Linguistic Society of Hong Kong

WORKSHOP ON CANTONESE PARTICLES

ABSTRACTS

(version 2.0)

The Hong Kong Polytechnic University

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http://www.cbs.polyu.edu.hk/ctswtang/tang/woc.htm

PROGRAM OF WORKSHOP ON CANTONESE PARTICLES (REVISED)
Location: M113

8:30-9:10	Ankie On Kei Lee (Lingnan University) Cantonese particles in ICQ
9:10-9:50	Roxana Fung (The Hong Kong Polytechnic University) On the particle of realization L-
9:50-10:30	
break	
10:40-11:20	
11:20-12:00	Leo Wong (Hong Kong Shue Yan College) Some preliminary observations of the compatibility between epistemic modal auxiliaries and epistemic sentence final particles
12:00-12:40	K.-K. Luke (The University of Hong Kong) The functions of sentence-final particles in Cantonese
lunch	
1:40-2:20	Carine Yuk-man Yiu (Hong Kong University of Science and Technology) The licensing conditions of the Cantonese final particle *zyu6*
2:20-3:00	Picus Sizhi Ding (Lingnan University) Notes on the peculiar functions of Cantonese *gwo*
3:00-3:40	Peppina Po-lun Lee and Haihua Pan (City University of Hong Kong) The semantics of Cantonese predicative suffix *hoi*
break	
3:50-4:30	Gordon Chin (The Chinese University of Hong Kong) *Haidou* as an aspect marker
4:30-5:10	Sze-Wing Tang (The Hong Kong Polytechnic University) Properties of the particle *ngaang* and its syntactic structure
5:10-6:00	Cathy S.P. Wong and Kitty K.S. Szeto (The Hong Kong Polytechnic University and Hong Kong Baptist University) The Cantonese *gam2*
6:00-6:40	Thomas Hun-tak Lee (City University of Hong Kong/National Chung Cheng University) Restrictive focus in Cantonese: how acquisition meets semantics

，　　　　　　　　　　　　　　（　　　1972），
　　　　　．Matthews & Yips(1994)　　　　　　　　　　　(filler phrases) (　：…
　…..)　　　　（　：　　）．　　　　　　　　　　　　　　，　：le1,
le2, le1wai3　．　　　　　　　　　　，　　　　　　　　(1a, 2a),
　　　　(1b, 2b).

1. a.　　，　　　　　．
　 b.　：　．　：　　　？　：　　　　．
2. a.　：　　　　喺　　？　：**Le2**,　　　　aa3.
　 b.　：　　　喺　　　：**Le2**. (　　　　)

　　　　　　　，　　(2b)　, le2
　　　，　：　　　　　．　　　　　　　　　　；　　，
　(1b)　'　'，　　　　，　　　　　　．
　　　　　　，　　　　　　，　　　　　．
　　　　　：le1, le1wai3, le1naa4, le1gam2.　：
3. **Le1**,　Peter　　　，　　　　lo1.
4. a). **Le1wai3**,　　　paper　sentence initial particle aa1.
　 b).　：**Le1wai3**, 啲 initial particle　　　wo3.　：　aa4?
5. **Le1naa4**/ **Le1gam2**, 啲 final particle　　，　　initial particle laak3.

　　，　(2)　le2　　　　(deictic)　,
　，　　　, le2　　　．Le1　　(3)　　　,
　　　，　，　'　'　，　　　，
　　　　　，　　　　　．Le1　　，
　　，　(4) le1wai3,　(5) le1naa4, le1gam2.
　　　，　　　　, wai3, naa4, gam2　　，
　–　　le1　　　　　　，
．
　　　，　　　　，　　　　，　：　,
，　，　　，　　　　，　　　：
6.　/　/　/　　　　　　aa4! (　)
7.　　　　，　/　/　/　! (　)

8.   ,   /   /   /   lo3. (   )

          :
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Haidou as an Aspect Marker

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This paper looks into the dual status of *haidou* in Cantonese. According to Matthews and Yip (1994), *haidou* functions as an aspect marker which marks the progressive aspect as well as a locative marker, meaning "to be here/there":

(1) a. Nei *haidou* nam mat aa?
       you PROG think what PRT
       "What are you thinking about?"
   b. Ngo ukkei jau hou do jan *haidou*.
       I home have many people here
       "My house is full of people."

This paper argues that the aspect marker *haidou* in general is used with an agent to describe an action which is going on "here and now". *Haidou*, unlike *gan*, shows a preference for activities which are going on at the moment of speaking. Consider (2) below:

(2) a. Sik-*gan* faan aa zangaan fuk nei.
       eat-PROG rice PRT later reply you
       "I'm having my lunch. Call you back later."
   b. **Haidou* sik faan aa zangaan fuk nei.
        PROG eat rice PRT later reply you

The ill-formedness of sentence (2b) can be attributed to the absence of an agent in the construction. (2b) will become much more natural if it includes an agent (e.g. *ngo* "I"). Now let's look at another property of *haidou*:

(3) a. Ngo *ganpaai* *haidou* jingau Gamjung ge siusyut.
       I recently PROG study Gamjung POSS novel
       "I'm studying the novels written by Gamjung."
   b. Ngo *haidou* jingau-*gan* Gamjung ge siusyut.
       I PROG study-PROG Gamjung POSS novel
       "I'm studying the novels written by Gamjung."

     c. Ngo *haidou* jingau Gamjung ge   siusyut.

     I   PROG   study   Gamjung POSS   novel

     "I' m studying the novels written by Gamjung now."

Sentences in (3) reveal that *haidou* shows a preference for activities which are going on at the moment of speaking. In order to describe an action which (i) has been started recently but not finished yet and (ii) is not going on exactly at the time of speaking, *haidou* has to be used with a past time adverb as in (3a) or *gan* as in (3b). If we use *haidou* alone as in (3c), the action will be conceived as going on at the time of speaking.

    There are some more examples which can show that our characterization of *haidou* —used with an agent to describe an action which is going on "here and now" —is justified:

    (4) a. Jigaa   lok-*gan*   jyu.

         now   fall-PROG   rain

         "It' s raining now."

      b. * Jigaa   *haidou*   lok jyu.

         now   PROG   fall   rain

Sentences in (4) involve a weather verb *lok* "fall" and do not have any agent. Since *haidou* requires an agent to be present in the construction, (4b) is ungrammatical. Now look at the sentences in (5) which illustrate that *haidou* conveys the meaning of "here and now":

    (5) a. Sinsaan   haang-*gan*   lai   aa.

         teacher   walk-PROG   come PRT

         "The teacher is coming."

      b. *Sinsaan   *haidou*   haang lai   aa.

         teacher   PROG   walk   come PRT

Sentences in (5) concern the direction of movement of the agent *sinsaan* "teacher". It seems that this type of sentences is not compatible with the aspect marker *haidou*, since the use of *haidou* implies that the agent is doing something "here", i.e. no direction is involved. Therefore, (5b) is ill-formed.

Notes on the Peculiar Functions of Cantonese *Gwo* ( )

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One of the most frequently used particles in Cantonese, *gwo* is remarkable in that it has a cognate *guo* in Mandarin. The major function of this grammaticalized particle in both Mandarin and Cantonese is to indicate the EXPERIENCE aspect, namely to function as the experiential marker.   By and large, this experiential usage overlaps significantly in these two Chinese languages.   As shown in (1), the two particles correspond perfectly in Mandarin and Cantonese:

(1a)   *Ni   qu **guo**   Beijing la?*   (Mandarin)
         you   go Exp.   Peking Q
         "So you' ve been to Peking?"

(1b)   *Nei   heoi **gwo**   Bakging la?*   (Cantonese)
         you   go Exp.   Peking   Q
         "So you' ve been to Peking?"

However, the particle *gwo* can be used in a wider range of contexts, peculiar to Cantonese.   These include: (i) *gwo* may co-occur with another verbal particle, (ii) *gwo* can signal a future experience, and (iii) *gwo* may be used to mark an imminent experience.   The following exemplifies these peculiar functions of the particle:

Co-occurrence of the experiential marker with another particle
(2)   *Giu   keoi   zou **gwo saai**   keoi!*
        ask   him/her   do Exp. Comp.   it
        "Have him/her to do it over again!"

Signaling a future experience
(3)   *Sik **gwo**   m housik   zoi   faanlai   wan   ngo.*
        eat Exp.   N delicious   again   return   find   me
        "Try some, come back to me if it isn' t delicious (after you have the experience of eating it)."

Marking an imminent experience
(4)   *Tai **gwo**.*
        look Exp.
        "Let me have a look."

The unusual functions of *gwo* noted above are all related to experience.   As

such, they can be regarded to have extended from a prototype of experiential. Using Natural Semantic Metalanguage, the meaning of experiential is spelt out in the following:

    i. At some time before now, someone did something
    ii. Because of this, this person knows something now

This script is applicable to (1), but not to (2)– (4). Certain modifications are in order when analyzing the extended functions of *gwo*. The revised scripts for each of the usage exemplified in (2)– (4) are proposed as follows:

The function of *gwo*, as in (2):

    i. At some time before now, someone did something
    ii. An important person thought:
            it is bad
    iii. Because of this, this person will do it once more

The function of *gwo*, as in (3):

    i. I know you don't know anything about this thing
    ii. I want you to do it now
    iii. Because of this, you will know something about this in a short time

The function of *gwo*, as in (4):

    i. I don't know anything about this thing
    ii. I want to know something about it now

Although the divergent developments of the experiential marker in Cantonese and Mandarin are no surprise under a cognitive view of grammaticalization, it reveals the extent to which the two Chinese languages are apart from each other. A humble goal of my observation on Cantonese *gwo* here is to remind Chinese linguists to look beyond superficial similarities shared between the Sinitic languages. Only then will it be possible for us to investigate further and better our understanding of a degraded language like Cantonese.

On the Particle of Realization L-

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This paper discusses the meanings of a group of final particles that are phonologically similar and semantically related. They are laa1, laa3, laa4, laak3, lo1, lo3, lo4, lok3, le3, le4 and le5. They may be intersubstitutable in some contexts but are totally exclusive in others. To capture the nuances between them has proved extremely difficult; and this is despite native speakers' strong intuition on which variant to use in specific contexts. The paper proposes that all these particles are conditioned variants of an underlying particle, denoted by L-, and that all manifestations are linked to form a word family. The paper first identifies the marking of realization of state as the core semantic feature of L-, which is shared by all manifestations of the family. All other senses of L- are derived from this core meaning combined with contextual information. The paper then proceeds to characterize the idiosyncrasies of each manifestation of L- by proposing a set of distinctive semantic primes through constructing minimal pairs, syntactic tests and felicity conditions.

Cantonese Particles in ICQ

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Many Hong Kong secondary and university students like to chat with their friends in ICQ. They are bilingual users of Cantonese and English. Their native language is Cantonese and their second language is English. Some ICQ users prefer to use mainly English as their communication medium, because they do not know how to type Chinese characters. Although they use English as their communicative medium, they involve a lot of Chinese features in their ICQ chat, which lead to a formation of a new variety of English—Hong Kong ICQ English. There are two focuses in my paper. One of the focuses in my paper is the ways that Cantonese particles function in ICQ English. The other focus is the effectiveness with which the addressees decode the meanings of Cantonese particles from the addressers. To describe the function of Cantonese particles in ICQ English, a study of twenty ICQ chats will be analyzed. Besides, magazines and newspaper cuttings such as Apple Daily and Next Magazine are used to show the effectiveness with which the addressees decode the meaning of Cantonese particles in written Cantonese, which is similar to the case in ICQ, because neither gives the intonation to the addressers.

The Semantics of Cantonese Predicative Suffix *hoi*

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This paper investigates the semantics of   occurring in main clauses. Previous studies on the aspectual marker   adopt the following two approaches, either treating it on par with 嘅,   , as a progressive marker (cf. Gao (1980)), or categorizing it under a different category. For the latter approach,   is treated as: (1) a continuative marker   (cf. Cheung (1972), Li (1995)) emphasizing the continuation of a state, and (2) a habitual marker, describing an action or state that has been going on or in existence for some time (cf. Yue-Hashimoto (1993), Matthews & Yip (1994)). However, closer examination reveals that it is not adequate to treat   as either a progressive/continuative marker or a habitual marker. The co-occurrence of   with the achievement type of situation in (1) suggests that   cannot be a progressive or continuative marker, and example (2) indicates that   is not a habitual marker, since its co-occurrence with the adverbial   'yesterday' has turned the relevant situation   嗰   into a non-habitual situation.

(1)   喺   .
 I always at-here bump-into HOI him
 "It is always here that I bump into him."

(2)   嗰   .
 I   yesterday use HOI that-CL-computer
 "I was using this computer yesterday."

(3) *   .
 I   yesterday go HOI US

(4)   .
 this-CL-hospital die HOI many person
 "Many patients have been dying in this hospital."

(5) *   .
 this-CL-hospital die HOI Siuming

(6) *
 he   tomorrow drink HOI coffee

This paper investigates the semantics of   , and we claim that   demonstrates the following five properties.

Property (1)

  requires its relevant situations with either sub-interval properties or multiple occurrences.

➔   Property (1) is supported by sentences (2) through (5). In (2),   嗰 belongs to the activity type of situation which is characterized by its homogeneity, ie. sub-interval property (cf. Dowty 1979). In (3),   belongs to the accomplishment type of situation, which is heterogeneous, and thus, bearing no sub-interval property. Moreover, with the introduction of a temporal boundary by

'yesterday', there is no possibility that the event   can have multiple occurrences, and (3) is thus ungrammatical.

➔   Sentences (4) and (5) differ only in their internal arguments, but they contrast in (un)grammaticality.   , being the achievement type of situation, bears no sub-interval property, and hence, such a predicate needs to have multiple occurrences in order to be compatible with   . However, in (5), with   as the internal argument of   , the relevant situation fails to have multiple occurrences, and hence,   is incompatible with   . On the other hand, in (4), the internal argument is   , and with such a plural NP, there exists multiple occurrences of the "dying" situations. Hence,   can co-occur with   in (4).

Property (2)
is a two-place predicate with the following semantic representation:

Hoi(P)(S) where P is the predicate and S is a set of situations including initial endpoints.

➔   operates over a set of situations having Property (1), and gives another set of situations which must include initial endpoints, but impose no restriction on their final endpoints.

Property (3)
describes situations occurring before or at ST only.

➔   This property of   is supported by the ungrammaticality of (6). (6) shows that   is not compatible with futurity encoded by   'tomorrow', which indicates that   is restricted to occurrences in the past or at present, and situations occurring after ST cannot co-occur with   .

Property (4)
demonstrates a universal quantification over events.

➔   Property (2) suggests that the semantics of   is in fact similar to that of   which also selects a set of situations (cf. Lee 2000). However, the two differ in the following way: gives a universal quantification over all situations denoted by the predicate P, which means that for all situations denoted by P, they have to be realized. However,   only requires at least one occurrence of the relevant situation, which makes it into an existential quantifier.

Property (5)
takes a prospective view from its initial point till ST.

➔   demonstrates another difference.   takes a prospective view and looks forward from its initial point to ST, whereas   takes a retrospective view and look backwards from its RT (or ST).

Restrictive Focus in Cantonese: How Acquisition Meets Semantics

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Restrictive focus operators like 'only' induce a semantic partitioning into a background (B) and a focus (F), such that the background is true of the focus, and for every element in the set of alternatives to the focus, if B is true of the alternative, then the element is identical to the focus (cf. von Stechow 1992, Krifka 1992). In a language such as Cantonese, which is rich in its devices for A-quantification (cf. Partee (1991), restrictive focus is encoded with three kinds of particles: a preverbal particle *zinghai*, a sentence final particle *zaa3*, and a particle *dak1*. The final particle *zaa3* has sentential scope, able to associate with any constituent in its c-command domain, including the subject, the exact focus determined by context and intonation. The particle *zinghai* has VP scope when in preverbal adverbial position, but can only have scope over the subject when preceding the latter. The two restrictive focus particles can co-occur, but are distinguished from one another in that while *zaa3* has both scalar and non-scalar uses, *zinghai* is limited to non-scalar quantification (cf. Konig 1991). The third restrictive particle *dak1* can function as a restrictive verb of possession but can also be used to focus on the subject. The final particle *zaa3* can occur in a particle sequence with other final particles, often in a fused form, in which the focus particle is fused with a yes-no question particle.

This paper explores the use of these restrictive focus structures in early Cantonese child language based on longitudinal data from four two-to three-year-olds who were each observed for one year. It also examines the ways in which adults use these particles. The following issues are addressed: (a) when do restrictive focus markers appear in child Cantonese, especially in relation to additive focus particles and evidential particles; (b) what are the semantic representations underlying children's restrictive focus markers?; (c) how is the scope of restrictive focus particles marked in the input data to the child?, and (d) in what kinds of discoursal contexts are restrictive focus particles used in the speech of children and adults?

The main findings can be summed up as follows. Restrictive focus markers did not begin to be used spontaneously and productively until shortly after 3;0, thus emerging later than the additive focus markers and some of the evidential particles (cf. Lee 1995, Lee and Law 2000). The restrictive focus particles in early child Cantonese reflect both exclusive and limiting (or scalar) uses; the non-scalar use may signal contrast rather than exclusivity. The adult input data show that utterance boundaries clearly mark the focused constituent. In signifying exclusivity, restrictive focus particles were used in contexts in which specific alternatives or all alternatives were denied, and contexts in which exclusivity was negated or questioned. In scalar quantification, these focus particles were employed when the size of a set was adjusted downward from a greater quantity or amount, or when discrete options were ranked or compared to one another on some dimension of significance. Restrictive focus particles were sometimes associated with minimality in their scalar uses, but whether this minimality denoted inadequacy would depend on the communicative context.

The Functions of Sentence-Final Particles in Cantonese

K.-K. Luke

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In this paper, I address the question of what functions are served by sentence-final particles in Cantonese. Aiming to provide an overview of the set of sentence-final particles as a whole, I put forward the following scheme.

Sentence-final particles serve four main kinds of functions. They are used:

(1) As indications of speech act categories (or "mood") such as question or request.

(2) As expressions of emotions and feelings such as surprise or doubt and as carriers of intonation.

(3) As indications of the speaker's judgment of the status of the information being communicated.

(4) As tokens to facilitate turn-taking in conversation.

Examples are given of SFPs which serve these functions, sometimes separately but sometimes simultaneously. It is argued that sentence-final particles are best studied in the context of sentences and in the context of discourse and conversations.

laa4, gaa4, aa4, me1,   ge2   ne1

redundancy

Properties of the Particle *ngaang* and its Syntactic Structure

Sze-Wing Tang

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This paper discusses the properties of *ngaang* (　), such as the one in (1), in Hong Kong Cantonese. Morphologically, *ngaang* is a particle that is attached to verbs. Regarding its semantic interpretation, it denotes a meaning of modality, similar to the interpretation of the modal auxiliary *must* in English.

Although the particle *ngaang* can be replaced by *gang* (　) in spoken Hong Kong Cantonese, as in (2), interestingly, the usage of *ngaang* is much better than that of *gang* particularly when the verb expresses accomplishments, as illustrated by (3). This paper mainly focuses on *ngaang*.

It is observed that the occurrence of *ngaang* is subject to some semantic as well as prosodic constraints. For example, the particle *ngaang* can be attached to the verb that expresses telic or bounded events, such as accomplishments (e.g. (4)) and achievements (e.g. (5)). The ungrammaticality of (6) shows that it cannot cooccur with any aspect markers. Furthermore, *ngaang* cannot be attached to disyllabic verbs, as suggested by the unnaturalness of (7). It is concluded that *ngaang* is subject to the boundedness requirement, the aspectual requirement, and the monosyllabic requirement.

Some properties of *ngaang*, *saai* (e.g. (8)), and *dak* (e.g. (9)), all of which are analyzed as verbal particles in Cantonese, will be compared. All these three particles are basically subject to the boundedness requirement. In addition, both *ngaang* and *dak* are subject to the aspectual requirement and the monosyllabic requirement. By virtue of their grammatical similarities, it is argued that these three particles in Cantonese should be treated on a par.

In terms of syntax, it is proposed that *ngaang*, *saai*, and *dak* are overt realizations of a functional category that is above VP in the argument structure. In terms of semantics, such a functional category is associated with modality, quantification, and focus. If the analysis in this paper is on the right track, verbs should move to a functional category that dominates VP (and AspP, if any) in Cantonese. Moving the verb out of VP can derive the right word order in Cantonese: 'verb-(aspect)-particle', à la Baker's (1985) Mirror Principle. This paper hopes that the observations about the syntax of particles and verb movement in Cantonese can shed some light on the study of parametric variation among Chinese languages.

(1) Keoi zou-ngaang.

    he   do-must

    'He must do (something).'

(2) Keoi jeng-ngaang/gang.   /

    he   win-must

    'He must win.'

(3) Zingfu   caak-ngaang/??gang nidi gau lau.   /??   啲

    government demolish-must   these old building

    'The government is demolishing these old buildings.'

(4) Keoi maai-ngaang ni zek gupiu.

    he   buy-must   this Cl stock

    'He must buy this stock.'

(5) Ngo jeng-ngaang.

    I   win-must

    'I must win.'

(6) Keoidei heoi(-*zo/*gwo/*gan)-ngaang.   (*咗/* /*)

    they   go(-Perf/Exp/Prog)-must

    'They must have gone.'

(7) *Keoi diucaa-ngaang   ni   gin si.   *

     he   investigate-must this Cl   matter

    'He must investigate this matter.'

(8) Ngo sik-saai go   di pinggwo.   嗰啲

    I   eat-all   that Cl apple

    'I ate up those apples.'

(9) Keoi maai-dak jat-zoeng toi.   枱

    he   buy-only one-Cl   table

    'He bought only one table.'

The Cantonese *gam2*

Cathy S.P. Wong & Kitty K.S. Szeto

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It is surprising to find that the Cantonese particle *gam2* is used very frequently in everyday Hong Kong Cantonese. In a very brief conversation we looked at, we found the use of *gam2* was as frequent as once every four or five sentences.

Previous studies of the Cantonese particle *gam2* by Cheung (1972), Gao (1980) Zeng (1994) and Matthews & Yip (1994) all assume that *gam2* is a kind of pro-form, one way or another. Cheung (1972: 99) considers *gam2* to be a pro-adjective or pro-adverb in sentences like the following:

    (1)   keoi5 tau1tau1 gam2 haang4 maai4 heoi3

        he steal steal GAM2 walk close go

        'he stealthily walked over'

    (2)   heng4heng1 gam2 mang1 zyu6 keoi5, m hou2 jung6 lik6

        搿 ,

        light-light GAM2 pull DUR he, not good use force

        'pull him gently; don't use force'

Gao (1980: 123) classifies *gam2* as a demonstrative pro-form which in effect implies that it must have a referent, at least in the context:

    (3)   nei5 gam2 pai1ping4 keoi5, keoi5 geng2 hai6 wui5 zit3sau6 ge2

        嘅

        you GAM2 criticize he, he of course will accept SFP

        'you criticizes him this way, he of course will accept'

Zeng (1994: 180) is in agreement with the above two authors and regards *gam2* as a pro-form:

    (4)   fei4 dou3 zak3 zyu1 GAM2

        fat RES CL pig GAM2

        'as fat as a pig'

According to Matthews & Yip (1994: 181), it is 'used elliptically as a predicate, ...' and so implying that it is a pro-form as well:

(5) dim2 gai2 gam2 ge2
                     嘅 ?
     how come will GAM2 SFP
     'How come it's like this?'

    Neither Gao (1980) or Zeng (1994) provide any justifications for their classification or discuss the syntactic properties of *gam2* . Cheung (1972) does provide evidence and discussion for his analysis but it is mainly based on how *gam2* functions in a phrase, such as whether *gam2*   modifies a noun or a verb. He does not examine thoroughly the syntactic distribution and properties of *gam2*   . Though Matthews & Yip (1994) give the most comprehensive account of the usage of gam2, their syntactic analysis of *gam2*   falls short of being a systematic account. The major aim of this paper is to provide a more in-depth account of the grammatical properties of *gam2*   as used by speakers of Hong Kong Cantonese.

    The issues that this paper focuses on include:

1.   What kind of pro-form is *gam2*   exactly? Is it a pro-noun, pro-adjective, pro-adverb, or all of the above?

2.   Semantically, if *gam2*   is a pro-form, does it always have a referent/antecedent?

3.   The position of *gam2*   varies in a sentence. What are the factors that determine its position?

4.   The pro-form *gam2*   is found to be optional in some cases but obligatory in others. Is this systematic? When is *gam2*   optional and when is it obligatory?

    We hope to provide some preliminary answers to these questions in this paper.

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Some Preliminary Observations of the Compatibility between Epistemic Modal Auxiliaries and Epistemic Sentence Final Particles

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This paper examines the compatibility between epistemic modal auxiliaries (EM) and epistemic sentence final particles (ESFP). When an EM (such as   ,   and

) and an ESFP ($_1$ $_5$, $_3$ $_5$, 喇 $_3$, $_3$, $_4$, and $_5$ are both present in a clause, they have to be in some sort of **agreement** in terms of modality strength.
For examples:

    Incompatible case:
(1)   Q: mat$_1$ ge$_2$?
        A: (*   /*   /*   ) $_1$ $_5$.

    Compatible case:
(2)   /   /   喇 $_3$.

In sentence (1), the ESFP $_1$ $_5$ indicates an obvious excuse, and so they cannot cooccur with the EMs   /   /   which indicate tentativeness. In sentence (2), the ESFP 喇 $_3$ marks uncertainty, which does not conflict with the EMs   /   /   , and hence the sentence is well-formed.

    Apart from a purely semantic analysis, this paper claims that the compatibility phenomenon calls for a structural (viz. syntactic) explanation, where agreement, scope, selection and complementation are at issue. Further details are to be worked out in this workshop.

The Licensing Conditions of the Cantonese Final Particle 'zyu6'

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The morpheme 'zyu6' as occurring in (1) is considered a final particle by a number of scholars (Cf. Cheung 1972, Leung 1992, Matthews & Yip 1994, Zhan 1958). It is also noted in the Cantonese literature that the final particle 'zyu6' can only occur at the end of negative sentences (Cf. Cheung 1972, Li ed 1998, Leung 1992, Zhan 1958)

(1) Keoi m/mei sik faan   zyu.

     s/he not   eat rice   ZYU

     'S/he is not going to have/has not had her/his meal yet.'

In this paper, I argue that the use of the final particle 'zyu6' is licensed by two conditions. First, the clause in which the final particle 'zyu6' occurs must be irrealis in the sense that there is a possibility of occurrence of the state denoted by the verb. Second, the final particle 'zyu6' must be c-commanded by a negative adverb. By proposing the above conditions, I can explain why the final particle 'zyu6' can also appear at the end of an A-not-A question as in (2). Furthermore, that the final particle 'zyu6' can not co-occur with the negative adverb *mou* in the same clause as shown in (3) can be accounted for. The above conditions can also predict that the negative adverb and the final particle 'zyu6' need not co-occur in the same clause as illustrated in (4).

(2) Keoi sik-m-sik faan zyu?

     s/he eat-not-eat rice ZYU

     'Is s/he going to have her/his meal?'

(3a)*Keoi mou sik faan zyu.

     s/he   not eat rice ZYU

     'S/he had not had her/his meal.'

(3b)*Keoi jau mou sik faan zyu?

     s/he   have not eat rice ZYU

     'Did s/he have had her/his meal?'

(4) Keoi dou mei waa sik faan zyu.

     s/he still not   say eat rice ZYU

     'S/he has not said s/he is going to have her/his meal.'