

Perfective Verbal Particles in Cantonese

TA2 - Group 3

NG Yuen Ki
Cynthia

NG Choi Lee
Charlie

WU Ming Kin

YIU Hin Lok

ZHANG Jiarui

Introduction

Introduction

❖ Perfective aspect

- a grammatical aspect
- describes an action viewed as a simple whole
- for various similar semantic roles
 - E.g. momentary events and the onsets or completions of events
- English » Inflectional morphemes
 - E.g. I've **lost** my key.
 - E.g. I **finished** drinking.
- Cantonese » Aspect markers
 - E.g. 我唔見**咗**鎖匙。
 - E.g. 我飲**完**。

Our research

❖ Study aim

- the usage of Cantonese verbal particles:
 - 「咗」/*z02*/
 - 「完」/*jyun4*/
- their semantics roles in different contexts

❖ Hypothesis

- 「咗」/*z02*/ and 「完」/*jyun4*/ are not totally interchangeable
- 「咗」/*z02*/ and 「完」/*jyun4*/ mark differently in some cases

Background

Tense & Aspect

Tense	Aspect
Deictic	Non-deictic
situation-external time	situation-internal time
the time of a situation relative to the situation of an utterance	the internal temporal constituency of a situation

Comrie (1976)

Perfective aspect verbal particle — 咗 /zɔː/

- ❖ Can occur in past, present and future

	Past	Present	Future
Example	<p>佢尋日痴咗線咁係咁買野。</p> <p>He went mad while he was shopping yesterday.</p>	<p>佢痴咗線。</p> <p>He is mad.</p>	<p>如果佢啊媽有日死咗，佢一定會痴咗線。</p> <p>If his mum dies one day, he will be mad.</p>

Perfective aspect verbal particle — 完 /jyun4/

- ❖ Can occur in past, present and future

	Past	Present	Future
Example	<p>我尋日食完野就去上堂。</p> <p>I ate before I had lesson yesterday.</p>	<p>我平時食完野就去上堂。</p> <p>I eat before I go to class.</p>	<p>我陣間食完野就去上堂。</p> <p>I will eat before I go to class later.</p>

Research Method

Research Method

❖ Quantitative research method

➤ Online questionnaires

➤ A set of 19 Multiple Choice Questions



❖ Participants

➤ **Native cantonese speakers**

➤ **Age between 18 and 23**

➤ **University students**

➤ **17 responses**

City University of Hong Kong LT 3211 Semantics Survey

Thank you for participating in this survey. This survey is conducted by students from the Department of Linguistics and Translation from City University of Hong Kong. This study attempts to understand the usage of Cantonese verbal particles 「咗」 zo2 and 「完」 jyun4 in different contexts. All data collected will be only for academic use. Thank you!
In the following questions, choose the most suitable answer according to your daily usage of Cantonese.

感謝你參與本問卷調查。

本人是香港城市大學 翻譯及語言學系 的學生，是次調查是旨在了解粵語當中的「咗」zo2和「完」jyun4 的語義和使用情況。所有研究資料只供學術用途。謝謝！
以下各題請根據平日運用粵語的情況，選出你認為最適當的答案。

* Required

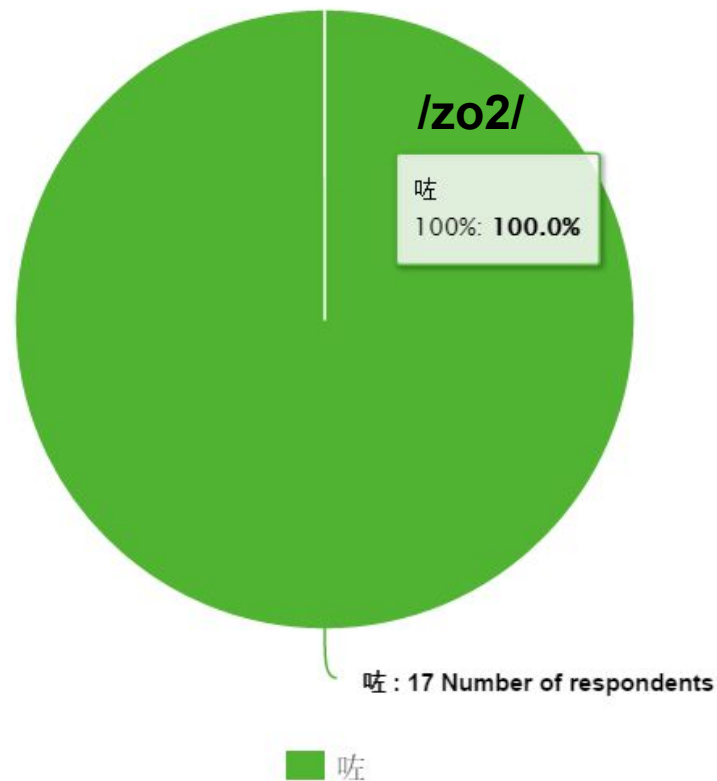
Result & Discussion

Survey Result (Example)

12) 你今日食_飯未?

- 咗 **/zo2/**
- 完 **/jyun4/**
- 兩者皆可 **/Both/**

Q12



Survey Result

≥ 85%

Categories	Number of questions	Data interpretation
㗎 /zɔ2/	10	Only & mostly 㗎 /zɔ2/
完 /jyun4/	3	Only & mostly 完 /jyun4/
Both	6	Ambiguous

Only

叻

/z02/



Sentences with only 咗

Q1	佢死_啦。 He/She has died.
Q6	我無_份工。 I have lost my job.
Q14	佢係咪癡_線。 Is he/she gone crazy?
Q17	尋晚個活動我識__好多人。 I met many new friends in the event held yesterday

Q6: 我無_份工

我無咗/*mo2 zo2*/份工

I **have lost** my job.

Interpretation : Job was lost

Action **can be repeated**

Focusing on the matter: lose a job
(I can lose another job again)

No progressive form

無緊份工 **losing** a job??

Focusing on the **present state**

Still cannot get a job until now

Only

完

/jyun4/

Sentences with only 完

Q3	冇啦冇啦, 玩 _ 啦! Oh, I'm done this time.
Q15	落 _ 雨之後先出去啦。 Let's go out after raining.
Q19	我開 _ 會啦, 我地係邊度等? I finished the meeting, where are we going to meet?

Q19. 我開 ___ 會啦, 我地係邊度等?

⇒ (I finished the meeting, where are we going to meet?)

The action cannot be repeated	That meeting has finished already
The verb can be used in progressive way	開緊會 = having a meeting
Focusing on the completion of the previous state	That meeting has completed

Ambiguous Sentence

Q2) 搞咗成日, 終於做_份功課。

Q5) 你今日話番中學探老師, 你去_未?

Q8) 你入咗浴室三十分鐘啦, 沖_涼未?

Q10) 你食_飯未? 我食_。

Q16) 又去? 我上個禮拜先去__。

Q18) 我尋日飲__酒, 今日好頭暈。

❖ Can use **both aspectual markers**

➤ Have more than one interpretations

叻

/zɔ2/

and

完

/jyun4/

In interrogative
sentences
(Questions)

Q5) 你今日話番中學探老師, 你去_未?

你今日話番中學探老師, 你去咗 /*hui1 zo2*/未?

You said you would go back to secondary school to visit the teachers today ,
did you go?

Interpretation 1 :

» **No presupposition:** You **have or have not** gone back and visited the teachers

你今日話番中學探老師，你去完 /*hui1 iyun4*/未？

You said you would go back to secondary school to visit the teachers today,
have you been to ?

Interpretation 2 :

» Presupposition : You **did go back** to your secondary school and visited the teachers.

Q10) 你食_飯未?

你 食咗 /*sik2 z02*/ 飯未?
Did you have your dinner?



➤ No presupposition

你 食完 /*sik2 jyun4*/ 飯未?
Have you finished your dinner?

➤ Presupposition

➤ The questions have **two interpretations**

Conclusion

	咗 /z02/	完 /jyun4/
Properties of verb	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The action can be repeated, but not the same object 2. The verb cannot be used in the progressive way 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The action cannot be repeated 2. The verb can be used in progressive way
Foregrounding aspect	Focus on the present state	Focus on the completion of the state
Presupposition in questions		

Our hypothesis...

1. 「咗」/z02/ and 「完」/jyun4/ are *not* totally interchangeable and are used in **different** cases
2. 「咗」/z02/ *doesn't have presupposition while* 「完」/jyun4/ **has** in interrogative sentences

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Appendix

Question	咗 /zo 2/	完 /jyun 4/	Both
1) 佢死_啦。	100%		
2) 搞咗成日，終於做_份功課。		65%	35%
3) 冇啦冇啦，玩_啦!	6%	88%	6%
4) 上星期你話番中學探老師，你去_未?	94%		6%
5) 你今日話番中學探老師，你去_未?	70%	12%	18%
6) 我無_份工。	100%		
7) 為_去旅行，我會儲錢。	100%		
8) 你入左浴室三十分鐘啦，沖_涼未?		70%	30%
9) 你今日沖_涼未?	94%		6%
10) 你食_飯未?	35%		65%
11) 食咁耐架，你食_飯未?	100%		
12) 你今日食_飯未?	100%		
13) 隔離陳太生_個仔。	88%		6%
14) 佢係咪癡_線。	100%		
15) 落_雨之後先出去啦。		100%	
16) 又去?我上個禮拜先去__。	12%	41%	65%
17) 尋晚個活動我識__好多人。	100%		
18) 我尋日飲__酒，今日好頭暈。	29%		71%
19) 我開__會啦，我地係邊度等?		94%	6%

Survey Result



Thank
you

Q & A