From Demonstrative to Discourse: The cartographic footprint of Cantonese gam2

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Table of Contents

- Introduction
- 2 SFP gam2

Introduction

- 3 Tag gam 2(joeng 2
- 4 The cartographic footprin
- 6 Concluding remarks

 Demonstratives allow us to "point at" different ontological types anaphorically or deictically (Diessel 1999; Anderson and Morzycki 2015; König and Umbach 2018).

	Nominal demonstratives					
Antecedent	Entity	Time	Place			
Form	ni 1/go2 -go3	ni 1/go2 -zan6	ni 1/go 2 -dou 6			
Gloss	this/that-cL	now/then	here/there			

Table 1: Nominal demonstratives in Cantonese

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Adverbial demonstratives are less studied (but see König and Umbach 2018; Lai and Wu 2020; Wu, Lai, and Liu 2024).

	Adverbial demonstratives					
Antecedent	Degree	Manner	Quality			
Form	gam3 -Adj	gam2 -V	gam2 -N			
Gloss	this/that	like this/that	such			

Table 2: Adverbial demonstratives in Cantonese

條繩咁長。 Tiu sing gam3 coeng. rope that long 'The rope is that long.'

b. 佢噉食野。 keoi gam2 sik-je. s/he like.that eat 'S/he eats like that.'

Introduction

• Only *gam2* can be used as a **predicative demonstrative** (Fung 2000).

	Predicative demonstratives				
Antecedent	Property	Situation	Proposition		
Form	gam2	gam2	gam2		
Gloss	like this/that	that/such	so		

Table 3: Predicative demonstratives in Cantonese

(2) a. 佢係噉架。

Keoi hai **gam2** gaa3.
s/he be like.that sfp
'S/he is like that'

b. 如果噉,點好?

Jyugwo **gam2**, dim hou?

if so how good

'If so, what should we do?'

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- What is known about gam2 (Peng 2003; H.-n. S. Cheung 2007; Sio and Tang 2007; 2008; Matthews and Yip 2011; H.-n. S. Cheung 2013; Lai and Wu 2020, i.a.):
 - It has a clear division labor with gam3
 - It serves dual functions: adverbial and predicative
 - It develops from the general classifier go3
 - It also develops into a structural particle that introduces adverbials.
- In this talk, I reveal two additional functions of gam2:
 - 1 gam 2 as a sentence-final particle

(M. C. Y. Lee 2018)

2 gam2 as a tag statment

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- By outlining the cartographic footprint of gam2 in Cantonese, we
 - obtain a case of **upward successive analysis** (Roberts and Roussou 2003)

"Thus grammaticalization pathways can be deduced from the functional hierarchy (and possibly vice versa), once upward reanalysis is taken as a basic mechanism of syntactic change" (p. 209)

uncover a parallel development of demonstratives in nominal and non-nominal domain (first discussed in Sio 2011)

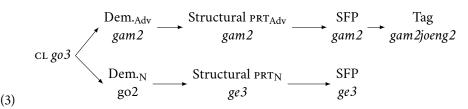


Table of Contents

- 1 Introduction
- SFP gam 2
- 3 Tag gam 2(joeng 2
- 4 The cartographic footprin
- 6 Concluding remarks

SFP gam2

• *Gam2* can be used sentence-finally (Peng 2003; M. C. Y. Lee 2018).

- (4) Examples of sentence-final gam2
 - a. 我想黎幫吓手 嗽 咋。 (Peng 2003, (10), modified)
 Ngo soeng lai bong-haa sau **gam2** zaa3
 I want come help hand sfp sfp
 'I just want to help.'
 - b. 張三有冇去台北玩 噉 呀? (M. C. Y. Lee 2018, (29b))
 Zoengsaam jau-mou heoi Toibak waan
 Zoengsaam have-not go Taipei travel sfp sfp 'Did Zoengsaam travel to Taipei?'
 - Peng notes that *gam2* is anaphoric to the previous proposition, giving rise to some emphasis effect.

The syntax of SFP gam 2

- Following the classification of SFP in Tang (2020), I argue that *gam2* is an Event-type SFP.
- (5) The ordering of SFPs in Cantonese

 Event < Temporal < Focus < Degree < CoA (Call on Addressee)
 - The evidence is two-fold:
 - *gam2* occurs before the other four types of SFPs.
 - *gam2* occurs before some Event-type SFPs, but after some others.

The syntax of SFP gam2

- **Before SFP**_{Temporal} \rightarrow e.g., *laa3* (change of state)
- (6) 感覺上個大學生涯都完左 噉 喇。
 Gamgoksoeng go daaihok sangngaai dou jyun-zo **gam2** <u>laa3</u>.

 Feeling CL college life DOU finished SFP SFP
 'I feel like the college life is over.'
 - **Before SFP**_{Focus} \rightarrow e.g., *zaa3* ('only'); see (4a)
 - **Before SFP**_{Degree} \rightarrow e.g., *aa3* (evaluative); see (4b)
 - **Before SFP** $_{CoA} \rightarrow e.g.$, \nearrow (rising intonation)
- (7) 你想黎幫吓手 噉 ↗?

 Nei soeng lai bong-haa sau **gam2** 丞

 You want come help hand sfp sfp

 'You want to help?'

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The syntax of SFP gam2

- Among the Event-type SFPs, gam2 precedes tim1 (additive)
- (8) 副校仲要叫我唔好講出去 咁 添。 forum Fuhaau zungjiu giu ngo m-hou gongcoetheoi **gam2** <u>tim1</u>.

 Vice.Principal also ask me not tell.others sfp sfp 'Vice Principal also asked me not to tell others.'
 - But it follows mat 1zai6 'not at all'.
- (9) 缺維他命D會提唔起勁乜滯 噉 囉 social media (modified)
 Koet waitaaming D wui tai-m-hei-ging <u>mat1zai6</u> **gam2** lo1
 lack Vitamin D will feel.unenthusiastic sfp sfp sfp
 'Lacking Vitamin D will (make one) feel unenthusiastic.'
- (10) Event SFPs: mat1zai6 < gam2 < tim1

- While the semantic contribution of *gam2* is subtle, I suggest that there is a **fuzziness effect** in sentences with *gam2*.
- (11) The fuzziness effects of SFP gam2
 The referent of the preceding proposition of gam2 must allow a certain degree of fuzziness.

• Pragmatically, *gam2* also has **a softening effect** on the proposition by making the utterance less forceful.

- **1** *Gam2* is sensitive to clause types.
 - As in (4a) and (4b), *gam2* can appear in **declaratives** and **interrogatives**.
 - ... but not **imperatives** and **exclamatives** → no fuzziness allowed
- (12) #即刻走<mark>噉</mark>!

 #Zikhak zau **gam2**!

 now go SFP

 'Leave now!'
- (13) cf. 我想你即刻走 啦。
 Ngo soeng nei zikhak zau **gam2**.
 I want you now go sfp
 'I want you to go now.'
- (14) #套戲真係好正 噉!

 #Tou hei zanhai houzeng **gam2**!

 CL film really nice sfp

 "The film is really nice."
- (15) cf. 套戲幾正 噉。
 Tou hei gei zeng **gam2**!
 CL film quite nice sfp
 'The film is quite nice.'

While *gam2* can be embedded in the antencedent of a conditional,

(16) <u>Gam2</u> in conditionals 如果識少少日文<mark>噉</mark>,可以插班。 *Jyugwo* sik siusiu jatman **gam2**, hoji zaapbaan. if know a.bit Japanese sfp can join.a.class.midway 'If (you) know a bit Japanese, (you) can join a class midway.'

- ... it is sensitive to the types of conditionals.
- Gam2 in only-if conditionals → no fuzziness allowed (17)#只有識少少日文 噉 , 先可以插班。 #Zijau sik siusiu jatman gam2, sin hoji zaapbaan. only.if know a.bit Japanese sfp then can join.a.class.midway
- 'Only if (you) know a bit Japanese, (you) can join a class midway.'
- (18)Gam2 in only-if conditionals → vacuous fuzziness #無論識幾多日文 噉 ,都可以插班。 #Mouleon sik geidou jatman gam2, dou hoji zaapbaan. No.matter know how.much Japanese sfp all can join.a.class.midway
 - 'No matter how much (you) know Japanese, (you) can join a class midway.'

- I suggest that this fuzziness effect comes from the core meaning of demonstratives.
- the primary function of demonstratives is to establish kinds (Anderson and Morzycki 2015; Arsenijevi, Kratochvil, and Sio 2015).

"the connections between kinds, manners, and degrees are too systematic and too widespread to be accidental, and suggest a profound similarity among these domains."

(Anderson and Morzycki 2015, p.800)

- Unifying different types demonstratives with the notion of kinds (Umbach and Gust 2014; Arsenijevi, Kratochvil, and Sio 2015)
 - Demonstratives establish *ad-hoc* kinds within the context (rather than well-establsihed kinds)
 - "only when extent is concerned, equality is expressed. In other cases, it is similarity" (Arsenijevi, Kratochvil, and Sio 2015)
 - Adverbial demonstratives refer to event-kinds, rather than object-kinds
- My suggestion: Clausal-final demonstratives refer to kinds of worlds (i.e., situation).
 - → the fuzziness effect and the softening effect

Table of Contents

- 3 Tag gam 2(joeng 2)

Tag gam 2(joeng 2)

- *Gam2* can be used utterance-finally, often in the form of *gam2joeng2*.
 - This usage is understudied, mentioned only in passing in Luke (2000).
 - But it is common in colloquial speeches.
- (19) Examples of utterance-final gam2joeng2
 - a. 佢要求索償四十五萬嘅, 噉樣。 (p.309, modified)
 Keoi jiukau saaksoeng 45maan ge3, gam2joeng2
 s/he ask.for compenetation 450k sfp TAG
 (Lit.) 'S/he askeed for a 450k compensation, like this.'

The syntax of tag gam2(joeng2)

- Some basic properties of tag gam2joeng2:
 - It follows all other SFPs.
 - There is usually a pause before it.
 - It is optional.
 - It cannot be used on its own.
 - It can take its own SFP.
- 可能價值教育會比較貼近啲啩, (20)咁樣囉。 Interview transcript Honang gaazik-gaaujuk beigaau tipgan di wui gwaa3, Values-Education will close bit maybe more SFP gam2joeng2 lo1. TAG SFP

'Maybe Values Education will be closer to (the goal), I believe.'

- I suggest that it is similar to constant polarity tags (Huddleston 1970).
- (21) a. John has gone, has he (?)
 - b. John hasn't gone, hasn't he (?)
 - The difference is that **the tag is a statement**, rather than a question.

• The discourse functions of the Mandarin counterpart of *gam2* are well recognized.

(22) Zheyangzi 'like this': Mandarin counterpart of gam2joeng2

聽起來很青春這樣子

(Huang 1999, p.87)

tingqilai hen qingchun zheyangzi.

hear very pure this '(It) sounds like very pure.'

(23) 我大概六分鐘就睡著了 這樣子

(Tang 2015a, p.14)

wo dagai liu fenzhong jiu shuizhao le **zheyangzi**

I probably six minute then sleep LE this.appearance 'Probably I will fall asleep in six minutes (or something like that).'

- Huang (1999, p.87)
 - "to mark a boundary in the discourse"; "to mark the end of a turn contribution"
- Tang (2015a), p.14:
 - "kind of repetition of the main clause that precedes them and they are used to reinforce the meaning denoted by the main clause.
- Y.-H. Lee (2020)
 - "a type of **discourse completion marker**, which marks the speakers emphasis on the finality or completion of the given discourse" (p.92)
 - "to show the speakers subject **distant from the story**." (p.117)

- I suggest to assimilate the functions of *gam2joeng2* to **confirmationals** in language (Lam 2014; Wiltschko and Heim 2016; Yang and Wiltschko 2016; Tang 2020; Cory and Koev 2025)
 - Their function is to "requests that the addressee confirm that the proposition expressed in the host sentence is true" (Wiltschko and Heim 2016, p.306)

(24) Confirmational tags in English

- a. You have a new dog, eh?
- b. You have a new dog, **dont you?**

- I suggest gam2joeng2 to be a self-confirmational tag.
 - By uttering tag gam2joeng2, the speaker expresses his/her confirmation to the preceding utterance.
 - The speaker is thus reassuring hisself/herself that what is uttered is true/correct, as if the confirmation is provided by a third party.
- It follows that it gives the effects describe in the literature:
 - a boundary in discourse/discourse complemetion
 - a reinforcement of meaning
 - distance from the story

Interim summary

• SFP gam2

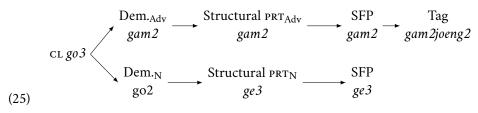
- Syntax: it is a low SFP, i.e., an Event-type SFP.
- Semantics: it is anaphoric to a previous proposition.
- Functions: it gives rise to a fuzziness effect.

Tag gam 2joeng 2

- Syntax: it involves a conjoined structure at the root clause.
- Semantics: it is anaphoric to a previous utterance.
- Functions: it expresses self-confirmation.
- Next: The cartographic footprint of *gam2*, compared to its nominal counterpart

- 4 The cartographic footprint

Recall that:



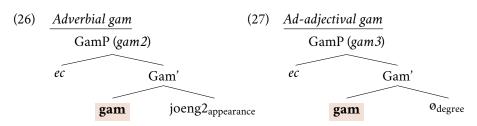
The structural particle usage of gam2 is discussed in details in Peng (2003) and Sio and Tang (2007, 2008), briefly overvied below.

An overview on gam as a structural particle

- H.-n. S. Cheung (2007, p.99) critically observes that adverbial *gam2* allows **apposition**.
- Peng (2003) and Sio and Tang (2007, 2008) argue convincingly that gam2
 develops into a structural particle that introduces adverbials, signalling the
 losee of anaphoricity.
- Sio and Tang (2007) proposes that *gam* is a head that takes two arguments, whose internal argument affects its phonological realizations.
 - gam2 vs. gam3

An overview on gam as a structural particle

They propose the following internal structure of *gam*:



ec can be filled by an overt adverb.

A remark (not discussed here):

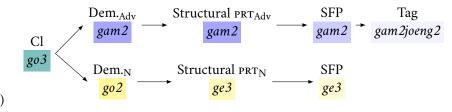
- It has been argued that the the origin of demonstratives in Cantonese is the general classifier go 3.
 - For the adverbial/predicative gam2 and gam3, see H.-n. S. Cheung (2013) and Lai and Wu (2020).
 - For the nominal (distal) demonstrative, go 2 and ge 3, see S. H.-n. Cheung (2006) and Sio (2011).
- Now it's time to put everything together.

The cartographic footprint

(28) 佢靜雞雞噉食咗 [嗰個好食嘅蛋糕] 噉/嘅 咋, 噉樣。
Keoi zinggaigai- gam2 sik-zo [go2 go3 housik- ge3 daangou]
S/he secretly-GAM2 eat-PFV that CL delicious-GE3 cake
gam2 / ge3 zaa3, gam2joeng2.

SFP SFP TAG

'Aaming only secretly ate that delicious cake, (I believe).'



(30)The cartographic footprint of go3 in Cantonese

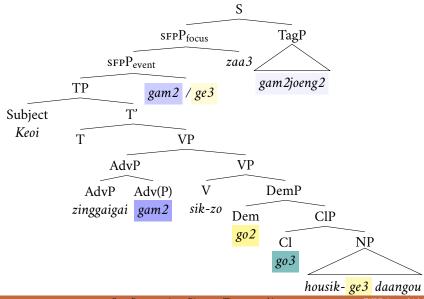


Table of Contents

- Introduction
- 2 SFP gam 2
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Concluding remarks

The directionality of grammaticalization

- From demonstrative (inner) to discourse (outer)
 - **G-family** (Dem): gam 2, gam 3, ge 3
 - Wh-family: how, what, where

- this talk (cf. Fung 2000)
- (Tsai 2011; L. Y.-L. Cheung 2009)

• From tag (outer) to SFP (inner)

- (Tang 2025, talk at TEAL-14, USC)
- H-family (be): oho2, ehe2, ahaa2
 - (Sybesma 2007; Chor, Yap, and Wong 2016; Tang 2020)
- W-family (say): wo5, waa2, wo4, haa6waa5

(Tang 2015b)

- Chinese right periphery is rich
 - it is the destination of both inner and outer elements, and
 - grammaticalization comes in a wide variety.

Concluding remarks

Demonstratives and kind estbalishment

- There appears to be an underlying function connecting all the demonstratives.
- An initial attempt:

Form	go2	gam3	gam2	gam2	gam2	gam2joeng2
Position	Adnominal + CL	Ad-adjectival	Adnominal + мор	Adverbial	Clausal-final	Utrerance-final
Antecedent	Entity	Degree	Quality	Mannar	States of affairs	Proposition
Dimension	Dimension Equative (single-dimensional)		Similative (multi-faceted; property)		Equative (single-dimensional)	
Type	objects	kinds of states	kinds of objects	kinds of events	kinds of worlds	truth values
Examples	阿明嗰個人	兩米咁高	好似綿羊噉嘅人	好積極噉幫手	想食啲咩噉	我好快就訓咗囉,噉樣。

Table 3: Different kinds established by different demonstratives

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