

CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSION

This study of Tai Lue particles in Donchai village, Pau district, Nan province shows that there are three status particles, eleven question particles, and nineteen mood particles. The status particles reflect the status of age, sex, and politeness or impoliteness throughout the conversation. To use them appropriately the speaker should consider all these conditions.

The question particles mark interrogation to an utterance. Ten question particles require a response from the audience, whereas, only one question particle is applied when the speaker talks to himself. Most Tai Lue particles expect to have a positive answer. The question particles / la^2 /, / k^2 /, / hu^1 /, and / na^2 / do not show a clear expectation of either a positive response or a negative response. The question particle / la^5 / echoes back a previous question in a reciprocal fashion. No question particles involve time except / la^2 / . Some question particles have overlapping functions, for instance, question particles / ka^2 /, / ja^2 /, and / $\text{m}^2 \text{ca}^3$ / vary in degree of doubt about the statement whereas / $\text{m}^2 \text{ca}^3$ / and / ja^2 / show decreasing degrees of doubt respectively.

Another couple of question particles which overlap are /kɔ̃²/, and /hu:¹/. They are different in that /hu:¹/ marks curiosity on the part of the speaker.

The group of mood particles indicate attitudes, feelings, and opinions towards an event or a hearer. For instance, the mood particles /kɔ̃n²/ shows a feeling of largeness or greatness in a comparison, /ni²/ expresses contradiction, /həj⁶/ shows familiarity or friendship, etc. Some particles have overlapping functions e.g the mood particles /ɔ̃²/, /æ²/, /nɔ̃²/, and /waj⁴/ emphasize the statement while the mood particles /hu⁵/, /ɔ̃⁵/, and /wa²/ show contradiction. The explanation of the differences has been previously presented.

The appearance of Tai Lue co-occurring particles is restricted in that those particles which have contrary functions will not co-occur, and also those which have a certain limited boundary of meaning will not co-occur. A Tai Lue status particles of never co-occurs with another status particle but will co-occur with mood particles. Most of question particles can co-occur with status particles, with mood particles, and with other question particles. The only question particle which never co-occurs with other particles is /[?]i:³[?]/. The mood particles appear with every class of particle. There is only one mood particle that never co-occurs in my data. It is /næ²/.

The phonological conditions which effect and result from the alternative forms are tone changing, vowel changing, vowel lengthening, glottalization, and assimilation. Many of the particles have variant forms that differ in tone, glottalization or vowel

length. Some of these variant forms have a variety of shades of functions. The basic form / $l\sigma^4$ / shows a mild request and / $l\sigma^5$ / contrasts with the addressee's opinion. The / $n\sigma^{2?}$ / emphasizes the utterance while the form / $n\sigma^{2?}$ / asks for agreement and / $n\sigma^4$ / is asked directly of oneself. The / ka^2 / is applied in an imperative whereas / $ka^{2?}$ / expresses uncertainty and / ka^3 / shows certainty along with complete confidence. Some variant forms do not change the function or increase the feeling of the speaker. We can say that they are in free variation. They are / $l\alpha^{2?}/\sim/l\alpha^{5?}/$, / $n\alpha^2/\sim/n\alpha^2$ /, / $n\sigma^6/\sim/n\sigma^5/\sim/n\sigma^4$ /, and / $na^2/\sim/na^2$ /.

In this study, the tones of the particles, including their variant forms, cover all sixemic tones of Tai Lue at Donchai village. That is they have tone 1 (35) mid-rising tone with allotone (55) rising level tone, tone 2 (34) mid-high tone, tone 3 (41) high falling tone, tone 4 (44) high level tone, tone 5 (22) low level tone, and or tone 6 (21) low falling tone.

According to this study the particles add colour to the utterance. They signal attitudes, satisfaction, dissatisfaction, feelings, familiarity, and the estimation of the speaker of events or the audience as mentioned previously. In the discussion of co-occurrence, Tai Lue final particles form independent functions as well as emphasis to others. Further study of final particles may also compare to other Tai languages.