Constructions and Functions of Particle ʔa呀 in Hakka*

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Abstract

In most languages, the most common particle is the sentence-final particle. However, the Hakka language, apart from the sentence-final particle, there are also post-verbal particles and this makes the word class difficult to identify. The particle has no precise meaning itself but has an important function at clause or phrase level.

The goal of this study was to clarify the particle ʔa呀 in Hakka language. When the author investigated grammar of Bangkok Hakka, the particle ʔa呀 was found to have multiple functions. The particle ʔa呀 is a bound morpheme. It cannot stand alone and always attaches to the post-verbal position. Some constructions can delete it but others cannot. Data from colloquial language found in the texts were collected and analyzed. Research findings indicate that there are at least three patterns of use for particle ʔa呀, according to its function. i) it should be called location particle and its structure is V+ particle ʔa呀+ locative phrase. ii) it may be called as aspect marker and its structure is V+ particle ʔa呀+ PERF. iii) it is used in the interrogative clause and its structure is V+ particle ʔa呀+ alternative conjunction + Item. Furthermore, the particle ʔa呀 can be deleted in the structure V± particle ʔa呀+ direction but the sound does not appear so elegant.

Keywords: Hakka, grammatical particle, post-verbal particle

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1. Introduction

There are few studies of Hakka grammar in Thailand. One reason scholars do not choose to research this topic is because Hakka is a dialect of Chinese and they believe it is not different from Mandarin Chinese. However, although they are in the same language family branch, they are not the same. For this reason, a number of aspects of Hakka are of interest for detailed study.

Hakka speakers in Thailand are descendants of migrants from several areas in China, and, as such, they speak different sub-dialects such as Meixian, Fengshun, Taipu, Xingning, Jiayang, Jiaoliang, etc. From previous studies of Hakka in Thailand, it was found that the Hakka language situation is declining (Siripen, 2011:168) and it can be considered an endangered language in Thailand. An indication of this is that it is quite rare to find good informants to collect data from - most informants are over 50 years old (Siripen, 2007). Hakka speakers who are under 50 either cannot use their mother tongue or are only able to use it a little. Although there are many descendants of the original Hakka migrants, they cannot speak or do not speak their language at home. This situation indicates that there will be no good informants who know the Hakka language in the near future. Some issues at the grammar level of Hakka are interesting to study such as particles, modality, aspect, etc. Each language or dialect of Hakka has significant points, not only in the phonology, but also in the grammatical structure. This research is continuation of the researcher’s dissertation (2007) in the area of phonological and acoustic studies. The data was collected from five informants who are descendants of migrants from Meixian, Guangdong Province, China. The main informant is now 85 years old and still speaks Hakka everyday.

The objective of the study is to present and describe the usage of the particle ʔa in multiple contexts and discuss its functions.

2. Summarized of Hakka phonology

This paper is based on Meixian Hakka phonology (2007) and is based on data collected from Hakka speakers living in the Bangkok area who speak the Meixian dialect. The results of study on the phonology identified 18 onsets or initial consonants /p, pʰ, t, tʰ, k, kʰ, ʔ, ts, tsʰ, f, s, h, m, n, ŋ, l, w, j/ which combine with 66 rimes. Within the tonal system there are four contrastive tones that occur on live syllables and two contrastive tones that occur on dead syllables. The live syllables include open syllables and closed syllables with final nasals m, n, ŋ whereas the dead syllables are syllables closed with final stops p, t, k. The tone contours and tone values can be symbolized as ˧33 mid level for Tone1, ˨˩ mid-low falling for tone 2, ˧1 mid falling for tone 3, ˦44 mid-high level for tone 4, ˧2 short mid falling for tone 5, and ˩4 short mid-high level for tone 6, respectively.

Phonological differences exist between Hakka sub-dialects particularly between consonant phonemes, single vowel phonemes, final consonants, and tones. For example, Jie Yang sub-dialect (Pratum, 1984) has 21 consonant phonemes, 6 single vowel phonemes, 6 final consonants, and 4 tones (but not separate dead and live syllables). Hsing Ning sub-dialect (Jurairat, 2001) has a similar phonological structure as the Jie Yang sub-
dialect, however it only has four final consonants. (See more details in Table 2.6 of Siripen, 2007: 30-31)

3. Methodology

Data was collected from several stories using an audio recorder and then transcribed using IPA script. Chinese characters were written for each syllable however, some characters were different from the Mandarin Chinese. The Chinese language uses only one writing system however dialects do not use a standard writing system, and this includes Hakka. Thus, the Chinese characters shown in this study are pronounced in the Hakka dialect, specifically, the Meixian sub-dialect. Siripen (2007) elicited many sentences and explanations, however, any particles present were explored from connected natural speech in context. So, the more data there was from the stories, the more particles were to be found.

A tagmemic framework was used in this study. The analysis of grammar is an interweaving of structure, function, and semantics at the various hierarchical ranks (Thomas, 1993). The same forms or words may reveal different functions according to their meaning and when they change their positions in the structure, the function changes too. The relationship between semantics, functions and structures determines meaning so all need to be considered.

4. Word order in Hakka

Hakka, like other Chinese dialects in general, has subject-verb-object (SVO) word order.

Example: S + V + O

ŋaj² k'ian¹ kew³

ㄧ ㄐ to lead ㄐ狗 ‘I lead a dog’

ki² ta³ ku³ ?e²

佢 打 鼓 子 ‘He/she hits a drum’

Word types in Hakka can be divided into compounding, affixation, reduplication and onomatopoeia. Prefixes are less common than suffixes and infixes are not found in Hakka. Prefixes and suffixes are usually bound forms which do not occur independently (Mattews and Yip, 1994:31) Suffixes used to identify gender in Hakka normally have three forms. Suffixes ku¹牯 and kuŋ¹公 are used to indicate male, while suffix ma²嫲 is used to indicate female (Siripen, 2013: 25-26).

At the phrase level, the modifiers are put on the left side of the head except for animate genders.

Example of general modifier:

modifier + Head

tsʰonj² fu⁴

长 裤 ‘long trousers’

thaj⁴ wuk⁵

大 屋 ‘big house’

Example of animate gender:

Head + modifier

ke³ ma²

鸡 嫲 chicken suffix (female) ‘hen’

kew³ ku¹

狗 牯
Therefore, post-modifiers of animate genders in Hakka are classified as suffixes (Siripen, 2013: 25) which is different from general pre-modifiers.

5. Meaning and function of the particles

David Crystal (1991: 251-252) provides the following meaning of a particle:

“A term used in grammatical description to refer to an invariable item with grammatical function, especially one which does not readily fit into a standard classification of parts of speech.”

Thus, particles function at the grammatical level and have no precise lexical meaning but act as marker making the context smooth or more elegant. The particle ʔa呀 is a bound morpheme and has no meaning in itself so it is also classified as a “particle”.

Chappell and Lamarre (2005) worked on the grammar and lexicon of Hakka and described other postverbal particles (directionals and completives). They offered examples of the postverbal particle loj来 which derives from the verb ‘to come’. When it functions as a postverbal particle, its meaning is like ‘to become’ or ‘to have become something’. Another postverbal particle is hi去 which derives from the verb ‘to go’. Its meaning changes to ‘away’ or ‘to (there)’.

Examples:

(1) təojŋ təŋ təu samʔəojŋ pianʔ ʔaʔ suʔ japəojŋ hewʔ tsəŋ təsk tətet təsam təme tətaw.

6. Constructions and functions of grammatical particles ʔa呀 in Bangkok Hakka

Siripen (2013) found that the bound morpheme ʔa呀 required further investigation. It has no precise meaning but can function in many positions as follows:

6.1 Location particle

The first one is called ‘location particle’ because it occurs between the verb and the locative phrase. Its meaning is similar to ‘at’, and links verbs and locations.

Its structure is V + particle ʔa呀 + locative phrase.

Examples:

(1) təojŋ təŋ təu samʔəojŋ pianʔ ʔaʔ suʔ japəojŋ hewʔ tsəŋ təsk tətet təsam təme tətaw.

When you have grown up, you will have to teach.'

(Chappell and Lamarre, 2005:111)

Examples: tsewəojŋ tsewəojŋ hi፛

走去走去

go come go go

‘to pace up and down’

(Chappell and Lamarre, 2005:113)

Other postverbal particles that they identify are: tsew워 ‘walk’, ‘away’; tson转‘return’, ‘back’, ‘again’; lok落 ‘into’; tsʰut‘out of’; tsonʃ ‘up’; ha下 ‘down’; hi起 ‘raise’, ‘up’.

This article will analyze the particle ʔa呀 which is not mentioned in Chappell and Lamarre’s description of particles. I will clarify this in the next section.
Constructions and Functions of Particle ʔa 呀 in Hakka

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Grasshopper catch cicada must hide ʔa 呀 leaf behind then catch can cicada asp.

“When the grasshopper wants to catch a cicada, it must hide itself behind a leaf.”

From example (1), the particle ʔa 呀 links the verb piaŋ 庞 and the locative phrase su 4 jap 6 poj 4 hew 1 树叶 背后.

(2) law 3 pak 1 na 1 tsut 3 tsoŋ 3 jiw 1 ke 4 fu 2 lu 2, piŋ 4 ʔa 4 ti 4 hong 4

老伯拿出装油个葫芦, 放呀地上

old man pick out fill oil rel. gourd, lay down ʔa 呀 ground on

‘The old man picked out the gourd for filling oil and laid it on the ground.’

From example (2), the particle ʔa 呀 links piŋ 4 放 and the locative phrase ti 4 hong 4 地上.

The following examples show the function of the particle ʔa 呀 in the same position.

(3) tsut 4 ʔa 4 niat 6 kiw 3 hong 4

住呀月売上

live ʔa 呀 the moon on

‘live on the moon’

(4) tui 4 sim 1 kaw 4 tsipw 4 lan 4 lu 4 maj 1 taw 3

大心白就半路买倒一扎扇子带呀身上

big female in-law then half way buy PERF. one cl. fan bring ʔa 呀 body on

‘The first female in-law walked along the path then bought one fan and took it her.’

(5) jiw 1 jit 3 niit 3 ka 1 kuon 1 na 1 jit 3 ki 1 saw 3 pa 1 piŋ 4 ʔa 4 tui 4 mun 3 hew 3 ti 3 ha 1.

有一日, 家官拿一枝扫把放呀大门口地下

have one day, father-in-law (of a woman) take one cl. broom put down ʔa 呀 big door mouth floor

‘One day, father-in-law took a broom and put it on the floor in front of the door.’

(6) jit 3 tsak 3 kuaj 3 ʔe 2 tsut 3 ʔa 4 jif 1 hew 3 fi 4 tsiaŋ 3 tu 1 ʔe 2

一只蝎子住呀一口废井肚里

one cl. frog live ʔa 呀 one cl. abolish a well inside

‘There was a frog which lived in the empty well.’

(7) na 1 wok 6 thew 3 piŋ 4 ʔa 4 lu 2 ʔe 2 hong 4

拿锅头放呀炉子上

take a pan put ʔa 呀 stove on

‘Take a pan and put it on the stove’

(8) tsut 3 ʔa 4 hong 3 sun 2 ke 4 tsip 3 sew 3, ja 1 tsipw 4 he 2 pak 3 hiaw 3 sin 1 san 1

住呀河唇个智叟, 也系百晓先生

live ʔa 呀 river mouth rel. clever old man, also is shrewd man

‘The man who lives at the mouth of the river is a clever old man.’

(9) ki 2 jiw 1 jif 3 tsak 3 se 4 tsip 3 ʔe 2 fi 3

佢有 一只 细茶壶. 佢每日都 坐呀路边泡茶分自家食.

she has one cl. small kettle. she
everyday all sit ʔa 呀 roadside boil tea give oneself drink

‘She has a small kettle. She sits down at the roadside and boils tea for herself everyday.’
Table 1 A summary of the particle ?a티呀 when occurring with a locative phrase

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>verb</th>
<th>particle?a티呀</th>
<th>locative phrase</th>
<th>meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>隱 pían티 ‘hide’</td>
<td>耶</td>
<td>树叶 背后 su티 jap티 poj티 hew티 ‘behind a leaf’</td>
<td>hide behind a leaf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>放 pìn티 ‘lay down’</td>
<td>耶</td>
<td>地上 thi蒂 ho蒂 ‘on the ground’</td>
<td>lay down on the ground</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>住 tshú티 ‘live’</td>
<td>耶</td>
<td>月球上 ni티 kíw티 ho蒂 ‘on the moon’</td>
<td>live on the moon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>放 pìn티 ‘put’</td>
<td>耶</td>
<td>大门口地下 tةaj蒂 mun蒂 hew蒂 tí蒂 ha蒂 ‘floor in front of a door’</td>
<td>put on the floor in front of a door</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>住 tsú蒂 ‘live’</td>
<td>耶</td>
<td>一口废井肚里 jit蒂 hew蒂 fi蒂 tsi蒂 tu蒂 ?e蒂 ‘in the abolish well’</td>
<td>live in the abolish well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>放 pìn티 ‘put’</td>
<td>耶</td>
<td>炉子上 lu蒂 ?e蒂 ho蒂 ‘on the stove’</td>
<td>put on the stove</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>住 tsú蒂 ‘live’</td>
<td>耶</td>
<td>河唇 ho蒂 sun蒂 ‘with the river mouth’</td>
<td>live at a with the river mouth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>坐 tsò蒂 ‘sit down’</td>
<td>耶</td>
<td>路边 lu蒂 pien蒂 ‘roadside’</td>
<td>sit down at the roadside</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>带 taj蒂 ‘bring together’</td>
<td>耶</td>
<td>身上 sɨn蒂 ho蒂 ‘with the body’</td>
<td>bring together with the body</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From Table 1, the position of particle ?a티呀 occurs after verbs and is followed by the locative phrase. The structure of locative phrase is composed of optional place marker filled by the word ho蒂, an obligatory head filled by the noun phrase, and an obligatory relator filled by the preposition as follows:

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LocP = ± Place mk: ho티 + H: np + Rel: prep.
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When the particle ?a티呀 occurs with a locative phrase, it has no meaning but functions as a preposition, meaning ‘in’, ‘on’ or ‘at’ etc.  

6.2 Aspect marker particle

The second one is called ‘aspect marker particle’ because it occurs between the verb and the aspect marker. Aspect is a grammatical category associated with verbs which related to state, time or an event. Examples of aspect in Hakka are perfective aspect: taw티倒, ?e티啰, experiential aspect: kuo티过, and continuous aspect: ten티等, ho티在 (Siripen, 2013).

When the particle ?a티呀 occurs with an aspect marker, its meaning cannot be translated precisely but it makes the utterance sound smooth and natural.
Its structure is V+ particle ʔa４呀+ aspect marker (PERF\(^{11}\))

Examples:

(10) ka¹ kʰuon¹ tʰaŋ⁴ ʔa⁴ taw³ sip⁶ fun¹ fon¹ hi³. mun¹ wa⁴ se⁴ moj⁴ ?e² he⁴ man¹ ńin², tsʰoј¹ ńaj⁴ ?e².

家 官 听 呀 倒 十分 欢喜.

问 话 细 妹子 係 么人, 在 哪里.

father-in-law listen ʔa⁴ PERF. very delighted. ask that small woman is who live where

‘Father-in-law was very delighted after listening to (the news) then asked who that was and where she lived.’

(11) men³ ʔa⁴ ?e². sam¹ tsi³ saw³ tsʰiun² tʰew² taw¹ mi¹ koŋ¹ pun¹ ki² tʰaŋ¹.

思 呀 哩. 三子 嫂 就 从 头 到 尾 讲 分 佢 听.

think ʔa⁴ PERF three daughter-in-law then from first to end tell to her listen

‘After thinking the three daughters-in-law told her the whole story.’

(12) tsʰin⁴ ʔa⁴ ?e² jiw¹ sam¹ pak⁵ liŋ⁴ ?an¹ to¹. fon¹ hi³ si³ ?e².

秤 呀 哩 有 三 百 两 悠 多。 欢 喜 死 哩.

weight ʔa⁴ PERF have three hundred two so much delighted die fp.\(^{12}\)

‘The weight was three hundred and twenty so he was very delighted.’

(13) ka¹ kʰuon¹ tʰaŋ⁴ ʔa⁴ taw³ sip⁶ fun¹ fon¹ hi³.

家 官 听 呀 倒 十分 欢喜

father-in-law listen ʔa⁴ PERF very delight

‘Father-in-law has already heard and he is very delighted.’

(14) nam² kuok² sin¹ saŋ¹ ti¹ ʔa⁴ taw³ kiak⁵ kiak⁵ tʰew¹ tsew³.

南 郭 先 生 知 呀 倒 逰 逰 偷 走.

name man know ʔa⁴ PERF hurry run away

‘When the man found out, he ran away quickly.’

(15) lu² ?e² kʰon⁴ ʔa⁴ taw³ tʰaj⁴ saŋ¹ jīt⁵ kiaw⁴.

驴 子 看 呀 倒, 大声 一 叫。 老 虎 怕 死 哩, 逰 逰 走 开。

donkey see ʔa⁴ PERF, big sound one to roar. tiger fear die part. hurry ran away

‘When the donkey saw a tiger, brayed very loudly and the tiger get frightened and ran away.’

\(^{11}\) PERF = perfective aspect

\(^{12}\) fp. = final particle
From Table 2, the particle ʔa呀 is always positioned between the verb and perfective markers but it adds no meaning to the phrase. Its function remains that of a particle.

6.3 Conjunction particle
This type of particle ʔa呀 is used in interrogative clauses. It is positioned between the verb and the alternative conjunction and has no precise meaning.

Its structure is V ± particleʔa呀 + alternative conjunction han2 he4 还係 + Item

Examples:
(16) ŋi2 loj2 ke3 le2 he4 loj2 liaw4 ʔa呀 han2 he4 loj2 kʰi⁴w³ tsh³ ka1 pien4 tso⁴ jit⁵ tsak⁴ fu₂ thiap⁶, pi⁵ ʔa呀 loj² pi² ʔa呀 hi¹, sip⁶ fun¹ tsʰi⁴ tsʰaj⁴ 有 一 摆, 庄 周 发 梦 发 倒 自 家 变 做 一 只 蝴 蝶, 飞 ʔa呀 来, 飞 ʔa呀 去, 十 分 自 在
you come here is come travel ʔa呀 or come study
‘you came here for travel or study?’
(17) ŋi³ ʔoj⁴ kaw¹ pi¹ ʔa呀 han² he⁴ ʔoj⁴ tsʰa² 你 爱 咖 啡 ʔa呀 还 係 爱 茶?
you want coffee ʔa呀 or want tea
‘Do you want coffee or tea?’

6.4 Other
6.4.1 Directional particle
The particle ʔa呀 can be deleted in some cases. This can be called a directional particle because it links the verb and the direction.

Its structure is V ± particleʔa呀 + direction

Examples:
(18) jiw¹ jit⁵ paj¹, tso¹ tsu¹ pot⁵ muŋ⁴ pot⁵ taw³ tshʰi⁴ ka¹ pien⁴ tso⁴ jit⁵ tsak⁴ fu² thiap⁶, pi⁵ ʔa呀 loj² pi² ʔa呀 hi¹, sip⁶ fun¹ tsʰi⁴ tsʰaj⁴ 有 一 摆, 庄 周 发 梦 发 倒 自 家 变 做 一 只 蝴 蝶, 飞 ʔa呀 来, 飞 ʔa呀 去, 十 分 自 在
have one time, name dream to oneself become to be one cl. butterfly, fly ʔa呀 come, fly ʔa呀 go, very happy
‘Once, Zhong zu had a dream that he turned into a butterfly, flow back and forth and felt very happy.’

In example (18), the particle ʔa呀 can be deleted but the resulting sound does not seem elegant or natural.

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Table 2 Summary of the particle ʔa呀 which occurs with aspect marker (PERF)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>verb</th>
<th>particle ʔa呀</th>
<th>aspect marker (PERF)</th>
<th>meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>看kʰon⁴ ‘see’</td>
<td>呀</td>
<td>倒taw³</td>
<td>already seen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>听tʰaj⁴ ‘listen’</td>
<td>呀</td>
<td>倒taw³</td>
<td>already listened</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>想men¹ ‘think’</td>
<td>呀</td>
<td>嘀ʔe²</td>
<td>already thought</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>称tˢʰin⁴ ‘weigh’</td>
<td>呀</td>
<td>嘀ʔe²</td>
<td>already weighed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>知ti¹ ‘know’</td>
<td>呀</td>
<td>倒taw³</td>
<td>already known</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

13 PERF = perfective aspect
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(19) koŋ3 ʔa4 pʰet5, tsʰiw4 na1 taw3 taw3 ʔe2. liŋ3 ke4 ɲin2 tʰen4 su5 tsʰiam1 ʔa4 lok6 hi4.

讲呀撇, 就拿倒刀子,两个人

two people cooperate stab ʔa4 down

‘Finished speaking, two people cooperated to stab the fox to death.’

(20) haŋ2 taw4 wok6 pien1, kiam4 hak5 jit5 kiam4 tsam3 ʔa4 hi4.

行到锅边, 剑客一剑斩

walk to a pan beside, swordsman one

time chop ʔa4 off

‘A swordsman walked to near a pan and chop (another person head) off.’

(21) lu5 ʔe2 tson4 ʔa4 ha1, tsʰiw4 pun1 law4 hu3 sit6 pʰet6 le2.

驴子转呀下, 就分老虎食

‘The donkey fell down and was eaten by a tiger.’

Table 3  Summary of the particle ʔa4呀 which occurs with the direction verbs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>verb</th>
<th>Particle ʔa4</th>
<th>direction</th>
<th>meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ʔe4pi1 ‘fly’</td>
<td>呀</td>
<td>loj2 ‘come’</td>
<td>fly back</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ʔe4pi1 ‘fly’</td>
<td>呀</td>
<td>hi4 ‘go’</td>
<td>fly forth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tson4 ‘turn’</td>
<td>呀</td>
<td>ha1 ‘down’</td>
<td>fall down</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tson4 ‘turn’</td>
<td>呀</td>
<td>hi4 ‘go’</td>
<td>chop down</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The particle described in Table 3 has no meaning. It makes a sentence sound smooth and elegant.

6.4.2 Verbal particle

This type of particle ʔa4呀 functions as a verbal particle because it is always placed after the verb with no need to link it to another word.

Its structure is verb + particle ʔa4呀 + item (clause or phrase)

Examples:

(22) ki2 wa4, ‘tsaw4 kuj1 ki5 jiwi1 tsen1 tsip5. ʔojo4 tsʰiam1 sam1 ke4 law1 ɲin1 ka1 loj2 pʰan1, kʰon4 ʔa4 man1 ɲin2 tsʰok6 man1 ɲin2 mi2 tsʰok6

佢话, “照规矩有争执, 爱请三个老人家来判, 看呀么人着,么人唔着

he said, the custom have quarrel must invite three cl. old people come judge, see ʔa4 who right, who not right

‘He said, in general custom when anyone has a quarrel, they must invite three old people to determine who is right and who is wrong.’

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(23)  kʰon⁴ʔa⁴ jiw⁴ŋaj⁴tsak⁵ja⁴tsʰu⁴kam³
m̩²wi⁴ŋaj⁴ʔa⁴mo².”
看呀有哪只野兽敢唔畏
唔呀无
seeʔa⁴have which wild animals dare
notfearmeʔa⁴not
‘See! no wild animals are unafraid of me.’

(24)  ki²kʰi¹ʔa⁴li²mak⁶kʰet⁶fun¹sup⁶fun¹
佢企呀离麦克风十分近
hestandʔa⁴awayfrommicrophone
verynear
‘He stood back from the microphone
very near.’

(25)  ki²tsʰo¹ʔa⁴tset⁵pien¹
佢坐呀侧边
he sitʔa⁴beside
‘He sat beside someone else.’

(26)  saŋ¹ʔa⁴tʰuŋ⁷jit⁶ke⁴tʰi⁴foŋ¹
生呀同一个地方
sproutʔa⁴togetheronecl.place
‘(The trees) grew in the same place.’

(27)  nĩ²tʰuŋ⁷man³ŋin²tsʰu⁴ʔa⁴jit⁶ha²?
y同么人住呀一下?
youwithwholiveʔa⁴together
‘You live together with whom?’

(28)  loj²hi¹haj⁰ʔa⁴le²ʔoj⁴mo²
来去行呀哩爱么?
comegowalkʔa⁴part.wantnot
‘Do you want to go for a walk?’

(29)  nĩ²he⁴m²sin⁴, tsʰiw⁴tʰen⁵ten¹ŋaj²loj²
hi¹ŋin¹kuon³haj⁰ʔa⁴le²
你係唔信, 就趁等住来去
你arenotbelieve,justfollowmecome
goeverywherewalkʔa⁴fp.
‘If you don’t believe me, you can go
anywhere with me to see.’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>verb</th>
<th>particle ʔa⁴</th>
<th>item</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>看  kʰon⁴‘see’</td>
<td>ʔa</td>
<td>么人着,么人唔着man³ŋin³tsʰok⁶, man¹ŋin¹m²tsʰok⁶‘who is right, who is wrong’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>企 kʰi¹‘stand’</td>
<td>ʔa</td>
<td>离麦克风十分近li²mak⁶kʰet⁶fun¹sup⁶fun¹kʰiu¹‘away from microphone very near’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>坐 tsʰo¹‘sit’</td>
<td>ʔa</td>
<td>侧边tset⁵pien¹‘beside’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>生  saŋ¹‘sprout’</td>
<td>ʔa</td>
<td>同一个地方tʰuŋ⁷jit⁶ke⁴tʰi⁴foŋ¹‘together the same place’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>住 tsʰu⁴‘live’</td>
<td>ʔa</td>
<td>一下jit⁶ha⁴‘together’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>行 hanj²‘walk’</td>
<td>ʔa</td>
<td>嘀ʔe²‘final particle’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>行 hanj²‘walk’</td>
<td>ʔa</td>
<td>嘀ʔe², 爱么ʔoj⁴mo²‘do you want’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From Table 4 we can see that the particle ʔa⁴‘呀 follows a verb. The following item can be a clause, phrase, modifier, or simply a final particle. Its meaning is not exactly the same in every context but depends on the meaning of the complete utterance.
6.4.3 Resultative particle

The particle ʔa呀 can function as a resultative particle because it is used together with a transitive verb to indicate an effect on the object or the compound verbs.

Its structure is transitive verb + particleʔa呀 + complement.

Examples:

(30) nraj tsaŋ sitʔa paw

正食呀饱

'I just eat ʔa呀 full

'I am full from eating.'

(31) foŋ ti4 siɔŋ sat5 ŋin 2 mo2 tshut5 tsiɔŋ 1 pa3 su3 hoŋ 4 na1

皇帝想杀人无借口, 火气无好出。将把手上拿等个玉笏㧒呀碎

the emperor think kill people not accusation, angry no way out. take hand on pick PERF cl. jade knock ʔa呀 shatter

'The emperor thought of killing the innocent person because he was angry. Then, he picked up a jade stone and threw it down until it shattered.'

(32) m̩2 ten2 men1 taw1, loŋ jit5 pioŋ ʔa4 tsut4 tsiw4 tsɔŋ 1 wu1 tsaw3 ʔoj 2 loj2 na1 ten1 ke4 njuːk fut6 ʔep5 ʔa suʃ1

皇帝想杀入无借口, 火气无好出。将把手上拿等个玉笏㧒呀碎

the emperor think kill people not accusation, angry no way out. take hand on pick PERF cl. jade knock ʔa呀 shatter

'The emperor thought of killing the innocent person because he was angry. Then, he picked up a jade stone and threw it down until it shattered.'

(33) ʔan tujit tsak 2 tshut4 ʔe tsew3 tsut4 loj2 k’on4 taw3 jiw1 jin2, tsok6 kianj tsin4 tsiaʃk 5 jit2 tsɔŋ 4, tsɔŋ 4 ʔa4 su4 tew2 ha1. kianj kin1 aw3 ʔa tiw1 si1 ʔa4 pʰet5

無对一只兔子走出来, 看倒有人, 看惊尽一撞, 撞呀树头下, 颈茎㧒呀断, 砍呀撇

by chance, one cl. rabbit come out see PERF have people, fear hurry run, bump against ʔa呀 tree head below, neck break ʔa呀 down, died ʔa呀 PERF

'Accidentally, a rabbit came out, saw the people, got scared so it ran away quickly, and ran into a tree trunk, broke its neck and died immediately.'

(34) jit4 ke4 law3 pak5 tsew3 loj2 k’on4 taw3 tsiw4 kaw1 ki2 wa4 “hi4 na1 jit4 pa1 ma1 loj2 tsam3 ʔa4 t’on1, m2 he4 tsiw4 tso4 tet4 ?a”

一个老伯走来 看倒,就教佢话: “去拿一把刀来斩呀断,唔係就做得啊?”

one cl. old man walk come see asp., then teach he that: go take one cl. knife come chop ʔa呀 short, not is then be able question part.

‘An old man came to see him, then told him to take a knife and cut it short and after that the bamboo can go to the gate.’

(35) pʰoŋ2 ʔe ke4 hok5 tsiw4 k’oŋ4 k’uaj5 hap5 ʔa4 tsiw4, kiap5 ten1 taw1 ʔe ke4 tsut3.

蚌子个壳就亢快合

shell rel.pro. valve then quickly close ʔa呀 tight, clip able bird rel.pro. mouth

‘The shellfish closed it shell quickly nipping the bird’s beak.’
Table 5 Summary of the particleʔa呀 which occurs with resultative verbs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>verb</th>
<th>particle ʔa呀</th>
<th>complement</th>
<th>meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>合 hap4 ‘close’</td>
<td>呀</td>
<td>拷 tsɨiw1 ‘tight’</td>
<td>closed up tightly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>食 sit6 ‘eat’</td>
<td>呀</td>
<td>饱 paw3 ‘full’</td>
<td>Full from eating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>斩 tsam3 ‘chop’</td>
<td>呀</td>
<td>断 tɨon1 ‘cut off’</td>
<td>broken down</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>拗ʔaw3 ‘break’</td>
<td>呀</td>
<td>断 tɨon1 ‘cut off’</td>
<td>cut something short</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>抗ʔep6 ‘knock’</td>
<td>呀</td>
<td>碎 suj4 ‘shatter’</td>
<td>knock until shatter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>放 pɨŋ4 ‘let go’</td>
<td>呀</td>
<td>出 tsu6t4 ‘out’</td>
<td>let out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>死 si1 ‘die’</td>
<td>呀</td>
<td>摒 p’et4 ‘perfective’</td>
<td>already died</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.4.4 The particleʔa呀 can link two verbs

Its structure is V+particleʔa呀+V

(36) ŋi4 sim1 khiw1 tshut5 loj2 khon4 taw3 saw4 pa3 ja1 haŋ2 ʔa4 kuo4 m̃2 li1.

The second female in-law came see asp. a broom, just walk ʔa4 across not interest to it but just walked over it.

(37) ʔan1 tuj4 kɨun1 tsi1 soj4 ʔa4 sian1 ʔa4 taw4 njian2 fi2 ta1 kɨoj1 p’u2 lo2 koj4 njiam1 fan4 sit6.

by chance Confucius sleep ʔa4 wake up, see asp. Yanhui open pot lid pick rice eat ‘Accidentally, Confucius woke up and saw Yanhui was opening the pot’s lid and picking out some rice to eat.’

(38) tsiɔŋ1 pa3 jit5 lew3 li1 ʔe2 pan1 soj1 tsəa3 tɨew1 tsoj4 ʔa4 tsew3

将 一把 梨子 搬 上 车 头 载 ʔa4 走 take one cl. bamboo basket Chinese pear to put up on frontage of bicycle carry ʔa4 go ‘He took one bamboo basket full of Chinese pears and put it on the front of his bicycle and rode away.’

(39) ʔan1 tuj4 jiw3 tsak5 se4 ʔa4 ko1. kɨi2 ten1 kiok5 tɨap6 tsəa1. ta1 ʔa4 su4 ha1 kuo4

恁 对 一只 彼 阿 哥, 起 脚 踏 车, 打 ʔa4 下  过 accidentally have cl. small child, riding bicycle, pass ʔa4 tree under across ‘By chance, there was a child who was riding a bicycle under the tree.’
Table 6  Summary of the particle ʔa4呀， which occurs between two verbs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb1</th>
<th>Particle ʔa4呀</th>
<th>Locative phrase</th>
<th>Verb2</th>
<th>meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>打ta3 ‘pass’</td>
<td>呀</td>
<td>树下su4 ha1 ‘under the tree’</td>
<td>过kuo4 ‘across’</td>
<td>pass under the tree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>载tsoj4 ‘carry’</td>
<td>呀</td>
<td>走tsew3 ‘away’</td>
<td>put on and ride away</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>睡soj4 ‘sleep’</td>
<td>呀</td>
<td>醒siaŋ3 ‘wake up’</td>
<td>wake up sleep</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>行hanj2 ‘walk’</td>
<td>呀</td>
<td>过kuo4 ‘across’</td>
<td>walk across</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From Table 6 the particle ʔa4呀 links two verbs but the locative phrase may be put before the second verb depending on the first verb.

7. Conclusion and suggestion

This study shows four types and four sub-types of particle ʔa4呀. The particle can be placed after any verb but this research refers to it by several names (6.1, 6.2, 6.3) according to its function. For example, the "location particle”, the “aspect marker particle”, and “conjunction particle” which occur with respectively. The other type of particle ʔa4呀 (6.4) is identified by the verb that it follows such as resultative particle, directional particle and verbal particle occurring with resultative verb, directional verb and other verbs respectively.

The particle itself has no meaning but functions at a grammatical level. Some languages have a complex particle but these are quite difficult to collect and identify, for example, in Thai or Khmer languages. Further study of other Hakka sub-dialects in Thailand would be valuable, particularly a comparative study, if sufficient data could be available.

References


