Atypical A-not-A questions in Sixian Hakka

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This paper is intended to examine the syntax of A-not-A questions in Hakka. I argue against the previous works on the analysis of A-not-A questions (X-ja-m-X) in Hakka(Chung2000, Wang 2008) and suggest that there is no genuine A-not-A questions in Hakka, according to two tests and the facts as follow.The evidence for my arguments is based on the following tests and the language facts. First, I adopt two tests proposed by Huang (1991) and MaCawly (1994) respectively to support my argument. Huang pointed out that true A-not-A questions are subject to the island constraints whereas *haishi*-questions (alternative questions) are not. Second, as noted by McCawley (1994), in alternative questions the order of positive and negative conjuncts is free. Nevertheless, A-not-A questions should have the fixed order in which A needs to occur precede not-A. In Hakka, the negative element in X-*ja-m*-X questions does not necessarily precede the positive element which has the same performance as alternative questions (X-*jahe*-m-X).

Granted the facts laid out above, a clear contrast cannot(can?) be found between alternative questions and X-ja-m-X questions in Hakka. Besides, the direct evidence in support of my argument comes from the "ja" morpheme. Based on my linguistic facts, I suggest that "ja" behave the same as 'jahe", which is clearly a coordinator in Hakka. Given this analysis, the X-ja-m-X questions might not be viewed as genuine A-not-A questions but might be subsumed under alternative questions.

1.Introduction

A-not-A question is a special and famous construction in Mandarin Chinese (abbreviated MC). With regard to this construction, linguists mainly focus on the derivation of different sub-types of this construction and its correlation with alternative questions (Hagstrom 2006 for a general review of A-not-A question). According to Huang (2010), in MC, while alternative questions display an overt disjunctive coordinator, i.e. *haishi*, A-not-A questions are formed by a positive disjoined with its negative counterpart without the use of the overt disjunctive coordinator *haishi*. This paper will follow Huang's definition of A-not-A question. In other words, a true A-not-A question should not contain an overt coordinator.

Judging from previous studies devoted to A-not-A questions, I found that different Chinese dialects have been examined in this regard. However, researchers pay little attention to Hakka, which is also a prominent dialect in Taiwan. Thus, the aim of this paper is going to investigate whether there is a genuine A-not-A question in Hakka[1] or not.

This paper will be organized as follow. In the following section, I will review three important works which are directly related to my topic. Besides, the discrepancy and inadequacy of their analyses will be pointed out in section two. I will present my argument in section 3; that is, this is no true A-not-A question in Hakka. And I am going to provide two pieces of evidence to demonstrate similarities between alternative question and the disguised A-not-A question (with morpheme ya). Finally, a conclusion will warp-up this paper.

2.Literature review

2.1 Luo(1995)

Luo is the first scholar that wrote the Grammar book of Hakka. In dealing with interrogative sentences, he listed six types among which two[2] sub-types are going to be reviewed in this section. First, Luo mentioned one type of the interrogative sentences is to use *ya* and *yahei* to from interrogative sentences. Consider the following examples:

(1)

ng   sonloi   siang   vong   **ya**   siang   li?

You   Adv   named   Huang   **or**   named Lee?

Ni daodi xing huang haishi xing li? (Chinese translation done by Luo)

Which one is your last name, Huang or Lee?

(2)

mosang	tseu sin	**ya hei**	am pun	ng	tsu	m	kit et	te?
Adv	morning	**or**	night	you	do	not	remember	?

Nandao shi zaocheng   shi wangshang dou bu jide le (Chinese translation done by Luo)

How come you don't remember when do you finish your work, in the morning or at night?

As show in example (1) and (2), it seems that *ya* and *ya hei* play the same role in forming interrogative sentences. Here, we can observe that *ya* and *yahei* are used as coordinators which connect VPs and NPs in example (1) and (2) respectively. We should keep this fact in mind since this idea correlates to the main argument in this paper.

The second type of the interrogative sentences is to reduplicate the predicate of a sentence and insert a negative adverb between the reduplicated elements and the base sentence. This type of construction resembles A-not-A question. However, the author(who?) doesn't name it as A-not-A question; instead, he described the formation of the sentence only . As shown in example (3) and (4), *kiang m kiang* 'afraid not afraid' and *K'on m k'on* 'read not read' correspond to the A-not-A construction.

(3)

ng	**kiang**	**m**	**kiang**	p'et	ngin	seu	ng?
you	**afraid**	**not**	**afraid**	other	people	laugh	at you?

Ni pa bu pa bier en xiao ni (Chinese translation done by Luo)

Are you afraid of being laughed by others?

(4)

ya	pun	su	ng	**k'on m**	**k'on**?
this	classifier	book	you	**read not**	**read**?

Zhe ben shu ni kan bu kan (Chinese translation done by Luo)

Do you want to read this book?

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2.2 Chung (2000)

According to Chung (2000), Hakka interrogative sentences can be classified into four types, namely, (1) Question-word interrogative sentences, (2)Particle interrogative sentences, (3) Selective interrogative sentence and (4) X-not-X interrogative sentences. In this paper, I am going to review his analysis of selective interrogative sentence and X-not-X interrogative sentences. The canonical example of selective interrogative sentence is shown in example (5). Since this is a selective interrogative sentence, there are absolutely two elements connected by *haishi* (→ As shown in (5), two elements are conjoined by *haishi* in a canonical selective interrogative sentence). In example(5), *haishi* connects two VPs.

(5)

ng	oi	tse	fang	**je he**	tse	miang?
You	want	eat	rice	or	eat	noodle?

Ni yao chi fang **hai shi** chi miang? (Chinese translation done by Chung)

Which one do you want to eat, rice or noodle?

In analyzing X-not-X interrogative sentence, Chung mentioned that the canonical example of Hakka X-not-X interrogative sentence is formed by a positive disjoined with its negative counterpart with the *ya* morpheme. What's more, he also found that most of the X-not-X construction should be put in the sentence-final position.(X-ja-not-X). Based on his observation, there are only two kinds of modal verbs which can appear in the X-not-X formation. Consider the following example:

(6)

ng	fuang xi	ja	m	fuang xi?
You	happy	or	not	happy?

ni gaoxing bu gaoxoing?

Do you feel happy?

(7) ya liang   shang fu   ng   aio   mai   ja   **mo**   aio   mai?

This   clothes   you   want   buy   or   don't want   buy?

Ni yao bu yao mai zhe jiang yifu?

Do you want to buy this clother?

(8) ya   bun   shu   ng   zhong i   ja   m   zhong i

This   classifer   book   you   like   or   not   like?

Do you like this book?

(9) gi   woi   bu   woi   loi jia   shu?

he   will   not   will   borrow the book?

Ta hui bu hui lai jie shu?

Will he borrow this book?

(10) gi   hei   bu   hei   xiong   yao   chu kuo   tuo shu?

He   will not   will   want   go   abroad   study?

Ta shi bus shi xiang yao chu guo nian shu

Does he want to study abroad?

For selective interrogative sentence, we can still add particles *mo* and *no* in the end of the sentence while X-not-X question is only compatible with particle *no* . Example (11a) and (11b) show the contrast between selective question and X-not-X question [Actually, both (11a) and (11b) can tolerate the presence *mo* and *no*, making it hard to distinguish two types at issue]. From this contrast and the categorization of interrogative sentence, it is obvious that Chung has the same viewpoint with Luo, who advocates that there is no correlation between selective question and X-not-X question.

(11) (a)gi you mai shang fu ja he mai wang zhuang ping mo/no?

Does he buy the clothe or cosmetics?

(b)ng you hi kuo ning bun ja he mi kuo mo/no?

Have you been Japan or American mo/no?

2.3Wang (2008)

Wang's paper, to the best of my knowledge, is the latest work that deals with   A-not-A question in Hakka . For her, three kinds of construction formation are considers to be X-not-X question: X-ja he-m-X, X-ja-m-X, X-m-X. Example (12) to (14) instantiate these kinds:

(12)X-ja-he-m-X

Ngi   fwn hi   **ja he m**   fwn hi?

You   happy   or   not   happy?

Are you happy or not?

(13)X-ja-m-X

ng   **zung- ja m   zung-i**   gie   hai?

You   like   not   like   his   shoes?

Do you like his shoes?

(14)X-m-X

Ngi   zung   m   zhung-i gei hai

You   like   ot   like   his shoes.

Do you like his shoes?

The appearance of X-not-X interrogative sentences and selective interrogative sentences are very similar, because both construct of choice to proved the listener to make a selection. However, in Wang's paper, her main argument is that she separates X-not-X questions from selective interrogative questions. Three pieces of evidence are provided as follows. First, she mentioned that the character of selective interrogative sentence is merged with the interrogative conjunction "ja he", which can not be deleted whereas X-not-X interrogative sentence can also use "ja he" to coordinate positive ,and negative terms; "ja he" also can be deleted "he" to form "X-ja-m-X, or deleted the whole coordination "ja he" Look at example (15) and (16)

(15)(a) ki   tien-gong-ngit   loi   **ja-he**   heu-ngt   loi?

You   tomorrow   come   or   the day after tomorrow come?

Will you come tomorrow or the day after tomorrow?

(b)*ngi   tien-gong-ngi   loi   heu-nit   loi?

You   tomorrow   come or   the day after tomorrow come?

Will you come tomorrow or the day after tomorrow?

(16)

(a)ngi   oi   kon   tien-iang   **ja he**   **mo**   oi   kon   tien-iang?

You   want   see   movies   or   not   want   see   movies.

Do you want to see movies?

(b)ngi   oi   kon   **ja**   **mo**   oi   kon   tien-iang?

You   want   see   or   not   want   see   movies

(c) ngi   **oi**   **m**   **oi**   kon   tien-iang?

You   want not   want   see   movies.

The second evidence that distinguishes the two construction is that the two terms of X-not-X

interrogative sentences must be one in positive and the other in negative just like "tam u tam"

(big not big), "Ziang m ziang" (beautiful not beautiful). Antonyms in X-not-X yields the

ungrammatical sentence.

(17) (a)lia   vuk   ziang   ja-he   tse?

This   house beautiful   or   ugly?

Is this house beautiful or ugly

(b)lia   vuk   **ziang**   **m**   **ziang**?

This   hour   beautiful not beautiful?

It this house beautiful?

(c) *lia   vuk   ziang   tst

This   house   beautiful ugly?

The third way to distinguish them is the subject of X-not-X interrogative sentence must be the same, but the subject of selective interrogative can be different, such as below:

(18)(a) ngi oi siit lia van pon **ja-he** ki oi siit lia van pon?

You want eat this bowl rice or he want eat this bowl rice.

To whom want to eat this bowl of rice, you or him?

(b) ngi oi siit lia van pon **ja-he m** siit lia van pon?

You want eat this bowl rice or not eat this bowl rice?

Do you want to eat this bowl of rice or not?

(c)* ngi oi siit lia van pon **ja-he** ki **mo** oi siit lia van pon?

You want eat this bowl rice or he not want want eat this bowl rice.

2.4 Inadequacy and discrepancy of previous work

There are several inadequacies of the previous work. First of all, the grammaticality of the examples varies from one to another and further examined[3]. The ungrammatical sentence cannot be the strong support for their arguments. Second, although Wang pointed out the differencws between selective interrogative question and X-ja-m-X question, counterexamples can be found easily. Example (16c) is an ungrammatical sentence, which cannot be a good example for the argument that in alternative question *ya he* cannot be deleted whereas in X-ja-m-X question, "ya" can be deleted. What's more, Wang mentioned that the subject of X-not-X interrogative sentence must be the same, but *ngi oi siit lia van pon ja ki oi siit lia van pon* is a grammatical sentence.

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[3] The author is a native speaker of Hakka, so does her parents. The true A-not-A examples shown in Luo and Wang's paper can not be viewed as grammatical sentence. For example:
(a)*ng **kiang   m   kiang** p'et ngin   seu ng?
you **afraid   not   afraid**   other people laugh at you?
Ni pa bu pa bier en xiao ni (Chinese translation done by Luo)
Are you afraid of being laughed by others?

(4)*ya   pun   su   ng   **k'on m   k'on**?
this   classifier   book you **read not read**?
Zhe ben shu ni kan bu kan (Chinese translation done by Luo)
Do you want to read this book?

3.The similarities between ja he question and ja question in Hakka

In this section, I am going to argue that there is no X-not-X question in Hakka. First of all, I will use two tests proposed by Huang (1991)and MaCawly (1994) respectively to test the pseudo X-ja-m-X interrogative question. Huang (1991) pointed out that the true A-not-A questions exhibit systematic island properties with respect to their distribution and interpretation, whereas *haishi*-question are exempt from island constraints. New let's consider the MC data first and then examine the Hakka data later. In MC, *haishi* question can occur within the island, such as sentential subject islands or relative clause islands, without inducing any island violation. In (19), we have *hasishi*-question within the sentential subject and in (20) we have *haishi*-question inside the relative clauses. All of them are grammatical sentences.

(19)

    [wo qu Meiguo hishi bu qu Meiguo]bijiao hao?

    I go American or not go American more good?

    Is it better that I go to American or that I do not go to American?

(20)

    ni xihuang [renshi ni shishi buren shi ni] de ren?

    You like know you or not know you DE person?

    Do you like people who know you or people who don't know you?

Nevertheless, if we locate A-not-A questions inside the island, this will yield ungrammatical sentences, as shown in (21) and (22).

(21)

    *[wo qu bu qu Meiguo] bijiao hao?

    I go not go American more good

    Is it better that I go to American or not.

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(22)

  *ni   xihuang[ren bu   ren shi ni de ren]?

  You like know not know you DE person

  Do you like people who know you or don't know you

Since we know that *haishi*-question differ from true A-not-A question in sensitivity to island constraints. Thus, I am going to show that X-ja-m-X is not a true A-not-A questions due to the reason that it is not constrained by two islands noted above. The following examples demonstrate X-ja-m-X can appear in sentential subject islands and relative clause islands , the same as *haishi*-quesiton.

(23)

  ki hi ya m hi miguo ai m qing chu

  I go not go American I don't know

  I don't know whether he will go to American or not.

(24)

  Ki xihuang rishai ja m jia ki e ren

  You like know not know you DE person

  Do you like people who know you or don't know you?

  McCawley (1994) observed that when positive and negative items are conjoined by *haishi*, the order of these two conjuncts is free. However, a true A-not-A question strictly requires A to occur before Not A.

(25)

  (a)Ta daodi lai (haishi) bu lai?

  He truly come (or) not come

  Let me get to the answer: will he come or not?

  (b)Ta daoli bu lai *(haishi) lai?

  He truly not come or come

Let me get to the answer: will he come or not?

Again, based on MaCawley's observation, I am going to show that X-ja-m-X can reorder the two elements.

(26)

Ni cidou ya dong foye ziang   ya m ziang

You thingk this house pretty or not pretty.

Do you think this is a big house or not?

(27)

Ni cidou ya dong foye m ziang ya ziang

You think this house not pretty or pretty

Do you think this is a big house or not?

(28)

Ni hi huong ya m hi huong ya mu diangyang

You like or not like this movie

Do you like this movie or not?

(29)

Ni m hi huong ya hi huong ya mu diangyang

You not like or like this movie

Do you like this movie or not?

4.Conclusion

Following the my analysis, we found that there is no true A-not-A question in Hakka. Instead, the examples discussed in the previous work are questions with *ya* coordinator. Moreover, two tests I adopted from Huang (1991) and MaCawley (1994) to distinguish whether the sentence construction is a true A-not-A question or not support the analysis under discussion We found that X-*ja*-m-X is free from island constraints and the order of the positive and negative element can be exchanged.

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論客語非典型正反問句

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　　本文試著探討客語中是否存在正反問句這樣的結構，根據過去的文獻指出客語正反問句的典型例子是以X-ja-m-X這樣的形式呈現，本篇作者認為此形式不應被視為典型的正反問句。文中首先指出，依據中文正反問句的定義，正反問句的結構中不應含有連接詞，對於作者而言，"ja"這個字似乎扮演了這樣的角色，使得X-ja-m-X的句子比較像是選擇問句。此外，作者依據前人提出的兩種測試方法來證明X-ja-m-X的結構不屬於真正的正反問句，黃(1991)提出分辨中文選擇問句與正反問句的方法，他發現正反問句受限於孤島約束，本篇作者發現X-ja-m-X卻可以出現在subject isaland與adjunt island的位子；另一個測試方式是由MaCawly(1994)所提出，他觀察到真正的正反問句的順序應該是，正向結構加上反向結構，若是順序顛倒則會產生不合文法的句子，此方法應用到客語的X-ja-m-X的結構上卻發現m-X-ja-X的結構是可以被允許的，以上描述再再說明了客語中並沒有典型正反問句的存在。

關鍵字: 客語、正反問句、選擇問句、孤島約束