



## A Complex ForceP for Speaker- and Addressee-oriented Discourse Particles in Cantonese

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### Abstract

This study of syntax-pragmatics interface analyzes the meaning of two Cantonese question particles, namely *me1* and *ho2*, and contrasts their felicity conditions with that of neutral questions. Both particles introduce complex speech acts which exercise two illocutionary forces (*asserting* and *asking*), contrary to neutral questions which are simple speech acts. Co-occurrence patterns of question particles, scope facts and clause-typing restrictions suggest that the addressee-oriented particle *ho2* is higher than speaker-oriented *me1* in syntax. A complex ForceP structure is proposed, in which a higher head FORCE<sub>A(addressee)</sub> hosts *ho2*, while FORCE<sub>S(speaker)</sub> hosts *me1*.

### Keywords

Cantonese, utterance-final particles, questions, left periphery, syntax, pragmatics

## 粵語的複合語氣詞短語

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### 提要

本文從語用學和句法學的角度探討粵語的疑問句末助詞“咩”和“喺”。透過比較“咩”、“喺”和普通疑問句之語境，本文指出“咩”和“喺”同時發揮兩種語力（陳述和發問），是一個複雜的言語行為，與簡單疑問句有別。語義上，“咩”是個以說話者為中心的語氣詞，而“喺”則以受話者為中心。另一方面，本文分析兩個語氣詞與各種疑問句的並存限制、轄域，及輸入之小句種類，發現句法結構上，一個語氣詞中心語並不足夠，而且“喺”必須比“咩”高。因此，本文提出由兩個語氣詞中心語構成的“複合語氣詞短語”——“咩”為較低的中心語  $FORCE_{S(\text{speaker})}$ ，而“喺”則在第二層較高的  $FORCE_{A(\text{addressee})}$ 。

### 關鍵詞

粵語，句末語氣詞，疑問句，左緣結構，句法學，語用學