

Standard negation in Gaozhou Yue 高州粵語的標準否定式

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Abstract

This paper examines the negation system of Gaozhou Yue, an under-documented and under-studied Yue variety. The discussion takes the official documentation of the variety as a starting point, which reports two negators *mau5* and *mau5 jau5* to be equivalent to Mandarin *méi(yǒu)* and can appear interchangeably. Then based on systematic acceptability judgment data and field-recorded production data, the paper compares Gaozhou Yue and Mandarin negators and argues that (i) *mau5* is resemblant to *méi(yǒu)* only in terms of viewpoint aspectual restrictions but has a much broader application where situation aspect is concerned; and (ii) *mau5* and *mau5 jau5* are only interchangeable in negative existential and negative possessive constructions, together with the fact that *mau5 jau5* is hardly acceptable in verbal negation, these demonstrate that *mau5 jau5* is not a standard negator. The empirical findings from this comparative study highlights that aspectual restriction still happens in a Chinese variety with only one standard negator. The conclusion reopens discussion on the negation-aspect interaction in Chinese varieties and points the discussion towards a more typologically generalisable formal explanation.

本文旨在探討高州粵語的否定系統。高州粵語是一個未受廣泛關注及紀錄的粵語變體。文章先從官方縣志的描述啟首，縣志中指高州粵語有兩個與普通話“沒有”相通並能互相交替使用的否定詞 – “冇” *mau5* 和 “冇冇” *mau5 jau5*。但根據田野考察中收集的日常溝通語料和句子語法判斷結果，再比較高州粵語和普通話後，本文做出以下兩項分析。一、“冇”和“沒有”在時點體的限制方面的確相似，但在情狀體方面“冇”並無普通話“沒有”的限制。二、“冇”和“冇冇”只在存在否定式和領屬否定式中能交替使用，而且“冇冇”並不能出現在一般句子否定式，證明“冇冇”其實並不是標準否定詞。文中的例證和分析說明在漢語語系當中，儘管只有一個標準否定詞也會出現時態限制。因此，本文對高州粵語的否定系統分析亦有助於拓展對漢語否定式與時態之間互動的研究。

Keywords

Standard negation	Gaozhou Yue	Viewpoint aspect	Situation aspect
標準否定式	高州粵語	時點體	情狀體

1. GAOZHOU YUE AND OFFICIAL DOCUMENTATION ON NEGATION

Gaozhou is one of the county-level cities within Maoming which is located in the southwestern part of Guangdong Province. With approximately 1.33 million permanent residents, over 80 percent are Yue speakers (1.1 million).¹ Gaozhou Yue shares the basic SVO structure with

¹ There is a Hakka variety locally referred to as the Ngaai language which co-exists with Gaozhou Cantonese as a minority variety, spoken by 16 percent of the city's population.

standard Yue (a.k.a. Cantonese),² but also displays morpho-phonological features iconic of western Yue varieties with the tone raising feature for marking diminutives being most studied (Li 1996; Zhao 2005; Lin, Wu & Liu 2019). To date, a systematic and detail syntactic analysis of Gaozhou Yue (GZY) is still lacking. The only official documentation of GZY syntax is the subsection of *fāngyán* ‘dialects’ in the *Gaozhou County Chronicle* (the Chronicle) published in 2006 (Zhang 2006).³

Focusing on the negation system, the Chronicle reported that there are three negators in GZY, namely *mau5* ‘not’, *mau5 jau5* ‘not have’, and *mei6* ‘not yet’. Particularly, *mau5* is argued to be the GZY counterpart to Mandarin *méiyǒu* ‘not have’, and *mau5 jau5* can appear interchangeably with *mau5* which seems highly resemblant of that between *méiyǒu* and *méi*⁴ (see also Cheng 1985 distinction made by the presence and absence of *yǒu*). In the Chronicle, the similarity between *mau5* and *méiyǒu* has been illustrated by sentences in (1) which are highly comparable to the Mandarin counterparts in (2).⁵

(1) Gaozhou Yue

- a. *Aa3Fong1 mau5 jau5 daai6hok6 bat1jip6 man4pang4*
 AaFong not have university graduation certificate
 ‘Fong does not have university graduation certificate.’ (Zhang 2006: 1741)
- b. *Keoi5 gei2 jat6 mau5 sik6 je5 de6*
 3.SG several day not eat thing SFP
 ‘S/he has not eaten for a few days.’ (ibid.)

(2) Mandarin

- a. *ĀFāng méi yǒu dàxué bìyè wénpíng*
 AhFang not have university graduation certificate
 ‘Ah Fang does not have university graduation certificate.’
- b. *Tā jǐ tiān méi chī dōngxi le*
 3.SG several day not eat thing SFP
 ‘S/he has not eaten for a few days.’

² The term ‘Yue’ has been adopted in this paper instead of ‘Cantonese’ for two reasons: (i) ‘Yue’ is the label used in Ethnologue to refer that family of varieties; and (ii) thanks to an anonymous reviewer for noting that since the Gaozhou variety belongs to the Gaoyang stream of Yue, it is more appropriate to refer to it as a Yue variety rather than a Cantonese variety to avoid confusion with the Guangfu stream of Yue.

³ The PRC government has been carrying out large scale documentation of a range of minority (and potentially endangered) varieties, including Gaozhou Yue, since 2005. However, the data so far remain unpublished and inaccessible.

⁴ Here, I quote and translate the description in the *Chronicle*:

“有有”是否定動詞，其意義及句法功能跟否定動詞“有”和普通話的否定動詞“沒有”相同，能用否定動詞“有”的地方都可以換成“有有”，而且，“有有”的使用頻率比“有”要高。[*Mau5 jau5* is a negative verb, its meaning and functions are the same as the negative verb *mau5* or *méiyǒu* in Mandarin. So, wherever the negative verb *mau5* can occur, *mau5 jau5* can also be interchangeably used, and the latter is more frequently used] (Zhang 2006: 1741).

⁵ All Mandarin examples are romanised using Hanyu Pinyin, and all Yue examples with Jyutping which is a system developed by the Linguistic Society of Hong Kong (LSHK). The Yue tones are represented as follows: 1 = high level, 2 = high rising, 3 = mid level, 4 = low falling, 5 = low rising, and 6 = low level.

The non-Leipzig abbreviations adopted in glossing the examples are: CL = classifier, CPL = completive aspect, EXP = experiential aspect, SFP = sentence-final particle, † = data retrieved from field recordings in Gaozhou (speaker coding to be included for individual example).

However, the fieldwork data reveals more complication than described in the Chronicle. Example (3) below illustrates.

- (3)a. Gaozhou Yue
*Ngo5 mau5 (*jau5) sik6 juk6*
 I not have eat meat
 (i) I do not eat meat.
 (ii) I did not eat meat.
- b. Mandarin
Wǒ méi (yǒu) chī ròu
 I not have eat meat
 (i) * I do not eat meat.
 (ii) I did not eat meat.

The example above presents two main puzzles. First, in terms of semantics, simple declarative sentences negated by *mau5* in GZY consistently generate an ambiguity between a habitual reading and an realisation reading. With the event of eating meat as in (3a), negation by *mau5* could, on the one hand, produce the meaning of the speaker not in the habit of eating meat (e.g., s/he is a vegetarian), and on the other hand, produce the meaning of the speaker did not perform any meat-eating activity at the specific time (e.g., s/he did not eat meat that day).⁶ In Mandarin, negation by *méi(yǒu)* consistently produces the eventive reading, but never allows for the habitual one unlike GZY. The second puzzle regards the optional presence of the ‘have’ auxiliary as a part of the negator in the two varieties. While *méi* or *méiyǒu* would yield a well-formed sentence (given an intended eventive interpretation), the same has not been found in GZY. The fieldwork data has found that *mau5* and *mau5 jau5* are not always interchangeable.

This paper will address the following two research questions: (i) is *mau5* a Gaozhou Yue counterpart of Mandarin *méi(yǒu)*; (ii) what is the syntactic relation between *mau5* and *mau5 jau5*? The empirical ground of the remainder of the discussion is based on two sources, namely the production data from the 10 hours of spontaneous conversation recorded during the researcher’s field trip to Gaozhou in 2014 (marked with † on the example), and the acceptability judgment data drawn from the online questionnaires conducted on native speakers of GZY and Beijing Mandarin (henceforth referred to as Mandarin for simplicity)⁷ in 2017.⁸ The rest of the

⁶ To disambiguate these two readings, sentence-final particle and aspect marker need to be used. According to the GZY speakers consulted, to emphasise on a habitual reading, the sentence-final particle *go3* is added; while the postverbal aspect marker *dou3* is used to more clearly indicate on an eventive reading of, for instance, ‘I did not eat meat’.

⁷ The Beijing variety of Mandarin has been used as a comparison to Gaozhou Yue for two reasons: (i) to enable a more specific and fair comparison between specific varieties, to avoid further geographical variation; and (ii) the Beijing variety of Mandarin is a mainland variety which is one of the closest to standard’ Mandarin.

⁸ There is a total of 42 Mandarin speakers and 19 GZY speakers consulted in the online questionnaires. All participants are native speakers of the respective variety aged 20-40 (except for GZY which involves a few speakers in their 60s) and have lived in the relevant area for at least ten years – most of them have not resided elsewhere.

A note on annotation: all data taken from the acceptability judgment questionnaires are annotated on this four-level grammaticality scale. The procedure taken to establish this scale is as follows. First, speakers of each variety are given a set of sentences to rate their grammaticality on a five-point scale – 1 being completely ungrammatical, and 5 completely grammatical. Within the set of sentences are nine control sentences: five well-formed structures, and four ill-formed structures. The range of average scores given by each group of speakers for these control sentences sets the threshold for completely acceptable (✓) and unacceptable (*) sentences respectively. The median between the two range boundaries defines the point of division between slightly marginal (?)sentences and very marginal (??)-sentences.

paper will explore the two research questions in turn. To anticipate, for the first question, it will be argued in terms of the interaction between negation and aspect that *mau5* displays the same viewpoint aspectual restriction as *méi(yǒu)*, but when it comes to Aktionsart *mau5* is far more accommodating than *méi(yǒu)* or *bù* alone, especially when semantic ambiguities between eventive, habitual and volitional readings are considered. Briefly, the idea is that, as Vendler (1957) has observed, activities involve volition. With states and achievements, the ability to perform the ‘action’ is largely equivalent to the performance of the ‘action’ itself, but the same cannot be claimed for activities. The argument follows that the performance of an activity is voluntary, i.e., involves volition. ‘To run’ and ‘to recognise someone/something’ are some examples to illustrate such presence/absence of volition: while to start or stop running can be done deliberately, ‘to recognise something/someone’ cannot, as illustrated in (4) (adapted from Vendler 1957: 149). Further discussion regarding observations in GZY as compared to Mandarin will be made in section 2.2 and 3.1.

- (4)a. John deliberately | carefully **sang**. (activity)
 b. #John deliberately | carefully **knew Mary**. (state)
 c. #John deliberately | carefully **recognised the truth**. (achievement)

For the second question, the paper will show how *mau5* and *mau5 jau5* are only interchangeable in negative existential and negative possessive constructions, but *mau5 jau5* cannot be fully acceptable as a standard verbal negator. Answers to these two questions will thus point to the analysis of *mau5* as the only standard negator in GZY, and therefore setting an interesting case of a Chinese variety with only one standard negator yet still displays viewpoint aspect asymmetry in the sense of Miestamo’s (2005) affirmative-negative paradigmatic asymmetry.

2. NEGATION AND ASPECT

It has been well-observed in the literature that negation in Mandarin demonstrates certain restrictions related to aspect, and these restrictions have been suggested to characterise the formal properties of the two standard negators of the language, namely *bù* and *méi(yǒu)*. It is helpful to begin with a clarification on the concept and terminology adopted for the present discussion of ‘aspect’. The classical definition comes from Comrie that aspect refers to the “different ways of viewing the internal temporal constituency of a situation” (1976: 3), and so the focus has been on the perspectival nature of temporal marking. Later works have extended the definition to include the internal/intrinsic temporal structures of situations, drawing inspiration from Agrell’s (1908) *Aktionsart* ‘kinds of action’ – the classification of lexical verbs by their temporal properties (cf. Xiao & McEnery 2004 for a more thorough description of the transformation in terminology). Smith (1997), in her two-component theory of aspect, terms the first approach to aspect ‘viewpoint aspect’, and the second approach ‘situation aspect’. In

Overall, Beijing Mandarin speakers show more black-and-white judgments for grammaticality, which presumably can be attributed to greater effort in standardisation in China, especially since Beijing is the capital city. In contrast, Gaozhou Yue speakers are less clear-cut with grammaticality (hence the wider marginal within the classes of completely acceptable and completely unacceptable), and the explanation is two-fold: (i) its lack of institutionalisation as Gaozhou Yue is not an official language in the region where it is spoken; and (ii) the written stimulus used in the questionnaires, since Gaozhou Yue is a primarily spoken variety. The limitation of using written stimulus should be remedied by the follow-up interviews with speakers.

Given the differences in judgment behaviours between the Beijing Mandarin and Gaozhou Yue speakers, the procedure described above generates a unique set of grammaticality ranges for each variety as presented in (i).

- (i) Mandarin: (✓) 4.7-5.0, (?) 3.0-4.6, (??) 1.4-2.9, (*) 1.0-1.3
 Gaozhou Yue: (✓) 4.4-5.0, (?) 3.2-4.3, (??) 2.0-3.1, (*) 1.0-1.9

more recent studies on aspect, the two-component approach of viewpoint aspect and situation aspect has been conceptualised and formally analysed as Outer Aspect and Inner Aspect in a way to show the syntactic connection that predicates bear in encoding different situation types (cf. Tsai 2008 and Travis 2010, see also Ramchand 2008 for an elaborate account of the VP shell for the representation of different classes of predicates). This paper follows Smith's (1997) terminology, and includes data related to the negation of five situation aspects – state, activity, accomplishment, achievement and semelfactive – following Comrie's (1976) classification. Formally, this paper also takes viewpoint aspect (a.k.a. outer aspect in Verkuyl 1993) to refer to the formal morphological marking of aspect outside of the VP, and situation aspect (a.k.a. Aktionsart or situation type or inner aspect in Verkuyl 1993 and Travis 2010) to refer to the VP-internal encoding of the semantic properties of the situation.

Focusing on the empirical observations on Mandarin negation and viewpoint aspect compatibility, in the literature, perfective *-le* has been reported to be incompatible with either *bù* or *méi(yǒu)*, while experiential *-guo* is fully compatible with the *méi(yǒu)* but not with *bù* (Wang 1965; Huang 1988; Ernst 1995; Lin 2003; Li 2007; cf. Lee & Pan 2001 for exceptional cases where *bù* may occur with perfective *-le*). Empirical findings regarding negation and imperfective aspect are more controversial. For the two imperfective aspect markers – preverbal *zài* and postverbal *-zhe* – Lin (2003) has suggested that only *méi(yǒu)* is compatible with these imperfective aspects, while Ernst (1995) has proposed a regional variation in preference between negation by *bù* in the south and negation by *méi(yǒu)* in the north. In accounting for the Mandarin data, proposals have been made on the selection requirement of the two negators. For instance, Huang (1988) has suggested that *bù* must cliticise onto the nearest verbal element and by doing so rules out any possibility of aspectual marking because the *bù*-cliticised verb now denotes a non-event. Ernst (1995) accounted for the incompatibility between *bù* and perfectivity by the unboundedness requirement of *bù*, while Lin (2003) has viewed the same empirical observation the perspective of situation type and suggested that *bù* requires a stative situation; and *méi(yǒu)* is taken to have the opposite properties of *bù* which should explain its ability to occur with perfective and experiential aspect. Li (2007) has adopted a more feature-based approach that integrates these former proposals by suggesting that both the negators and the aspect markers carry four aspectual features – telic, stative, progressive and resultative – then with the different values they intrinsically have on those features, the negators and the aspect markers may be (in)compatible with each other. This section will probe into the interaction between negation and aspect in GZY and compare it with Mandarin. A comparative study of GZY and the Mandarin on both viewpoint and situation aspect will highlight the similarities and differences between *mau5* and *méi(yǒu)*, and provide a comprehensive description of the formal properties of *mau5*.

2.1 Negation and viewpoint aspect

2.1.1 An overview of viewpoint aspect in Gaozhou Yue

Since the documentation and discussion of aspect have been virtually absent for Gaozhou Yue, to study the viewpoint markers there, the Gaozhou Yue examples taken from field recordings have been compared with their Hong Kong Cantonese (HKC) counterparts. The Gaozhou Yue-Hong Kong Cantonese translations provided in the examples have been confirmed by Gaozhou Yue native speakers.⁹ The search is not meant to be exhaustive, rather, the aim is to identify

⁹ HKC is used as a standard of comparison to identify Gaozhou Yue aspect markers because (i) HKC and Gaozhou Yue are typologically more closely-related varieties; and (ii) HKC aspect marking does not run into the confusion that Mandarin aspect marking sometimes does, especially in the case of *le*, which, the literature argues, can mark

the counterparts of the four Mandarin aspect markers — perfective *le*, experiential *guo*, progressive *zai*, and durative *zhe* — in Gaozhou Yue.

In Gaozhou Yue, perfectivity is encoded by a postverbal marker *de6*, as in (5-6). The (a) sentences are Gaozhou Yue examples taken from the conversations transcribed, and the (b) sentences are Hong Kong Cantonese translations.

- (5)a. *Jau5 zik1 zyul loi4-de6*
have CL pig come-PFV
'A pig came.' (GZY[†])
- b. *Jau5 zek3 zyul lai4-zo2*
have CL pig come-PFV
'A pig came.' (HKC)
- (6)a. *Jat1 ci3 zeoi3 dol syul-de6 loeng5 cin1 baat3*
one time most much lose-PFV two thousand eight
'Once, at most, (he) lost two thousand eight hundred in one go.' (GZY[†])
- b. *Jat1 ci3 zeoi3 dol syul-zo2 loeng5 cin1 baat3*
one time most much lose-PFV two thousand eight
'Once, at most, (he) lost two thousand eight hundred in one go.' (HKC)

Experiential aspect is realised by the same postverbal marker in all four varieties of Chinese, though the phonological realisation differs slightly — toneless *guo* in Mandarin, and *gwo3* in Hong Kong and Gaozhou Yue. The correspondence between Gaozhou and Hong Kong Cantonese experiential aspect is hence straightforwardly found as in (7).

- (7)a. *Tung4 jan4 zou6-gwo3 gam3 dol zok3jip6 dou1 mau5*
with person do-EXP so many assignment also not
gei3dak1 go3?
remember SFP
'(You) have done so many assignments with him and you can't remember (him)?' (GZY[†])
- b. *Tung4 jan4 zou6-gwo3 gam3 dol gung1fo3 dou1 m4 gei3dak1?*
with person do-EXP so many assignment also not remember
'(You) have done so many assignments with him and you can't remember (him)?' (HKC)

In both Mandarin and Hong Kong Cantonese, there is a preverbal imperfective marker: *zai* 'be.at' and *hai2dou6* 'be.place' respectively. Gaozhou Yue also has a similar preverbal marker *coi5(gei2)* 'be.here' as exemplified in (8).¹⁰

perfective, inchoative, and be a sentence-final particle.

¹⁰ The preverbal imperfective marker in Gaozhou Yue has a distinctive feature: while the 'be.loc' markers in Mandarin and HKC are polysemous in being both a locative marker and a progressive marker, the locative element is often obscure, but the locative element in Gaozhou Yue *coi5(gei2)* 'be.here' is much more transparent and lexical. For instance, *zai* in Mandarin does not involve a locative component morphologically, and *hai2dou6* in HKC is literally 'be.loc', where *dou6* can be prefixed by a deictic element, i.e., *li1* 'here' or *go2* 'there'. In Gaozhou Yue, *coi5* can stand alone as in (i), similar to Mandarin *zai* 'be.at' and HKC *hai2* 'be.at', while *gei2* is a proximal deictic marker itself, meaning 'here' as illustrated in (ii).

- (i) *Keoi5 mau5 hai2 Sin2taai3 miu6, keoi5 coi5 bok3mat6gun2 go3*
3.SG not at Madam.Sin Temple 3.SG be.at museum SFP
'It isn't in the Temple of Madam Sin, it is in the museum.' (GZY[†])
- (ii) *Gei2 tiu4 lou6 jau6 mau5 gei2 dol cel*

- (8) *Mau5 jan4 gong2 Baak6waa2 go3, zing6hai6 gong2 Ngaai1waa2*
 not people speak Cantonese SFP only speak Ngaai
wo3
 SFP
 ‘Nobody spoke Cantonese, only Ngaai.’
 – *Hai6 laak3, mau5 co3 bik1-dou3 nei5 coi5(gei2) gong2 de6*
 right SFP not wrong force-CPL you **be.here** speak SFP
 ‘Right, exactly, (it) forces you to speak (Ngaai)’ (GZY[†])

Gaozhou Yue also shares the same postverbal imperfective marker, *gan2* as HKC; this is illustrated in (9). *Gan2* differs from *zhe* in Mandarin as the former expresses progressivity without an additional stative interpretation, while the latter focuses on the result state of a once-ongoing activity.

- (9)a. *Keoi5 jilgaal zau6 paak3-gan2 de6*
 3.SG now then film-**PROG** SFP
 ‘She is filming now.’ (GZY[†])
 b. *Keoi5 jilgaal zau6 (ji5ging1) jing2-gan2 laa3*
 3.SG now then already film-**PROG** SFP
 ‘She is filming now.’ (HKC)

The viewpoint aspect markers commonly identified in Mandarin and the Yue/Cantonese varieties discussed above are catalogued in Table 1.

Table 1 Viewpoint aspect markers

	Perfective	Experiential	BE.LOC	Imperfective
Mandarin	<i>-le</i>	<i>-guo</i>	<i>zai</i> ‘be.at’	Durative <i>-zhe</i>
GZY	<i>-de6</i>	<i>-gwo3</i>	<i>coi5gei2</i> ‘be.here’	Progressive <i>-gan2</i>
HKC	<i>-zo2</i>	<i>-gwo3</i>	<i>hai2dou6</i> ‘be.loc’	Progressive <i>-gan2</i>

Note that, the four viewpoint aspect markers under investigation are only a subset of the inventory of aspect markers in these Chinese varieties, but the selection is made to facilitate a more thorough study of the interaction between negation and aspect in the four varieties. The next section will explore the compatibility between negation and these viewpoint aspects.

this CL road also not quite many car
 ‘This road doesn’t have many cars.’ (GZY[†])

Naturally, one would assume that *coi5* can appear alone as a locative expression or progressive marker similar to *zai*. The production data indeed show *coi5(gei2)* being commonly used as a locative expression for physical location (iii) and time (iv).

- (iii) *Coi5 nung4cyun1 di1 sai3lou6 hou2 gin6hong1 go3*
in village GEN children very healthy SFP
 ‘Village children are very healthy.’ (GZY[†])
 (iv) *Nei5 coi5 jaa6.sei3 siu2si4 zi1cin4 gaau1 cin2 dou1 syun3 go3*
 you **at** twenty.four hour before submit money also count SFP
 ‘It counts if you pay twenty-four hours in advance.’ (GZY[†])

However, Gaozhou Yue speakers mostly find the sentence very marginal when *coi5* appears alone as an aspect marker without the deictic component *gei2* ‘here’.

2.1.2 Negation and viewpoint aspect compatibility

With regard to the compatibility between negation and perfectivity, GZY *mau5* has been found to behave in a similar way as *méi(yǒu)* in being incompatible with perfective aspect (10a),¹¹ fully compatible with experiential aspect (10b). The corresponding Mandarin sentences are presented in (11) with Mandarin judgment results indicated.

- (10)a. *Ngo5* (*??mau5* | *??mau5 jau5*) *paau2-de6-bou6*
 I not | not have run-PFV-steps
 Affirmative: ‘I ran.’
- b. *Ngo5* (*mau5* | *mau5 jau5*) *coeng3-gwo3-gol*
 I not | not have sing-EXP-songs
 Affirmative: ‘I have sung before.’
- (11)a. *Wǒ* (**bù* | *??méiyǒu*) *pǎo-le-bù*
 I not | not have run-PFV-steps
 Affirmative: ‘I ran.’
- b. *Wǒ* (**bù* | *??méiyǒu*) *chàng-guo-gē*
 I not | not have sing-EXP-songs
 Affirmative: ‘I have sung before.’

With imperfective aspect, GZY *mau5* is marginally acceptable with the two progressive viewpoint aspect markers, namely the preverbal *coi5gei2* ‘be.here’ (resemblant to *zài* in Mandarin) in (12a) and the postverbal *-gan2* (the same form as in standard Cantonese) in (12b).

- (12)a. *Ngo5* (*mau5* | *??mau5* *jau5*) *coi5gei2* *paau2bou6*
 I not | not have be.here run
 Affirmative: ‘I am running.’
- b. *Ngo5* (*mau5* | *??mau5* *jau5*) *coeng3-gan2-gol*
 I not | not have sing-PROG-song
 Affirmative: ‘I am singing.’

¹¹ Thanks for an anonymous reviewer for pointing out. With both *mau5* and *mau5 jau5* being incompatible with the perfective marker *de6* in Gaozhou Yue, it is reasonable to seek a grammatical structure for expressing ‘I did not run’ and other negative perfective meanings. In Gaozhou Yue, as presented in example (3), *mau5* itself would allow for both a negative perfective and a negative habitual reading, i.e., ‘I did not eat meat’ and ‘I do not eat meat’. Therefore, the negative counterpart to *ngo5 paau2-de6-bou6* ‘I ran’ would be to remove the perfective marker and negate the sentence with *mau5* (i.e., *ngo5 mau5 paau2bou6* ‘I not run’) which would ambiguously allow for two readings as in example (3), in the case of running, it would be (i) ‘I did not run’ and (ii) ‘I do not run’. To disambiguate the two readings, native GZY speakers would either rely on the context or insert other modifiers, but the meaning would change accordingly as illustrated in (i) below.

- (i) *Ngo5 mau5 sik6-dou2 juk6*
 I not eat-CPL meat
 ‘I did not manage to eat meat.’

It is also noteworthy that although *mau5 jau5* in (10a) seems to behave similarly as *méiyǒu* in Mandarin (11a) in being very marginal in the presence of a perfective aspect marker, it is still doubtful that *mau5 jau5* should be considered a negative marker with a perfective interpretation as Mandarin *méiyǒu*. The reason is that, upon confirmation from native GZY speakers, negative perfective interpretation cannot be naturally expressed by *mau5 jau5*, but relies on postverbal markers such as *dou2* ‘manage.to’ or completive *dou3*. And in any case, GZY speakers disprefer the presence of *jau5* ‘have’. In other words, whether the sentence contains an aspect marker or not, the natural negative marker is *mau5*, not *mau5 jau5*. More discussion on the structural status of *mau5* and *mau5 jau5* will be presented in Section 3.

The acceptability judgments made by the Mandarin speakers show that *méi(yǒu)* and *mau5* indeed share similar properties regarding compatibility with imperfective aspects as well. The preference for negation of imperfectives by *méi(yǒu)* is consistent among Mandarin speakers though it is still marginal when occurring with *-zhe* (14). Table 2 summarizes the negation-aspect compatibility pattern across the two Chinese varieties discussed. The data so far have highlighted how GZY *mau5* is resemblant to Mandarin *méi(yǒu)*, as described in the Chronicle (the issue of *mau5 jau5* will be discussed in section 3).

- (13) *Wǒ* ([?]*bù* |[?]*méi-yǒu*) *zài* *kàn-shū*
 I not |not-have **be.at** read-book
 Affirmative: ‘I am reading.’
- (14) *Wǒ* (^{??}*bù* |[?]*méi*) *chàng-zhe-gē*
 I not |not sing-DUR-song
 Affirmative: ‘I am singing.’

Table 2 Negation-viewpoint aspect compatibility

	Mandarin		GZY	
	<i>bù</i> ‘not’	<i>méi(yǒu)</i> ‘not have’	<i>mau5</i> ‘not’	<i>mau5 jau5</i> ‘not have’
PFV	?? 1.4	?? 1.7	?? 2.4	?? 2.5
EXP	* 1.2	? 4.1	✓ 4.6	? 3.8
IMPFV (be.loc)	? 4.0	? 4.3	✓ 4.7	? 3.2
IMPFV	?? 1.6	? 3.1	? 4.0	?? 2.9

2.2 Negation and situation aspect

Indeed, when examining the compatibility between negation and viewpoint aspect above, the focus was on sentences with an activity predicate, as it has been found in the acceptability judgments that activity predicates tend to be most compatible with aspect marking in affirmative sentences, and hence trigger the least interference on the grammaticality of the negative counterparts. However, the difference between *mau5* and *méi(yǒu)* becomes apparent as we probe into the full range of situation aspect expressed. This section considers the five situation types defined in Comrie (1976) to examine the compatibility between different situation aspects and negation by *bù* and *méi(yǒu)* in Mandarin as well as *mau5* and *mau5 jau5* in GZY. Within the class of stative predicates, a further distinction between psych-predicates and non-psych predicates has been made following Cheng & Sybesma (2015). The empirical data comes from the negation of simple verbal declarative sentences without overt aspect marking in the two Chinese varieties. A list of the predicates examined is provided below.

Table 3 Exemplar predicates for each situation type

Situation aspects	Gaozhou Yue	Mandarin	
State	<i>kwong4 lou5syu2</i>	<i>hàipà lǎoshǔ</i>	[+psych] ‘to fear rats
	<i>zung1ji3 Siu2ming4</i>	<i>xihuan Xiaoming</i>	[+psych] ‘to like (someone)’
	<i>dei1dou3 gei2 gin6 si6</i>	<i>zhīdào zhè jiàn shì</i>	[–psych] ‘to know (about something)’ ¹²
Activity	<i>sik1dak1 Can4</i>	<i>rènshi Chén</i>	[–psych] ‘to know (someone)’
	<i>sin1saang1</i>	<i>xiānsheng</i>	‘to stroll’
	<i>saan3bou6</i>	<i>sànbù</i>	‘to sing’
	<i>coeng3go1</i>	<i>chàng gē</i>	‘to read books’
	<i>tai2 syu1</i>	<i>kàn shū</i>	‘to run’
Accomplishment	<i>paau2bou6</i>	<i>pǎobù</i>	‘to eat this piece of cake’
	<i>sik6 gei2 zik1</i>	<i>chī zhè kuài dànɡāo</i>	
Achievement	<i>daan6gou1</i>		
	<i>se2 gei2 fung1 seon3</i>	<i>xiě zhè fēng xìn</i>	‘to write this letter’
	<i>jing4 bei2coi3</i>	<i>yíng bǐsài</i>	‘to win a race’
	<i>jing6dou2 Can4</i>	<i>rènchū Chén</i>	‘to recognise (Mr Chan)’
Semelfactive	<i>sin1saang1</i>	<i>xiānsheng</i>	
	<i>daa2laan6 zik1 bui1</i>	<i>dǎpò zhè ge bēizi</i>	‘to shatter a mug’
	<i>haau1 mun4</i>	<i>qiāomén</i>	‘to knock on the door’
	<i>daa2gaak3</i>	<i>dǎɡé</i>	‘to hiccup’

The Mandarin data shows that stative predicates can be negated by *bù*, but while negation by *méiyǒu* is generally unacceptable with non-psych verbs, it is actually marginally well-formed with psych verbs with a reading that the situation described has never happened; example (15) illustrates.

- (15)a. *Wǒ (bù |^{??}méi-yǒu) zhīdào zhè jiàn shì*
 I not |not-have know this CL event
 Intended: ‘I do not know about this event.’
 ‘I did not know about this event.’
- b. *Wǒ (bù |^{??}méi-yǒu) hàipà lǎoshǔ*
 I not |not-have fear rats
 Intended: ‘I do not fear rats.’
 ‘I did not fear rats.’

With the dynamic predicates, *bù* and *méiyǒu* are generally acceptable except with achievements where *méiyǒu* is clearly the preferred negator as shown in (16).

- (16) *Wǒ (??bù |[?]méi-yǒu) yíng bǐsài*
 I not |not-have win race
 lit. ‘I do not win the race.’
 ‘I did not win the race.’

¹² The status of the concept of ‘knowing’ may be ambiguous in terms of [+psych] since, on the one hand, the external arguments of the predicate ‘to know (someone)’ or ‘to know about (something)’ is a Holder, not an Agent; on the other hand, ‘to know’ is dissimilar to other canonical psych predicates such as ‘to like’, ‘to fear’, or ‘to hate’ which have an Experiencer as their external argument. In this study, I will classify ‘to know’ as a non-psych stative predicate.

The findings stand in contrast with Lin’s (2003) distinction of the two Mandarin negators by stativity – *bù* selects for a stative predicate while *méiyǒu* requires an eventive one. It also challenges a strong assumption of Ernst’s (1995) unboundedness requirement on *bù*, since *bù* has been found to be marginally acceptable with accomplishment and semelfactive predicates. The Mandarin data presented above thus re-opens discussion on how the two negators are distributed and distinguished. We will return to this question later in the section.

We now turn to GZY and examine the compatibility between *mau5* (*jau5*) and the predicate types. There are two note-worthy empirical findings. First, unlike either of the Mandarin negators, *mau5* is largely compatible with all predicate types, as exemplified in (17). The apparent exception is with achievement predicates where negation by *mau5* is slightly marginal. Table 4 summarises the data from Mandarin and GZY.

- (17)a. *Ngo5* (*mau5* |^{??}*mau5* *jau5*) *kwong4* *lou5syu2*
 I not |not have fear rats
 Intended: ‘I do/did not fear rats.’ (psych state)
- b. *Ngo5* (*mau5* |[?]*mau5* *jau5*) *dei1dou3* *gei2* *gin6* *si6*
 I not |not have know this CL event
 Intended: ‘I do/did not know about this event.’ (non-psych state)
- c. *Ngo5* ([?]*mau5* |[?]*mau5* *jau5*) *coeng3* *go1*
 I not |not have sing songs
 Intended: ‘I do/did not sing.’ (activity)
- d. *Ngo5* (*mau5* |[?]*mau5* *jau5*) *se2* *gei2* *fung1* *seon3*
 I not |not have write this CL letter
 Intended: ‘I do/did not write this letter.’ (accomplishment)
- e. *Ngo5* ([?]*mau5* |[?]*mau5* *jau5*) *jing4* *bei2coi3*
 I not |not have win race
 Intended: ‘I do/did not win the race.’ (achievement)¹³
- f. *Ngo5* (*mau5* |[?]*mau5* *jau5*) *haau1* *mun4*
 I not |not have knock door
 Intended: ‘I do/did not knock on the door.’ (semelfactive)

Table 4 Negation-situation aspect compatibility¹⁴

	Mandarin		GZY	
	<i>bù</i> ‘not’	<i>méi(yǒu)</i> ‘not (have)’	<i>mau5</i> ‘not’	<i>mau5 jau5</i> ‘not have’
State [+psych]	✓ _{4.8}	? _{3.4}	✓ _{4.6}	? _{3.5}
State [–psych]	✓ _{5.0}	?? _{2.5}	✓ _{4.7}	? _{3.6}
Activity	✓ _{4.8}	? _{4.4}	✓ _{4.6}	? _{3.7}
Accomplishment	? _{4.1}	? _{4.1}	✓ _{4.5}	? _{3.6}
Achievement	?? _{1.6}	? _{4.4}	? _{3.9}	? _{4.1}
Semelfactive	? _{3.9}	? _{4.5}	✓ _{4.6}	? _{4.2}

¹³ As noted by an anonymous reviewer, a more natural way for expressing the intended readings in (17e), where both *mau5* and *mau5 jau5* are marginal, would be require the presence of either the sentence-final particle *go3* for habituality or a volitional reading, or postverbal markers such as *dou2* (meaning ‘managed.to’) for an eventive reading.

¹⁴ When reading the judgment scores in Table 4, it is worth-noting that the mapping between the acceptability annotation and the absolute score varies according to the variety concerned, in order to more accurately reflect the judgment preference and behaviour of speakers of each variety. The mechanism and procedure behind has been detailed in footnote 8.

Table 4 highlights two important findings. First, in Mandarin, a clear-cut negator selection requirement is only found in two types of predicates: non-psych states and achievements; the former is only compatible with *bù*, and the latter only with *méi(yǒu)*. The other situation types can be negated by either negator with little, if any, grammaticality consequence. The second finding is the fact that this pattern is inapplicable to GZY. In GZY, negation of bare declaratives by *mau5 jau5* is never completely acceptable regardless of situation type, the scores given range between 3.5/5.0 (psych states) and 4.2/5.0 (semelfactives). In other words, ‘not’ is the only fully acceptable negator where negation can be grammatically applied to the sentence; negation of achievements is the exception where *mau5* ‘not’ is also slightly marginal (3.9/5.0). The findings lead to two questions: first, if both negators in Mandarin can be acceptable with most situation aspects, then what distinguishes one negator from the other in those cases? Second, if GZY speakers never fully accept *mau5 jau5* ‘not have’ with any type of predicate, then what is the structural status of *mau5 jau5* ‘not have’? The second question will be addressed in section 3.

For the first question, follow-up interviews with Mandarin speakers show a consistent pattern that the difference between ‘not’ and ‘not have’ is a semantic one when they appear in activity, accomplishment and semelfactive sentences. This semantic contrast has been mentioned in passing in Li & Thompson (1981). They have suggested that, with a stative predicate, *bù* simply denies the existence of the state; however, with an activity “over which the subject has some control”, negation with *bù* implies refusal and unwillingness of the subject to take part in the event, so *méi(yǒu)* must be used if the occurrence of the event is to be negated (1981: 423). Native Mandarin speakers consulted have made a similar remark that negation with ‘not have’ always denies the realisation of the situation, i.e., the situation did not happen. Li (1999/2007) also reported that negation with *bù* can produce a volitional reading, as in (18). In fact, the volitional reading is the only licit interpretation in the presence of a postverbal frequency adverbial (19).

- (18) *Wǒ bù chàng gē*
 I not sing song
 (i) ‘I do not sing songs.’
 (ii) ‘I won’t sing songs.’ (ibid.: 276)

- (19) *Tā bù lái sān cì*
 3.SG not come three times
 (i) * ‘He did not come three times.’
 (ii) ‘He won’t come three times.’ (ibid.)

The result of the follow-up interviews shows that negation by *bù* is not limited to a volitional reading. When *bù* negates an activity, accomplishment, or semelfactive, the meaning systematically varies between a volitional reading (i.e., the speaker lacks the willingness to realise the situation) and a habitual reading (i.e., the speaker does not have the habit of participating in the situation denoted), according to the situation aspect. Mandarin speakers reported a tendency to interpret the activity sentences with a habitual reading; the accomplishment sentences with a volitional reading; while semelfactives could allow for both readings depending on the predicate concerned (cf. the description in Li & Thompson (1981)

and Li (1999/2007)).¹⁵ In sum, *bù* and *méiyǒu* are not necessarily in complementary distribution; except with non-psych states and achievements, both negators can appear in bare negative clauses. In the majority of cases where both negators are acceptable, their distribution produces semantic consequences: negation with *bù* generates a modality reading, either habitual or volitional, while negation with *méiyǒu* systematically denies the realisation of the situation.

3. STRUCTURAL STATUS OF *MAU5* AND *MAU5 JAU5*

This section addresses the second research question: what is the syntactic relation between *mau5* and *mau5 jau5*? The findings presented in section 2 has an important bearing on this question which points to the structural status of *mau5* and *mau5 jau5*. Prima facie, the judgment results presented in section 2.2 did not indicate clear-cut support for or rejection of the standard negator status of *mau5 jau5* ‘not have’. The fact that all sentences negated by *mau5 jau5* are slightly marginal regardless of situation type is open to two interpretations. First, *mau5 jau5* ‘not have’ is a standard negator because, though it may not be the preferred negation strategy, it is still an available option. Alternatively, the quantitative results may be unreliable due to speakers’ ‘acquiescence bias’ – the tendency to agree with what is given. Findings from follow-up interviews corroborate the latter possibility. Indeed, speakers who rated the *mau5 jau5* ‘not have’ sentences as high as 4.0/5.0 in the online questionnaire firmly rejected them in the interview, though they generally found the sentences comprehensible. This could be explained by the linguistic status of these varieties: Gaozhou Cantonese is the only variety that is not an official language among the three varieties investigated, it is also the least institutionalised variety. These factors may contribute to speakers being less confident and clear-cut with their acceptability judgments, which would explain the relatively low threshold for fully acceptable and completely unacceptable sentences (i.e., a higher score for the upper boundary of unacceptable sentences, and a lower score for fully acceptable ones), and consequently narrows the score range for each subdivision within marginally acceptable structures (see footnote 7 for the annotation scale of the two Chinese varieties discussed). This section will establish that *mau5* ‘not’ is the only standard negator in Gaozhou Yue. *Mau5 jau5* ‘not have’, though assumed as the counterpart of Mandarin *méi(yǒu)* is not a standard negator but should be analysed as the standard negator *mau5* modifying the verbal element *jau5* ‘have’. The conclusion is drawn based on three sets of empirical evidence.

3.1 The interpretations of bare negatives with *mau5*

One decisive piece of evidence comes from the empirical finding that sentences negated by *mau5* ‘not’ in Gaozhou Yue are open to three interpretations: denial of realisation of the situation, of volition or of the habit in realising the situation. In the follow-up interview, sentences in (20) were all found to be fully acceptable to the speakers, which indicates that the reading of *mau5* is not affected by situation type so long as the situation is eventive. With stative predicates, *mau5* expectedly negates the realisation of the state.

- (20)a. *Ngo5 mau5 coeng3 go1*,
 I not sing song
 daan6 hai6 kei4 sat6 ngo5 (hou2) soeng2 coeng3

¹⁵ As mentioned by an anonymous reviewer, the semelfactive predicate *qiāomén* ‘knock the door’ could actually involve volition. However, it is not surprising that the volitional reading is absent in some other semelfactive sentences (e.g., to hiccup in 20c of section 3.1) as such events are hardly controllable in the real world, thus a volitional reading may be only licensed by very marked contexts.

- but actually I very want sing
 ‘I don’t sing, but I actually want to.’ (activity)
- b. *Ngo5 mau5 se2 gei2 fung1 seon3*,
 I not write this CL letter
daan6hai6 kei4sat6 ngo5 (hou2) soeng2 se2
 but actually I very want write
 ‘I won’t write this letter, but I actually want to.’ (achievement)
- c. *Ngo5 mau5 daa2 gaak3*,
 I not make hiccup
daan6hai6 kei4sat6 ngo5 (hou2) soeng2 daa2
 but actually I very want make
 ‘I won’t hiccup, though actually I really want to.’ (semelfactive)

According to the speakers, when the predicate denotes an event, bare negative sentences with *mau5* are ambiguous between a volitional reading, habitual reading, and realisational reading; (21) illustrates the three potential readings.

- (21) *Ngo5 mau5 sik6 gei2 zik1 daan6gou1*
 I not eat this piece cake
 (i) ‘I will not eat this piece of cake’ – volition
 (ii) ‘I do not (usually) eat this piece of cake’ – habitual
 (iii) ‘I did not eat this piece of cake.’ – realisation

A summary of the interpretation patterns in Mandarin and Gaozhou Yue is presented in Table 5 below.

Table 5 Standard negators and bare negatives

	non-existence	non-volitional/habitual
Mandarin	<i>méi(yǒu)</i> *non-psych states	<i>bù</i> *achievement
GZY	<i>mau5</i> compatible with all situation types, and interpretations restricted contextually	

The fact that *mau5*, unlike *bù* or *méi*, does not show any semantic preference and little grammaticality restriction regarding situation type not only highlights an important point of cross-linguistic contrast, but also establishes the empirical ground that *mau5* is the general standard negator in GZY, in the sense that it is applicable to basically all types of predicate and is invariably the unmarked negation strategy.

3.2 *Mau5 Jau5* in negative existence and negative possessive constructions

In the Chronicle, the meaning and distribution of *mau5 jau5* are illustrated with the six examples in (22-27). The squared brackets are added to the original examples to indicate the appropriate constituency for the specified interpretation; the reasons for the bracketing will become apparent shortly in the discussion that follows.

- (22) *Keoi5 mau5 [jau5 zai2.nui2]*
 3.SG not have children
 ‘He doesn’t have children.’ (Zhang 2006: 1741)

- (23) *Aa3Fong1 mau5 [jau5 daai6hok6 bat1jip6 man4pang4]*
 AaFong not have university graduation certificate
 ‘Fong doesn’t have university graduation certificate.’ (ibid.)
- (24) *Zoeng1 si1fu2 hang2ding6 mau5 [jau5 cyun4zip3]*
 Zoeng master sure not have passbook
 ‘Master Cheung certainly doesn’t have a passbook.’ (ibid.)
- (25) *Mou5daa2 din6jing2 zeoi3 mau5 [jau5 tai2tau4]*
 martial.art movie most not have attraction
 ‘Action movies are the least attractive.’ (ibid.)
- (26) *Mau5 jau5 jan4 koeng4bik1 keoi5 caam1gaa1 bei2coi3*
 not have people force 3.SG join competition
 ‘Nobody forced/forces him to join the competition.’ (ibid.)
- (27) *Nei5 jau5 sau2gei1 maa3?*
 you have mobile.phone Q
 ‘Do you have a mobile phone?’
 – *Mau5 jau5.*¹⁶
 Not have
 ‘No.’ (ibid.)

¹⁶ As raised by an anonymous reviewer, the answer to the VP-neg question in (27) can actually omit *jau5* ‘have’. But native speakers of GZY rarely drop *jau5* akin to how other verbal elements in yes-no questions would be echoed in the answer; the following examples illustrate.

- (i) *Jau5 mei6 maa3?*
 have taste Q
 ‘Does (it) have enough taste?’
 – *mau5 gau3 mei6*
 not enough taste
 ‘(No, it) does not have enough taste.’[†]
- (ii) *Nei5 uk1kei2 jau5-mau5-jau5 cel?*
 you home have-not-have car
 ‘Has your family got any car?’
 – *Mau5 jau5 cel*
 not have car
 ‘No, we do not have a car.’[†]
- (iii) *Can1 faan6 hou2sik6 mau5 hou2sik6?*
 CL meal tasty not tasty
 ‘Is the meal delicious?’
 – *mau5 hou2sik6*
 not tasty
 ‘Not delicious.’[†]

However, it is quite common and even preferable to follow the ‘not yet’ negator *mei6* with *jau5* ‘have’, as shown in (iii). The analysis of which requires further research.

- (iv) *Zau2 gwo3 tau4 laa3 maa3?*
 Go pass head SFP Q
 ‘Have (we) gone past (the place)?’
 – *mei6 jau5*
 not.yet have
 ‘Not yet/no.’[†]

An important observation follows from these six examples, that is, *jau5* ‘have’ in all six examples functions as a lexical verb meaning ‘to exist’ or ‘to possess’. For instance, in (19), the sentence literally means ‘he not possesses children’ where the subject ‘he’ is the possessor and the direct object ‘son-daughter’/ ‘children’ is the possessed, hence ‘he does not have children’; this is fully comparable to the meaning of ‘have’ in the English translation. In (22) the meaning of *jau5* is still ‘to possess’ although the subject is an inanimate one with an abstract property as the possessed entity, thus can be paraphrased as ‘the movie does not possess (any) attraction’ or ‘the movie is not attractive’. Example (26), on the other hand, does not show *jau5* ‘have’ scoping over the apparent subject *jan4* ‘people’ (cf. Huang’s 1990 analysis of Mandarin sentences involving *shì* ‘be’ and *yǒu* ‘have’). Interestingly, what (26) documents is that *mau5 jau5 jan4* ‘not have people’ can function as an indefinite pronoun similar to English ‘nobody’ (i.e., there exists no one) and hence is essentially associated to negative existence.¹⁷

Returning to the VP-neg question and answer in example (27). According to Holmberg’s (2015) typological analysis of yes-no questions and answers, Mandarin belongs to the class of languages where answers to yes-no questions – whether as A-not-A questions or particle questions – take the form of ‘verb-echo answers’. What this means is that the verb in the question is used as the affirmative answer, and the negative counterpart embeds the verb under the sentential negation. This is precisely what we see in (27). We can identify *jau5* ‘have’ as the verb in the yes-no question, partly because it is the only verbal element in the question, and the fact that *jau5* appears in the answer scoped under the negator *mau5* ‘not’ constitutes another piece of evidence for *jau5* ‘have’ to be a verb in the question, and in this case, the only lexical

¹⁷ I thank an anonymous reviewer for noting that though *mau5 jau5 jan4* can be translated as ‘nobody’ in English (and *jau5 jan4* as ‘somebody’), there are structural restrictions which are not found in English. For instance, as observed in Huang (1990) about Mandarin, *mau5 jau5 jan4* ‘nobody’ and *jau5 jan4* ‘somebody’ cannot appear as object to a verb, as illustrated below:

- (i) Mandarin
- a. *Méi-yǒu rén dǎ tā*
not-have people hit 3.SG
‘Nobody hit him/her.’
 - b. **Tā dǎ méi-yǒu rén*
3.SG hit not-have people
Intended: ‘S/he did not hit anyone.’
 - c. *Yǒu rén dǎ tā*
have people hit 3.SG
‘Somebody hit him/her.’
 - d. **Tā dǎ-le yǒu rén*
3.SG hit-PFV have people
Intended: ‘S/he hit somebody.’
- (ii) Gaozhou Yue
- a. *Mau5 jau5 jan4 daa2 kui3*
not have people hit 3.SG
‘Nobody hit him/her.’
 - b. **Kui3 daa2 mau5 jau5 jan4*
3.SG hit not have people
Intended: ‘S/he did not hit anyone.’
 - c. *Jau5 jan4 daa2 kui3*
have people hit 3.SG
‘Somebody hit him/her.’
 - d. **Kui3 daa2 jau5 jan4*
3.SG hit-PFV have people
Intended: ‘S/he hit somebody.’

verb. Therefore, the structure *mau5 jau5* in these examples should be [not [V_{HAVE}]], which contradicts description in Chronicle that *mau5 jau5* ‘not have’ is another negator in GZY similar to Mandarin *méi(yǒu)*.

If the analysis of *mau5 jau5* as [not [V_{HAVE}]] is on the right track, we expect this structure to hold whenever the *mau5 jau5* complex appears in actual speech. This expectation is largely borne out in fieldwork production data. In the ten hours of spontaneous speech recorded over a week, 474 instances of *mau5* were found, including 37 tokens where *mau5* is immediately followed by *jau5*. Among the tokens of *mau5 jau5* a majority of cases involve negative existential (28-29) and negative possessive (30) constructions.

- (28) *Keoi5 mau5 jau5 ziulpaai6 daa2 ceot1 lei4 gaa3 nel*
 3.SG not have signboard place out come SFP SFP
 ‘It [the restaurant] doesn’t have a signboard out there.’ (GZY[†] [U])
- (29) *Faat3leot6soeng6 mau5 jau5 kwailding6 go3 dou1 mau5 baan6faat3*
 legally not have restriction SFP all not way
 ‘Whatever has no legal restriction (we) have no way.’ (GZY[†] [U])
- (30) *Gei2 mau5 jau5 zi2 de6 go3*
 this/now not have seeds SFP SFP
 ‘It [the tree] doesn’t have seeds now.’ (GZY[†] [B])

Nonetheless, there are six instances of *mau5 jau5* where *jau5* is not the only predicate and is potentially not the predicate targeted for negation. These are presented in (31-36).

- (31) *Mau5 jau5 lyun4hai6*
 not have contact
 ‘Haven’t contacted (someone) (for long).’ (GZY[†] [A])
- (32) *Gong2 Baak6 hou2ci5 mau5 jau5 gong2 boulsong2faan6 wo3*
 speak Cantonese seem not have say bousongfaan SFP
 ‘Cantonese doesn’t seem to have the expression, *bousongfaan*.’ (GZY[†] [M1])
- (33) *Di1 mai5 mau5 jau5 sei1jiu3 hou2 dol sei2 gaa3 wo3*
 that rice not have need very much water SFP SFP
 ‘That rice doesn’t need a lot of water.’ (GZY[†] [A])
- (34) *Gong2 waa6 mau5 jau5 haan6 kau3 gaa3*
 speak say not have restricted purchase SFP
 ‘(It) said there isn’t restricted purchase.’ (GZY[†] [F5])
- (35) *Ging2jin4 mau5 jau5 hoi1mun4 go3!*
 unexpectedly not have open SFP
 ‘It isn’t open, I’m surprised!’ (GZY[†] [A])
- (36) *Go3 neoi2 mau5 jau5 gaau3-dou3 tiu3mou5 de6*
 CL daughter not have teach-CPL dancing SFP
 ‘My daughter isn’t teaching dancing.’ (GZY[†] [F6])

The demographic background of these tokens is noteworthy: these sentences are either produced by a particular speaker (speaker [A]) or by speakers who are multi-dialectal in neighbouring Chinese varieties – [M1] is a Hakka-Yue bilingual, [F5] and [F6] also speak another neighbouring Yue variety in Maoming city and Huazhou respectively. The issue of multilingualism and its impact on speaker's linguistic competence in Gaozhou Yue could be crucial, but that will be reserved for further language acquisition and language contact research. For the current discussion, the crucial finding is the ambiguity that these potential counterexamples present – the status of *jau5* as a lexical verb or part of the negator – often depends on the interpretation. Example (31) is a clear case in point. One way to parse the sentence is to treat *jau5* 'have' as part of the negator and *lyun4hai6* 'contact' as the predicate, the meaning is then '(X) have not contacted (Y)' where *mau5 jau5* 'not have' is a perfective negator. Alternatively, *lyun4hai6* 'contact' can be analysed as a nominal (cf. the ambiguity with English *contact*), in which case the only verb that *lyun4hai6* 'contact' can be an argument to would be *jau5* 'have', and the meaning is understood as 'there exists no contact (between X and Y)'. The status of *jau5* is equally ambiguous between an existential reading and an eventive reading in (32-34), for similar reasons.

The genuinely problematic cases for the generalisation are (35-36). In both instances, the constituent following *mau5 jau5* is apparently the predicate – *hoi1mun4* literally 'open-door', here it means idiomatically that the shop is open in (35), and (36) the predicate is *gaau3* 'to teach' which is aspectually marked with the completive marker *dou3*. Therefore, in these two examples, *jau5* would not be the predicate but an auxiliary verb. Taking the data from both the official documentation and the spontaneous speech recorded in the field into account, the status of *mau5 jau5* as another standard negator is rather weak, though still cannot be definitively ruled out. Therefore, I argue that *mau5* is the only standard negator in GZY and *jau5* 'have' is not part of the negator but a lexical verb, hence *mau5 jau5* only appears in negative existential and negative possessive constructions.

Further support can be found based on the sentences documented with *jau5* 'have' in affirmative contexts. Of the 88 instances of *jau5* documented from the field, 55 of these tokens appeared in either an existential or possessive construction, as illustrated in (37).

- (37)a. **Jau5** waa6 zau6 mau5 zi6
have speech just not word
'(It) can be spoken but not written.'[†]
- b. Lou5 zung1 cing1 dou1 **jau5** de6
old middle young also have DE
'(You) have got people of all ages.'[†]
- c. Gwong2zau1waa6 si1si3 **jau5** hong6gai1 nil go3
Guangzhou.Cantonese where have maiden.chicken this CL
ci4 gaa3
expression SFP
'Where on earth would Guangzhou Cantonese have such an expression as *honggai*?'[†]
- d. Ngo5 **jau5** sap6-gei2 nin4 mau5 caam1jyu5 de6
I have ten-some year not participate DE
'I have not been participating for more than ten years.'
- e. Ngo5 mau5 dei1 dim2zi2 **jau5** jat1 bun2
I not know how have one CL
'I don't know how come I have a (copy of the book).'

The remainder of the occurrences of *jau5* partly concerned some lexicalised expressions – for example, *jau5 di1* ‘have some’ meaning ‘a bit’ and *jau5 si4* ‘have time’ meaning ‘sometimes’ – which are also common expressions in standard Cantonese. But there are another seven instances of *jau5* co-occurring with other predicates; (38) presents some of the examples.

- (38)a. *Gei2 ci3 mau5 dei1 *(jau5) pung3-soeng5 nei5 go3*
 this time not know have meet-up you SFP
 ‘(We) didn’t know we would run into you this time.’[†]
- b. *Zing3fu2 *(jau5) bei2 di1 cin4 lei4 bong1bou2 haa5*
 Government have give some money come help a.bit
go3 maa3?
 SFP Q
 ‘Did the government give (you) some subsidy?’
- c. *Jau5 loi4 wan2-gwo3 nei5 maa3?*
 have come find-EXP you Q
 ‘Has (he) contacted you?’[†]
- d. *Zi1hau6 sin1 jau5 jyut6 naau6 jyut6 lit6 de6*
 afterward then have more argue more heated DE
 ‘It then became a more heated debate.’[†]

In (38a) and (38b), the presence of *jau5* is obligatory for the well-formedness of the sentence, and in (38c) and (38d), *jau5* produces an emphatic effect on the realisation of the situation of ‘contacting you’ and ‘the debate becoming more heated’ respectively. This observation with affirmative sentences confirms the analysis of the negative examples in (31-36) that *jau5* is a verbal elements which expresses the realisation of a situation. As a lexical verb, *jau5* describes the existence or possession of an entity; as an auxiliary, as in (38), it emphasises on the existence or realisation of the situation described by the predicate.

3.3 *Mau5* and other auxiliaries

Examining beyond *mau5 jau5*, empirical data have also shown that *mau5* can not only negate predicates of almost all situation types (see section 2.2 and 3.1), but also other auxiliaries than *jau5* ‘have’. Firstly, *mau5* can negate *hai6* ‘be’ in contrastive focus constructions as exemplified in (39). In both (39a) and (39b), the proposition in the matrix clause has been negated by *mau5* which is immediately followed by *hai6* ‘be’ to mark that proposition to be false, while the subordinate clause stands in contrast to the matrix clause as affirmative. Note that *hai6* ‘be’ can be optional. In (39b), *hai6* only appears in the negative matrix clause, but not in the affirmative subordinate clause. Whereas in (39c), the matrix clause is affirmative and the subordinate clause is negated by *mau5*, but neither of the clauses is marked by *hai6*.

- (39) *Mau5* and contrastive focus construction
- a. *Mau5 hai6 tit3lou6, hai6 goulcuk1*
 not be railway be highway
 ‘(It) isn’t railway, it’s highway.’[†]
- b. *Mau5 hai6 ngo5.dei6 bun2gwok3 gaa3 wo3, ngoi6gwok3*
 not be 1.PL home.country SFP SFP overseas
go3
 SFP
 ‘It’s brought back from overseas, not from our country.’[†]
- c. *Keoi ho2ning4 dei6 jat1 daai6 zau6 mau5*

3.SG possible number one big and not
dei6 ji6 daai6
 number two big
 ‘He may be the biggest not the second biggest.’[†]

A similar observation has been made with adjectival constructions which can be negated by *mau5* but is only optionally marked by *hai6*. In (40a) and (40b), *hai6* precedes the negated adjectival phrase (e.g., *mau5 tung5* ‘not same’, *mau5 hou2* ‘not good’), but its presence is not obligatory. In (30c), for instance, the subject is directly predicated by the negative adjectival phrase, similar to its Mandarin counterpart in (41a) but unlike standard Cantonese as illustrated in the Hong Kong Cantonese sentence in (41b).

- (40)a. *Jau5 di1 cung6.jam1 hai6 mau5 tung4 gaa3*
 have some heavy.sound be not same SFP
 ‘Some stressed sounds are not the same.’[†]
- b. *Jau5 gou1cuk1 hai6 mau5 hou2 de6 go3*
 have highway be not good DE SFP
 ‘It is no good to have highway.’[†]
- c. *Keoi5 san1tai2 mau5 gei2 hou2*
 3.SG body not quite good
 ‘She is not very healthy.’[†]
- (41)a. *Tā shēntǐ bù (shì) tài hǎo*
 3.SG body not be very good
 ‘S/he is not very healthy.’ (Mandarin)
- b. *Keoi5 san1tai2 m4 *(hai6) gei2 hou2*
 3.SG body not be quite good
 ‘S/he is not very healthy.’ (HKC)

While a thorough analysis of the structural properties of Gaozhou Yue *hai6* ‘be’ would go beyond the scope of the present discussion, a preliminary analysis of such a pattern could be that *hai6* in Gaozhou Yue carries an emphatic function in both focus and attributive constructions, hence its optionality. But the key fact to note in the data above is that *mau5* is capable to co-occur with other auxiliaries than *jau5* ‘have’ (see example 39, and shortly in example 42).

Further empirical evidence also demonstrates that *mau5* can negate modal auxiliaries, such as *wui5* ‘will’, *sai2* ‘need to’, and *ho2nang4* ‘possible’¹⁸, as presented in (42). It is worth noting that *mau5 jau5* has not been documented to appear with any of these modal auxiliaries. *Jau5* alone could only appear with *ho2nang4* in affirmative sentences as (43).¹⁹

¹⁸ *Ho2nang4* in Gaozhou Yue, similar to standard Cantonese *ho2nang2* and Mandarin *kěnéng*, can be taken as both a nominal meaning ‘possibility’ and an adjective meaning ‘possible’. This fluidity of grammatical categories is well-known in Chinese morphosyntax, and is also seen when comparing the gloss for *ho2nang4* in (42c) and (43).

¹⁹ I thank an anonymous reviewer for raising the point of whether modals or other auxiliaries may intervene between *mau5* and *jau5*, the possibility of which would show whether *mau5 jau5* is monomorphemic. The data show that modals can intervene between *mau5* and *jau5* as illustrated below. Therefore, the analysis that *mau5* alone is the standard negator should stand.

- (i) *Mau5 ho2nang4 jau5 jan4 seon3*
 not possible have people believe

(42) *Mau5* and modal auxiliaries

- a. *Ngo5 zau6 mau5 wui5 coi2 keoi5 wo3*
 I then not will care 3.SG SFP
 ‘I will ignore him.’[†]
- b. *Keoi5 go3 mau5 sai2 nei5 gaau1 wui2 fai3 go3*
 3.SG CL not need you pay club fee SFP
 ‘His doesn’t require you to pay membership fee.’[†]
- c. *Keoi5 zik1si2 haau2 San3ji4 go2 go3 jik6*
 3.SG even sit.for.the.exam Xinyi that CL also
mau5 ho2nang4 zou6 dak1 dou2
 not possible do able CPL
 ‘Even if he sit for the exam in Xinyi he cannot possibly handle it.’[†]

- (43) *Jau5 ho2nang4 keoi5 goi2 de6*
 have possibility 3.SG change DE
 ‘Maybe it has changed.’[†]

Based on the three pieces of evidence presented in section 3, it is evident that, first, *mau5 jau5* ‘not have’ is not a monomorphemic negator; *mau5* alone is the standard negator in Gaozhou Yue, and where *mau5* occurs with *jau5* ‘have’, the latter is either a verb or auxiliary which *mau5* negates. Secondly, *mau5* is not really the counterpart of Mandarin *méi(yǒu)*. *Mau5* is a more general negator than *méi(yǒu)* as it can not only negate *jau5* and almost all kinds of predicates, but also other auxiliaries which are known to be compatible only with *bù* in Mandarin.

4. CONCLUDING REMARKS

To summarise, this paper has introduced an under-studied and under-documented Yue variety spoken in Gaozhou. The official description in the *Gaozhou County Chronicle* has drawn preliminary correspondence between the ‘negators’ of GZY – *mau5* and *mau jau5* – and Mandarin *méiyǒu*. However, through further testification from systematic acceptability judgment results and field-recorded production data, the paper has addressed the two research questions brought up in example (3) and put forward two major claims. Firstly, while *mau5* resembles *méi(yǒu)* in having restriction in co-occurring with viewpoint aspect markers except experiential aspect, taking situation aspect into consideration, *mau5* differs substantially from *méi(yǒu)* in being largely compatible with types of predicates (except the marginality in appearing with achievements). Second, the paper has clarified on the structural status of *mau5* and *mau5 jau5* based on (i) the general marginality of *mau5 jau5* in verbal negation (see section 2 and 3.1), (ii) the interchangeability of *mau5* and *mau5 jau5* being limited to negative existential or possessive constructions (see section 3.2), and (iii) the possibility of *mau5* co-occurring with other auxiliaries than *jau5* ‘have’ (see section 3.3).

On the one hand, the resemblance between GZY and Mandarin negation may be unexpected and pose substantial challenge to traditional understanding that viewpoint aspectual restriction in Chinese negation may be attributed to the possible division of labour between different standard negators, as in Mandarin *bù* and *méi(yǒu)*, since the same aspectual restriction is now found in Gaozhou Yue with only one standard negator, *mau5*. However, taking a broader

[†] ‘It is impossible for anyone to believe (it).’[†]

typological view, the data presented in the paper actually shows that Gaozhou Yue and Beijing Mandarin both display the same paradigmatic asymmetry documented in Miestamo (2005) and Miestamo & van der Auwera (2011) by having fewer aspectual distinctions under negation (see also Matthews 1990 and Schmid 1980 for related discussion on the asymmetric marking of perfective and imperfective aspect in affirmative and negative sentences). Thus, the paper has not only opened up the discussion on microvariation within Chinese varieties in terms of negation²⁰ and offered important empirical findings for further formal analysis of the structural similarities between GZY and Mandarin (and possibly other Chinese varieties), but more importantly contributed to bridging the Chinese negation puzzle with the wider typological picture established in the field for investigations into the implications that having one standard negator as opposed to multiple may have on other parts of the grammatical system.

²⁰ Similar negation systems to Gaozhou Yue have been documented in Zhang (2002) in other southern Chinese varieties, such as, Yulin Yue. I thank an anonymous reviewer for pointing this out, and for drawing wider implications for the empirical discussion presented in this paper.

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