terminal /h/ with /ná/ or /nâ/ is a little difficult to pin down. It can convey affection, gentleness, personal interest in the addressee; or it can be distinctively feminine (as when admonishing a child); or it can express puzzlement (as when asking a bafflement question). And, no doubt, it can convey a number of other messages. One thing, at least, seems to be sure. Its presence is not simply arbitrary. That is, it *does* make a detectable if not clearly definable difference in meaning when it occurs.

5.1.3 EXTRA VOWEL LENGTH

Any of the long vowel variants of *na* (i.e. /náa/, /nâa/ and /naa/) may be modified by an extra lengthening of the vowel, thus conveying an additional sense of pleading, concern for the addressee, or (in the case of bafflement questions) puzzlement. To a certain extent it does for the long vowel variants what terminal /h/ does for the short vowel ones.

5.1.4 LOWERING OF PITCH

There are two different kinds of pitch lowering that must be noted here: a general falling-tone particle lowering that affects sentential postposition particles and particle variants having falling tone, and a special low-tone modification that affects the form /nâa/ and possibly also /naa/.

5.1.4.1 GENERAL FALLING-TONE PARTICLE LOWERING

The primary variants /nâ/ and /náa/ are subject to a general rule of lowering which affects any falling-tone sentence-final particle, long or short, when it occurs in prepause position and

unaccompanied by special stress or emphasis. In the case of long-vowel particle forms, including /nâa/, the pitch drop of the lowered falling tone will begin from a starting point at the mid-tone level or lower and then fall on down from there. And in the case of short vowel forms, including /nâ/, the pitch drop will begin from a starting point clearly below the mid tone level. In fact, here the resulting pitch is usually so low that the difference between falling tones of this sort and low tones is minimal. In either case, though, whether with long vowels or short, this lowered falling tone differs substantially from any non-particle falling tone, for the latter will usually drop from a starting point at the high tone level or higher and then fall on down from there.

General falling-tone particle lowering, as here described, has no special semantic significance but can be taken simply as a feature of normal intonation as it affects particles (but not other forms in the language). Note, however, that under conditions of intonational stress or emphasis, most falling-tone particles can be pronounced with a higher falling tone (see 5.1.5).

5.1.4.2 SPECIAL LOWERING OF /nâa/ AND /naa/

Besides the general lowering discussed above, there is also a special type that affects /nâa/, and perhaps /naa/, and brings about a corresponding modification in meaning. In both cases the variant in question is lowered to what would ordinarily be taken to be low tone, and the effect on meaning is as follows.

The form /nâa/, when it is lowered (transcribed here with low tone, /nâa/), conveys an additional sense of pessimism, defeat, hopelessness with respect to whatever it is that the speaker is trying to persuade the addressee to do, acquiesce in, pay attention to, etc.

The form /naa/, when or if it is lowered, makes a warning or admonition more personal, less aggressive. I say 'if', here, because so far I have found only one speaker who claims to recognise a lowered /naa/, though she says she does not use it herself.

It will be noted, perhaps, that these lowered forms could conceivably be analysed as together making up one additional primary variant /nâa/. I am, however, reluctant to do this, because the native speakers I have questioned perceive intuitively that these are, in fact, variants of /nâa/, and possibly /naa/, respectively.

5.1.5 PARTICLE PITCH RAISING WITH /nâa/, /ná/ AND /náa/

The variant /nâa/ can be raised in pitch above its normally lowered level (see 5.1.4.1), thus conveying an intensified urging toward or pressing for the desired response. And the higher the pitch raising the greater the intensification of meaning. Raised /nâa/, then, is pronounced with a falling pitch that starts at the high-tone level or higher and drops on down from there to end with a fairly low pitch.

The forms /ná/ and /náa/ can also be raised, but ordinarily, when this happens, the whole of the sentence or clause in which the variant occurs will be raised in pitch along with it (see section 5.2.2 below). However, I have a few examples of utterances from one native speaker where the variants /ná/ and /náa/ are raised above the pitch level one would expect when compared with the pitch levels of forms in the rest of the sentence – which, as a whole, is also raised in pitch. At present I have no clear picture as to what such additional raising adds to the meaning of the particle or to the sentence as a whole.

Note that the falling-tone short-vowel variant /ná/ is not subject to raising of the sort described here – presumably because any intensification of meaning (as implied by the raising) would be incompatible with the element of momentariness, moderation, restraint that the use of /ná/ necessarily implies.

5.2 MODIFICATIONS AFFECTING THE WHOLE CLAUSE

The above secondary modifications are ones that primarily affect just the particle or particle variant in question. I now wish to consider those that affect the whole clause or sentence in which they occur. These are of two types: increased volume and raised pitch. When these occur, the whole sentence, not just the particle, will be increase in volume and/or raised in pitch.

5.2.1 INCREASED VOLUME

So far, I have found at least two main functions of increased volume. One is the obvious case where the speaker has to raise his voice to make himself heard. The other is a matter of expressing aggressiveness, assertiveness, annoyance, hostility, anger and the like. One of the most frequent occurrences of the latter involves the use of /ná/ to convey a flat demand or hostile command (see examples 1a, 2a, and others above.).

5.2.2 RAISED PITCH

When a speaker raises the pitch of his entire utterance (but not the volume), the general effect is rather similar to the use of terminal /h/ (with short vowel forms) or extra length (with long vowel forms). Often the utterance comes across as feminine, or as gentle or personal. And it can highlight the pleading of pleading utterances or the puzzlement of bafflement questions.

5.3 COMBINATIONS OF SECONDARY-MODIFICATION ELEMENTS

Naturally it is possible to use at the same time two or more of the secondary-modification features described above. Thus raised pitch and terminal /h/ can occur in the same utterance, and so can lowering with extra vowel length. And loudness can accompany both a raise in pitch and terminal /h/. I am not, at present, able to say much about the effect of such combinations. But it is clear that the feature of loudness usually (but not always) swallows up the semantic value of any co-occurring features. And raised pitch can occur with either terminal /h/ or extra lengthening of the vowel without changing the effect much as against any of the same features alone. At any rate, I shall have to leave the matter there.

5.4 WHY 'PRIMARY' VERSUS 'SECONDARY'

Up to this point, I have discussed the variations of *na* in terms of primary variants and secondary modifications. Now, with a reasonably clear picture of the phenomena involved, it becomes possible to discuss the question of why it seems advisable to treat the data in this way.

Why not, for example, set up a basic form *na* that is modified by various intonational or prosodic features of pitch, length, terminal /h/, etc.? Then one could go on to propose certain combinations of

such features with specified meanings assigned to each. Thus length plus falling tone would signal persuasion; shortness plus falling tone would signal momentary persuasion plus restrained impatience; and so forth. This kind of thing has been proposed by other authors (see Henderson, Terd, Sagarik and others), and I understand that this sort of analysis is customary in describing Chinese particles (see Chao). Why, then, do I not do the same thing here?

Well, let me say that I have no objection in principle to this way of handling the data. It may (or it may not) ultimately turn out to be the best way to describe the phenomena. But, for the moment, such a procedure presents difficulties. The biggest difficulty is the fact that we do not know enough about the meaning of various combinations to say anything very revealing about them. What in general does short vowel plus high tone mean? What does short vowel plus falling tone plus terminal /h/ signify? I am beginning to know what they mean in the case of the particle *sí* and the particle *na*. But it is not clear that the same combinations necessarily mean the same things in the case of just these two particles. And I am as yet able to say very little about what they mean with other particles.

Now there *are* some combinations that clearly can be assigned a more general meaning than can be observed in the case of a given particle. Thus long falling tone seems to signify persuasion, applying pressure, in both /sī/ and /náa/. And short falling tone could be said to signify statement (as opposed to question) both in /sí/ and /nâ/, and also in the class of speaker-addressee-relationship particles like /khâ/ (polite particle, woman speaking). And so forth. But there are exceptions to many such statements that we might make. (For example, the shift of focus particle /lâ/ normally occurs short and falling, but it appears in the same form in both statement and question contexts; the same is true of the proximate focus particle /nî/ and the non-proximate focus particle /nâ?/.) And when we have made the relevant generalisations, we have still left out a large proportion of the information that needs to be known about the meanings of the combinations we are seeking to describe.

In view of the above considerations, therefore, I prefer to leave the primary-secondary distinction as it is. Then if additional information and analysis requires a change in approach, the change can be made.

6. CONCLUDING SUMMARY

The phenomena I have described may be restated briefly as follows:

(1) The sentential postposition particle *na* occurs with various modifications of form and meaning, but in all occurrences it signals the message that the speaker desires or expects a given response, whether by action, acquiescence, information or whatever.

(2) The basic modifications of form and meaning involve five primary variants, each of which has its own distinctive form and meaning. These may be identified as follows:

(a) /ná/ signals the speaker's mild, unemphatic call for the desired or expected response; but in the case of commands it is demanding and often hostile. In non-command usage it also marks the utterance as a question.

(b) /nâ/ signals momentary persuasion or urging, and often also mild impatience. It also signals a statement (as opposed to a question).

(c) /náa/ signals begging, pleading, longing and concern for the response in question. It also marks the utterance as a question.

(d) /*nâa*/ signals coaxing, pressure, sustained persuasion. It also signals a statement (as opposed to a question).

(e) /*naa*/ signals the speaker's reduced emotional involvement in receiving the desired response. It also marks the utterance as a question. With AIU's and statements, there is an additional element of calling the addressee to attend or heed the speaker's warning, admonition, statement of need etc. With 'I wonder' questions and bafflement statements or questions, /*naa*/ expresses moderate concern with respect to the response or situation in view.

(3) The primary variants are subject to secondary modification, either of the particle itself, or of the whole sentence or clause in which the particle occurs.

(4) Secondary modifications affecting the particle itself are as follows:

(a) Neutralisation. This occurs whenever *na* immediately is followed in the same utterance by another particle; it has the effect of short-circuiting potential occurrences of primary variants such that only /*ná*/, or rarely /*na*/, may occur. This means that, when neutralisation takes place, all the potential semantic distinctions of the primary variants are lost.

(b) Terminal /*h*/. This may be added to either of the short vowel variants, /*ná*/ or /*nâ*/, and it conveys (among other things) affection, gentleness, personal interest in the addressee.

(c) Extra vowel length. Long vowel forms /*náa*/, /*nâa*/ or /*naa*/ may be further lengthened to express such things as intensified pleading, concern for the addressee, deepened emotional involvement.

(d) Lowering of pitch. This may be one or another of two kinds: the first is a general falling-tone particle lowering, in which any falling-tone sentential postposition particle will ordinarily be pronounced lower than other falling tone forms in the language. That is, it will be pronounced with a pitch drop starting from the mid tone level or lower, not from the usual high tone level or higher. The second kind of lowering is a special lowering that affects /*nâa*/ (signalling discouragement, pessimism) and possibly also /*naa*/ (to signal more personal, less aggressive warnings).

(e) Raising of pitch. Most pitch raising affects the whole sentence or clause in which it occurs, but there appears to be a marginal type of raising that occasionally affects /*ná*/ and /*nâa*/, the meaning of which is at present unclear.

(5) Secondary modifications affecting the whole clause are as follows:

(a) Increased volume. This may signal an attempt by the speaker to make himself heard, or it often signals aggressiveness, assertiveness, anger, impatience and the like. The most notable example changes /*ná*/ from a mild, friendly term to an abrupt, hostile command.

(b) Raised pitch. This often signals things like gentleness and personal concern, and sometimes comes across as feminine.

(6) The above secondary modifications, apart from neutralisation, can occur in various combination with (so far) somewhat unpredictable effects. However, increase in volume seems often to overpower other features.

NOTES

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2. The transcription *na* throughout this paper, and also the transcription *si*, are intended as general representations covering any and all possible variations of tone or vowel length that may occur with the particle in question. Actually, I have more recently concluded (on the basis of a general study of particles) that it is possible and appropriate to establish underlying forms *ná* (with high tone) and *sí* (with falling tone), but the issue of underlying representations is explicitly avoided here.

3. I am indebted to many Thais who have helped me in this work, particularly Dr Malinee Dilokwanich and Mr Suriya Smutkupt, both of whom were graduate students at the University of Washington during the period of my research on *na*. These friends not only devoted considerable time to answering questions and providing examples of usage, but they also entered into thoughtful discussion and contributed many useful explanations and opinions.

4. There is one scholarly work which has contributed materially to my own research: an unpublished paper by Ms Nisa Sakdechayont (formerly Ms Udomphol) entitled 'The Thai Particle /Na/'. Not only have I used some of her examples, but I found her treatment a useful starting point for much of the work I have done since.

5. Forms cited between slash marks are phonemic representations transcribed in accordance with the system of phonemicisation used by Marvin Brown (1967 et al), which was adapted in turn from the system earlier developed by Mary Haas (1964). For a brief summary of the phonetic values of the symbols used here, see Cooke (1979).

6. For further discussion of this hostile usage of /ná/, see sections 2.1.1.2 and 5.2.

7. The most likely particle for ordinary invitations ('please come in', 'have a seat' etc.) is /sî/ or possibly /thə̌/. For a comparison of these particles with /ná/, see section 2.1.1.3.

8. Actually there is still another possibility, and that is to use no particle at all. Commands with no particle shortcut all the possible distinctions discussed here, and they come across as rather abrupt and peremptory.

9. Note that questions *do* occur with the nearly homonymous demonstrative particle *nâ?*:

/kháw pay nǎy nâ?./

1 2 3

'Where's **he** going?'

3 1 2

I mention this here because I have found that native speakers sometimes confuse the two particles; actually /ná/ and /nâ?/ are readily differentiated both in terms of form and meaning.

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