

認識方言真面貌

Understanding the Dialect 粵語語法學研究

Cantonese Grammatical Studies

食飯啦
[laa1]

食飯噏
[laa4]

食飯噏
[laa3]

2010年年中，廣州掀起了一連串捍衛粵語的行動，不少香港人亦感同身受，桴鼓相應。事緣廣州市政協就建議增加廣州市營電視台的普通話節目進行了一次網上問卷調查，隨即引起

了一場粵語存廢的討論。其後有政協更提議以粵語為主的廣州電視台綜合頻道或新聞頻道改為普通話廣播，遂激起反對聲音，「撐粵語」運動的序幕由此掀起。及後文化廳把紀念碑上所刻的明末廣東名將袁崇煥的粵語口頭禪鑿去，更是火上加油。結果政府領導數度發言安撫，事件才得以平息。然而，到了去年12月，廣東省政府又公布了一些限制傳媒使用粵語的政策，看來問題仍在醞釀。

中大中國語言及文學系鄧思穎教授是香港有數的研究粵語語法的學者，他認為粵語已有悠久的歷史，今天在內地和國外超過五千萬人使用，不會輕易被廢。他反而覺得很多人甚至學術界對粵語以及漢語方言的性質往往有不少誤解。他說：「要麼把方言的地位貶得很低，視為不夠文雅，是土話；不然便把方言抬上半天高，例如把粵語抬舉為高度發達的語言，甚至認為是保存漢唐語法最多的中國方言，應該珍如拱璧，諸如此類。身為客觀的研究者，過分的褒貶一種方言都沒有意思。」

鄧教授認為要了解方言，應該循科學方法，從研究方言的核心結構着手。以研究粵語語法為例，入門別無他法，必須首先掌握中國語文的基本知識，了解漢語的語法特點，在這個基礎上剖析粵語語法，當能事半功倍。他指出，粵語和普通話在語法上可能分別不大，例如普通話的「我今天吃飯」，粵語是「我今日食飯」，但粵語的「食飯啦（讀作陰平聲 [laa1]）」、「食飯噏（讀作陰去聲 [laa3]）」、「食飯噏（讀作陽平聲 [laa4]）」的三個語氣詞，所表達的意思已大不同：第一句的語氣有鼓勵或催促的意味，第二句是邀請或告訴，第三句則是詢問，有一種推測的意思。這類語氣詞的用法在普通話以至其他中國方言裏非常罕見。

鄧教授解釋，語氣詞屬於後置成分，而後置成分通常放在動詞之後或句末。例如粵語說「我寫好論文咁滯」，換成普通話是「我幾乎寫好論文」。「咁滯」是在句末，「幾乎」則在動詞前。又例如「我淨係飲得一杯茶咋」，普通話是「我只喝一杯茶」。粵語「淨係」和普通話「只」都屬副詞，在動詞之前，但粵語還有一個後置的「得」和「咋」。「這是粵語獨有的，」鄧教授說。「粵語的詞尾、助詞、語氣詞等虛詞數量特別豐富，形式亦較為複雜。」

鄧教授現時在着手研究粵語的「框式結構」。他解釋說，粵語除了有大量虛詞外，其後置成分往往能夠找到對應的副詞，兩者可以同時出現，形成意義冗餘的「框式結構」。例如「我差唔多寫好

論文咁滯」，「差唔多」和「咁滯」所表達的其實是同一意思，但整句說話的語氣加強了。又例如「佢先講先」（「他先說」），動詞前的「先」屬副詞，而動詞後的「先」屬後置虛詞，兩者組成框式結構「先……先」，共同修飾動詞「講」。

對於有學者認為以外來的語法分析研究中文是扞格不入，只會「衍生成為教學方法，演變成規條自然語言的外在格律」，鄧教授頗不以為然。他解釋，根據當代語言學的研究方向，語法研究不應是規範性，因此不會有人為的格律。語法研究應該是描述性，並用以解釋語言現象，進一步找出語言的自然「格律」。「從語法學的角度來研究粵語，就是利用一套科學和客觀的工具幫助我們了解粵語的結構，」鄧教授說。「只有了解粵語的真面目，我們才可以為粵語正確定位，證明粵語和其他語言一樣，有嚴謹的組織。」

In mid-2010, there were a series of pro-Cantonese protests in Guangzhou that struck a chord in many Hong Kongers who staged similar actions locally. The incident that sparked the controversy was the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference Guangzhou Committee's proposal to increase Putonghua programmes on Guangzhou Television's main and news channels. Then the Department of Culture further fueled the furor when it removed the pet phrase of late-Ming military commander Yuan Chonghuan from a memorial tablet. The government authorities had to make repeated attempts to pacify the public before sentiments subsided. Yet in December last year, the Guangdong Municipal Government announced policies limiting the media's use of Cantonese. The problem is clearly still brewing.

Prof. Tang Sze-wing of the CUHK Department of Chinese Language and Literature is one of a few scholars in Hong Kong who study Cantonese grammar. He believes that the dialect will not be phased out easily because of its long history and the fact that it's currently being used by over 50 million people in China and the world. He thinks however that many people including scholars have misconceptions about Cantonese and Chinese dialects.

He said, 'Dialects either get put down as inelegant or superfluously hailed, such as saying Cantonese is a highly developed language or that the Cantonese dialect has preserved the most Han-Tang grammar. Academics should be more objective.'

Professor Tang believes that dialects should be studied using scientific methods, starting from its core structure. For instance, for ease of understanding Cantonese grammar, one needs to have basic knowledge of the Chinese language and its grammatical features. He pointed out that though Cantonese and Putonghua are not very different grammatically, variations in meaning are given by utterance particles in Cantonese. This usage of utterance particles is very rare in other Chinese dialects.

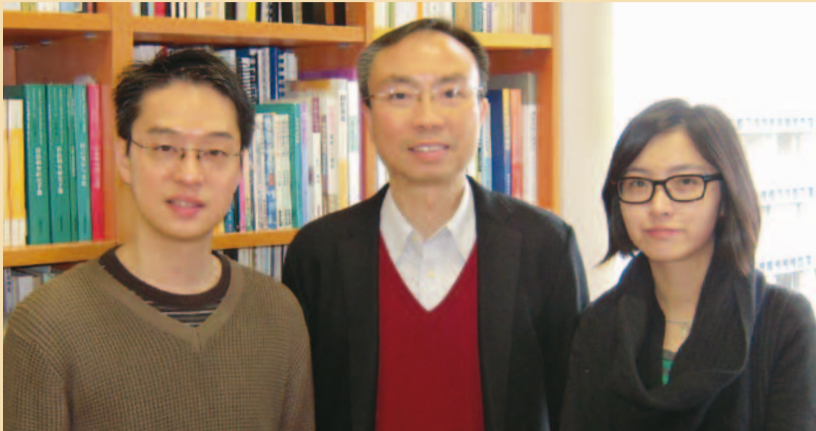
Professor Tang explained that utterance particles are post-verbal elements which usually come after verbs or at the end of sentences, and they are unique to Cantonese. 'Cantonese is particularly rich in verbal suffixes, particles and utterance particles. Their forms are also more complex.'

Professor Tang is now researching into discontinuous constructions in Cantonese. He explained that besides having many function words, their post-positions often find corresponding adverbs. The two can appear concurrently, forming a meaning-redundant discontinuous construction.

Some scholars think it inappropriate to study Chinese using the methods of foreign grammar analysis, but Professor Tang does not agree. He explained that according to the research directions of contemporary linguistics, grammatical studies should not be standardized hence there is no man-made form. He said grammatical studies should be descriptive and should be used to explain linguistic phenomena and to find a language's natural 'form'. 'Using a grammatical studies approach to scrutinize Cantonese means using a set of scientific and objective tools to help us understand the structure of the dialect. It's only by getting to the bottom of the language that we can accurately position Cantonese and prove that like other languages, it is highly organized.'



IN PLAIN VIEW



鄧思穎教授(中)及他的博士學生
Prof. Tang Sze-wing (centre) and his PhD students

鄧思穎教授畢業於香港中文大學，獲文學士和哲學碩士學位，其後在加州大學爾灣校區取得博士學位。他目前擔任中大中國語言及文學系副教授，並兼任粵語研究中心主任、中國語文教學發展中心主任、中國文化研究所吳多泰中國語文研究中心副主任。鄧教授的研究興趣主要為漢語語法學、漢語方言比較。

Prof. Tang Sze-wing received his BA and MPhil degrees from The Chinese University of Hong Kong. He then obtained his PhD degree from University of California, Irvine. Professor Tang is currently an associate professor in the CUHK Department of Chinese Language and Literature, and concurrently the director of Research Centre for Cantonese, Chinese Language Teaching Development Centre; and associate director of T.T. Ng Chinese Language Research Centre, Institute of Chinese Studies. His research interests lie primarily in Chinese grammar and comparative study of Chinese dialects.