AFFIXATION AND COMPOUNDING IN HAKKA

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Abstract
This paper aims to present the internal structures of words in the Hakka language. Similar to other languages, affixation and compounding are outstanding in Hakka. In general, prefixes and suffixes are bound morphemes which do not occur independently, but in Hakka they sometimes appear as independent forms. Apart from single words, identifying compound words is of particular interest. Compound nouns can be made up of two or three words (characters) which may be a noun, adjective or verb. The results found that some prefixes or suffixes have no meaning such as the prefix ʔa which is used with kinship or address terms. The most interesting suffixes are used with animal gender (ku ‘male’, ma ‘female’, and kuŋ ‘male’) and in some cases the meaning is not related to the gender of the animal but is merely a component of those morphemes. Such examples are kiŋ ma ‘ginger’ and ha kuŋ ‘shrimp’.

Keywords
affixation, prefixes, suffixes, compound words, Hakka

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AFIJACIÓN Y COMPOSICIÓN EN HAKKA

Resumen

Este trabajo tiene como objetivo presentar la estructura interna de las palabras en el idioma Hakka. Al igual que en otras lenguas, la afijación y la composición son excepcionales en esta lengua. En general, los prefijos y sufijos son morfemas concatenados que no ocurren de manera independiente, pero en Hakka a veces aparecen como formas independientes. Además de palabras sueltas, la identificación de palabras compuestas es de particular interés. Los nombres compuestos pueden estar formados por dos o tres palabras (caracteres) que pueden ser un sustantivo, un adjetivo o un verbo. Los resultados muestran que algunos prefijos o sufijos no tienen significado, como el prefijo ʔa₁, que se utiliza con los términos de parentesco o de dirección. Los sufijos más interesantes se utilizan con el género de los animales (ku³ 钩 ‘masculino’, ma² 姬 ‘femenino’, y kuŋ¹ 公 ‘masculino’) y, en algunos casos, el significado no está relacionado con el género del animal, sino que es meramente un componente de esos morfemas. Ejemplos tales son kioŋ¹ ma² 姜 ‘jenjibre’ y ha² kuŋ¹ 蝦公 ‘camarón’.

Palabras clave
afijación, prefijos, sufijos, palabras compuestas, Hakka

1. Introduction

Publications dealing with Hakka grammar are quite rare. Previous works have tended to investigate the phonology of Hakka dialects, including Meixian, Xingning, and Jieyang Hakka which are spoken in Thailand and researchers can find good informants giving data (Saengtummachai 2003; Ungsitipoonporn 2007, 2009; So-Bha 2001; Wongwantanee 1984; Shiwaruangrote 2008). One important reason why grammars of other Chinese dialects including Hakka are not interesting or not available is that those Chinese dialects have only spoken language. When they read the Chinese characters in Mandarin they can pronounce in their pronunciation. So the grammar of written language is not different from modern standard Chinese or Mandarin. In fact each Chinese dialect group has many sub-dialects and some details are different.
2. Hakka language and Hakka speakers

Hakka belongs to Hakka group of seven Chinese groups (Mandarin, Wu, Xiang, Gan, Min, Hakka or Kejia, and Yue). According to Luo Xianglin (1933), ancestors of Hakka group originally migrated from the Central Plains to south China during several periods in the past so that now Hakka speakers are scattered in many provinces in southern China such as Guangdong, Guangxi, Fujian, Jiangxi, Hunan, Hainan, Sichuan, and Taiwan (cited from Yan 2006: 166). Hakka speakers in Thailand mostly came from Guangdong province but have many sub-dialects. Meixian and Hongshun sub-dialects are the most common. The usage described in this work is that of Meixian Hakka spoken in Bangkok so we can call this Bangkok Hakka. The situation of Hakka in Thailand is endangered now. Although Hakka descendants are large in number, most cannot speak their mother tongue. Only the elderly can provide good data.

3. Description and explanation

This article is part of my research results in the project of “The Hakka grammar as spoken in Bangkok” (Ungsitipoonporn 2013). This paper is intended to describe the Hakka grammar of current spoken language especially word formation by compounding and affixation. The objective is to describe the affixation and compounding of Bangkok Hakka from my data collected from several contexts and conversations, focusing on colloquial language pronounced by the Hakka speakers who came from Meixian and have lived in Bangkok for a long time. The Chinese characters that are used together with IPA (International Phonetic Alphabet) mean they are pronounced the same as or similar to the informant pronunciation.

4. Compound words in Hakka

A compound word is combined of two or more independent morphemes to make a single word. Its meaning is sometimes predictable but sometimes may not be. The
compounding can be both nouns and verbs. For examples, pak⁵ kuŋ¹ 伯公 ‘father’s brother and father’s father = god of land’ and mien⁴ sam¹ 面衫 ‘outside – shirt = coat’ are compound nouns because they refer to one single word.

In Hakka, there are several compound nouns and verbs. We classify the compounding according to their properties which mean their parts of speech.

4.1 Compound nouns

Compound nouns are composed of at least two free morphemes. They function as single nouns and act as head nouns in noun phrases. The internal compositions have several types as follows:

Examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Noun + Noun</th>
<th>Noun or N</th>
<th>N+N</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) tsok⁵ pu⁴</td>
<td>桌布 “ผู้ปูโต”</td>
<td>‘table cloth’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>table + cloth</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) maw¹ kio⁵</td>
<td>毛脚 “ราหู”</td>
<td>‘hair root’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>hair + foot</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) tʰien¹ kiŋ¹</td>
<td>天弓 “รุ้งกินน้ำ”</td>
<td>‘rainbow’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>sky + bow</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4) tʰew⁴ jin²</td>
<td>豆仁 “เมล็ดถั่ว”</td>
<td>‘bean seed’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>bean + seed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5) ηa² sot⁵</td>
<td>牙刷 “แปรงสีฟัน”</td>
<td>‘a toothbrush’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>tooth + brush</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(6) ηiet⁵ piaŋ⁴</td>
<td>月 “มนสำหรับให้พระจันทร์”</td>
<td>‘moon cake’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>moon + cake</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(7) tsu³ ηin²</td>
<td>主人 “เจ้าของบ้าน”</td>
<td>‘owner of the house’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>owner + person</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Their structure can be written as follows: modifier (n.) + Head N.

In the examples above, the right side morpheme functions as the head noun and the left side morpheme function as the modifier.

### Adjective + Noun → Noun or Adj. + N → N

1. **pʰak⁶ maw¹**  
   白毛 “ผมขาว” ‘grey hair’
   white + hair

2. **hon² sam¹**  
   寒衫 “เสื้อคลุมกันหนาว” ‘overcoat’
   cold + coat

3. **pʰak⁶ tsuk⁵**  
   白粥 “ข้าวต้ม” ‘porridge’
   white + porridge

4. **tsʰon² tsʰiek⁶**  
   长席 “ผ้าเช็ดตัว” ‘long mat’
   long + mat

5. **saŋ¹ kuo²**  
   生果 “ผลไม” ‘fruit’
   raw + fruit

Their structure can be written as follows: modifier (adj.) + Head N.

In the examples above, the noun on the right side functions as the head noun and the adjective on the left side function as the modifier.

### Verb + Noun → Noun or V+N → N

1. **hok⁶ kaw³**  
   學校² “โรงเรียน” ‘school’
   study + school

2. **hok⁶ tʰon² ha¹**  
   學堂 下 “โรงเรียน” ‘school’
   study + room for specific purpose

3. **son⁴ mieŋ⁴ sin¹ saŋ¹**  
   禱命先生 “หมอเจ้า” ‘fortune-teller’
   tell one’s fortune + teacher/ master

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² Literary language.
Their structure can be written as follows: modifier (v.) + Head N.
In the examples above, the verb functions as the modifier which is placed on the left side of the head noun.

In addition, there can be three syllables of compound nouns as follows:

1. Noun + Noun + Noun → Noun หรือ น + น + น → น
   - (1) ke² maw¹ saw⁴ 鸡毛扫 “ทิ้งขนไก่” ‘a broom from chicken+ hair + sweep (feathers for cleaning’
   - (2) fu⁴ tʰew² taj⁴ 裤头带 “เข็มขัด” ‘belt’
   - (3) muk⁵ mi² maw¹ 目眉毛 “หั่น” ‘eyebrow’
   - (4) tsañ⁵ kut⁵ 脚蹬骨 “หัวเข่า” ‘heel’
   - (5) tsip⁵ maw¹ 目汁毛 “ขนตา” ‘eyelashes’

Noun + Noun + Verb → Noun or น + น + ว → น
   - (1) pa² ɲi⁴ si³ 抜耳屎 “ไม่ให้หูรับเสียง” ‘ear picker’
   - rake up + ear + excrement
4.2 Compound verbs

Compound verbs are composed of two morphemes. They seem to be a verb plus object and are corresponding to an intransitive verb in English.

Examples:

Verb + noun (object)

(1) tsi⁴ suj³ 浸水 ‘soak’ ‘แชจุม’
soak + water
(2) tʰat⁵ ʔin² 告人 ‘tell obvious lies’ ‘โกหก’
lie + human
(3) kʰon⁴ pʰiæn⁴ 看病 ‘go to see a doctor’ ‘ไปพบแพทย์’
see + illness
(4) laj² tʰien² 犁田 ‘to plow’ ‘ไถนา’
plow + farmland
(5) lok⁶ fo⁴ 落货 ‘to carry, to load on (ve-)
drop + goods hicles, animals' back’
(6) mi⁴ suj³ 潜水 ‘to dive’ ‘ดิ่ง’
dive + water
(7) hoŋ⁴ tsʰoŋ² 蹣床 ‘to rise from bed’ ‘ตื่นได้แล้ว (สุขภาพดี ATA)’

raw + to eat + melon
water + to steam + air
get up+ bed

(8) pot⁵ muŋ⁴ 发梦 ‘to dream’ ฝัน
produce + dream

Verb + Verb or verb complement

(1) fat⁵ sin⁴ 发性 ‘angry’ โกรธ
produce + temper
(2) tʰew¹ kʰon⁴ 偷看 ‘to peep’ แอบดู
steal + see
(3) tʰaŋ¹ taw⁴ 听到 ‘to hear’ ไดยิน
hear + used as a verb complement to indicate the result of an action

4.3 Compound adjectives

Compound adjectives are composed of at least two morphemes which are adjectives plus verbs or nouns. This process can produce some new adjectives.

Examples:

(1) tʰaj⁴ foŋ¹ 大方 ‘magnanimous’ ใจกว้าง
big + locality
(2) haw³ tʰaŋ¹ 好听 ‘melodious’ ไพเราะ
good + hear
(3) haw³ sit⁶ 好食 ‘delicious’ อร่อย
good + eat
(4) tʰaj⁴ sit⁶ 太食 ‘greedy’ ตะกละ
greatest + eat
(5) tet⁵ ṇin² siak⁵ 得人惜 ‘lovely’ น่ารัก
gain + human + love
(6) tʰaj⁴ saŋ¹ 大声 ‘loud’ สยร
big + sound
5. Affixation

There are both prefixes and suffixes in Hakka language. In general, prefixes and suffixes are bound morphemes and do not occur independently. In Hakka, however, prefixes and suffixes may sometimes appear as independent forms but their meanings are not exactly the same when they act as prefixes or suffixes. For example, for the prefix law³, its literary meaning is “old” but when it functions as a prefix, its meaning is not related to ‘old’.

5.1 Prefixes in Hakka language

Prefix ?a¹ 阿 is a prefix used with kinship terms and person names to identify a closed relationship or to express intimacy with somebody.

Examples:
(1) ?a¹ pa¹ 阿爸 “爸” ‘father’
(2) ?a¹ me¹ 阿姆 “姆” ‘mother’
(3) ?a¹ ko¹ 阿哥 “哥” ‘older brother’
(4) ?a¹ saw³ 阿嫂 “嫂” ‘female in-law’
(5) ?a¹ kap⁵ 阿甲 “甲” ‘name of people’
(6) ?a¹ pʰo² 阿婆 “婆” ‘grandmother’
(7) ?a¹ tsi³ 阿姊 “姊” ‘older sister’
(8) ?a¹ pak⁵ 阿伯 “伯” ‘uncle’

Prefix ?an³ 怒 is placed before verbs or adjectives in order to emphasize a stronger meaning than normal.
Examples:

(1) ʔan³ sin¹ kʰu³ 惱辛苦 “สับสนเหลือเกิน” ‘so difficult’
(2) ʔan³ tuj⁴ 惱对 “สัมพันธ์เหลือเกิน” ‘so accidental’
(3) ʔan³ hiŋ⁴ 惱响 “รังการเหลือเกิน” ‘so loud’
(4) ʔan³ kʰoi² tson⁴ 惱强壮 “เข้มแข็งเหลือเกิน” ‘so strong’
(5) ʔan³ tiam³ 惱恥 “ดีจั่ว” ‘so calm’
(6) ʔan³ to¹ 惱多 “มากมายเหลือเกิน” ‘so much’
(7) ʔan³ ti³ tsʰien² 惱抵钱 “มีค่าเหลือเกิน” ‘so precious’
(8) ʔan³ tʰaj⁴ 惱大 “ใหญ่เหลือเกิน” ‘so big’
(9) ʔan³ tsʰaj⁴ tsʰaj⁴ 惱自在 “อิสระเหลือเกิน” ‘so free’
(10) ʔan³ kaw¹ 惱高 “สูงจัง” ‘so high’

Prefix law³ 老, has the literary meaning of “old” but when it functions as a prefix, its meaning has changed and is not related to the original. Occasionally, it means respect to someone or a senior person when it precedes kinship terms and nouns.

Examples:

(1) law³ pʰo² 老婆 “ภรรยา” ‘wife’
(2) law³ ŋin² 老人 “คนแก่” ‘old people’
(3) law³ pak⁵ 老伯 “คนแก่” ‘elderly’
(4) law³ kuŋ¹ 老公 “สามี” ‘husband’
(5) law³ tʰaj¹ 老弟 “น้องชาย” ‘younger brother’
(6) law³ moj⁴ 老妹 “น้องสาว” ‘younger sister’
(7) law³ sit⁶ 老实 “ซื่อสัตย์” ‘honest’
(8) law³ sin² 老成 “ระมัดระวัง” ‘careful’
(9) law³ sin¹ saŋ¹ 老先生 “คุณครูอาวุโส” ‘old teacher’

Prefix law⁴ 老, has no meaning in this situation but is used to complete a noun morpheme.
Examples:
(1) law⁴ haj³ 老蟹 "ปู" ‘crab’
(2) law⁴ fu³ 老虎 "เสือ” ‘tiger’
(3) law⁴ tsʰu³ 老鼠 “หู” ‘rat’

Prefix m̄² 唔 has a literary meaning of “not” and is used in a negation sentence. We called it a prefix when it precedes some verbs or adjectives, when it becomes a single noun.

Examples:
(1) m̄² kian⁴ 唔见 “ไม่ + ยืน = หาย” ‘lose’
not + see
(2) m̄² lan⁴ li⁴ 唔 伶俐 “ไม่ + สะอาด = สกปรก” ‘dirty’
not + bright
(3) m̄² tʰ.getLog³ 唔同 “ไม่ + เหมือน = แตกต่าง” ‘different’
not + same
(4) m̄² pʰian² 唔平 “ไม่ + เทียบ = ขรุขระ” ‘rough’
not + flat
(5) m̄² tsʰin¹ tsʰi³ 唔清楚 “ไม่ + ชัดเจน = ต้องคิด” ‘vague’
not + clear
(6) m̄² jaŋ² 唔赢 “ไม่ + ชนะ = แพ้” ‘to be defeated’
not + win
(7) m̄² jit⁵ joŋ⁴ 唔一样 “ไม่ + เหมือน = แตกต่าง” ‘different’
not + same
(8) m̄² woj⁴ nan² 唁会难 “ไม่ + ยาก = ง่าย” ‘easy’
not + difficult
(9) m̄² ki⁴ tet⁵ 唁记得 “ไม่ + จำได้ = ลืม” ‘forget’
not + remember
Prefix *jiw*¹ 有, has a literary meaning of “to have” but when it precedes a noun, it changes to an adjective.

Examples:

1. *jiw*¹ *tsʰien*² 有钱  “มีเงิน = รวย”  ‘rich’
   have + money
2. *jiw*¹ *pʰian*⁴ 有病  “มีโรค = ป่วย”  ‘sick’
   have + disease
3. *jiw*¹ *miaŋ*² 有名  “มีชื่อ = เป็นที่นิยม”  ‘famous’
   have + name

Prefix *fat*⁵ 发, has a literary meaning of “become, get into a certain state” but when it precedes a noun, it changes to a noun.

Examples:

1. *fat*⁵ *pʰian*⁴ 发病³  “ใคร = ไม่สบาย”  ‘to be ill’
   become or get + ill
2. *fat*⁵ *tsʰoʃ*² 发财  “ใคร = ร่ํารวย”  ‘get rich’

5.2 *Suffixes*

Suffixes used to identify gender have three forms. Suffixes *ku*³ 頭 and *kuŋ*¹ 公 are used to indicate male, while suffix *ma*² 嫡 is used to indicate female. In general a modifier in the Hakka language is placed on the left side of the head noun but only for the gender it is placed on the right side of the head noun so we classify it into suffixes class.

Examples:

N + suffix

1. *ke*¹ *ma*² 鸡 嫡  “ไก่새”  ‘hen’
   chicken + suffix (female)

---

³ Literary language.
Suffix ma² 嫩 has a meaning that is sometimes not related to gender but it is used to complete a noun.

Examples:

(1) kiŋ² ma²  姜嫳  “ชิง”  ‘ginger’

(2) taw¹ ma²  刀嫳  “ถิกิ้น”  ‘kitchen chopper’

(3) li² ma²  笠嫳  “จอบ”  ‘a bamboo hat’

(4) set⁵ ma²  虱嫳  “ก่อ”  ‘louse’
Suffix kuŋ¹ 公 has a meaning that is sometimes not related to gender but it is used to complete a noun.

Examples:
(1) ni² kuŋ¹ 蟲公 “มน” ‘ant’
(2) ha² kuŋ¹ 蝦公 “งู” ‘shrimp’
(3) san³ ha² kuŋ¹ 山蝦公 “แมงป่อง” ‘scorpion’
(4) hian³ kuŋ¹ 螃公 “ไสเดือน” ‘earthworm’

Suffix ku¹ 姑 has a meaning that is sometimes not related to gender but it is used to complete a noun.

Examples:
(1) si¹ ku¹ 須姑 “มวด” ‘moustache’
(2) nen⁴ ku¹ 乳姑 “เต้นนม” ‘breast’

Suffix ha¹ 下, when it follows a noun, has a meaning which is similar to indicating location and it acts as preposition.

Examples:
N + suffix
(1) wuk⁵ ha¹ (kʰua¹) 屋下 “(ที่) บ้าน” ‘(at) house’
(2) ṭam¹ ha¹ 庵下 “(ที่) วัด” ‘(at) temple’
(3) hok⁶ tʰɔŋ² ha¹ 学堂下 “(ที่) โรงเรียน” ‘(at) school’
Suffix ᵇe² 里 has a sound which is sometimes assimilated to the final consonant of the former syllable. It follows a noun and its meaning denotes the location. Its function is similar to a preposition.

Examples:

\[
\text{N} + \text{suffix } ᵇe² \text{ 里}
\]

(1) ka¹ ᵇe² 里  "นั้น"  ‘in a house’
(2) sim¹ (tu¹).COMP ᵇe² 里  "นั้น"  ‘in a heart’
(3) su³ ᵇe² 里  "นั้น"  ‘in a hand’
(4) san² ᵅe² 里  "นั้น"  ‘in the city’
(5) tʰoj⁴ ᵇe² 里  "นั้น"  ‘in a bag’
(6) ho² ᵇe² 里  "นั้น"  ‘in a river’
(7) tʰien² ne² 里  "นั้น"  ‘in a rice field’
(8) san¹ ᵇe² 里  "นั้น"  ‘in a rice field’
(9) wok⁶ ᵇe² 里  "นั้น"  ‘in a pan’
(10) su⁴ lim² me² 里  "นั้น"  ‘in a forest’
(11) suj³ ᵇe² 里  "นั้น"  ‘in water’

Suffix tʰew² 头 has a literary meaning of ‘head’ but when it follows a noun, its function changes to complete a noun morpheme.

Examples:

\[
\text{N} + \text{suffix } tʰew² \text{ 头}
\]

(1) kut⁵ tʰew² 头  "唵สุกต"  ‘bone’
(2) ṇjt⁵ tʰew² 头  "唵สุกต"  ‘sun’
(3) kuon⁴ tʰew² 头  "唵สุกต"  ‘tin, canister’
(4) kin¹ tʰew² 头  "唵สุกต"  ‘shoulder’
(5) kiok⁵ tʰew² 头  "唵สุกต"  ‘hoe’
(6) wok⁶ tʰew² 头  "唵สุกต"  ‘pan’
Examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N + suffix</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>η³ tsi³</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>tsʰi³ tsi³</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>sin² tsi³</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>jan⁴ tsi³</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>sin¹ ne³</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
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<td>lu² ṭe³</td>
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<td>wo² pit³ ṭe³</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>tsa¹ ṭe³</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>pʰan² ṭe³</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>kuo³ ṭe³</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>tʰu⁴ ṭe³</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>pʰon¹ ṭe³</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Suffix tsaj³ 仔 follows an adjective in order to complete a noun morpheme. Most of them mean female.

Examples:

adj. + suffix

(1) lien⁴ tsaj³ 靚仔 “หนุ่ม” ‘handsome man’
(2) lien⁴ moj⁴ tsaj³ 靚妹仔 “สาว” ‘beautiful girl’
(3) so² tsaj³ 傻仔 “คนก็” ‘stupid man’
(4) se⁴ tsaj³ 细仔 “เด็กชาย” ‘boy’
(5) moj⁴ tsaj³ 妹仔 “เด็กหญิง” ‘girl’

Suffix ko¹ 哥 follows a noun in order to complete a noun morpheme.

Examples:

(1) hew² ko¹ 猴哥 “ลิง” ‘monkey’
(2) wat⁶ ko¹ 鰕哥 “ปลาดุก” ‘catfish’
(3) wu¹ liaw⁴ ko¹ 乌鶇哥 “นกขุนทอง” ‘grackle’
(4) sa² ko¹ 蛇哥 “งู” ‘snake’
(5) se² lo² ko¹ 蜗螺哥 “หอยทาก” ‘garden snail’
6. Conclusion

Compounding in Hakka can be found as three types: compound nouns, compound verbs, and compound adjectives. Compound nouns are quite clear whereas compound verbs can be identified to be verb-object compounds. This study shows ten suffixes and seven prefixes. Some prefixes or suffixes have no meaning but functions to complete a noun morpheme. Some suffixes act as prepositions such as suffix ʔe² 里 and suffix ha¹ 下. The most interesting finding is that suffixes used to identify gender in Hakka have three morphemes. Suffixes ku³ 鍬 and kuŋ¹ 公 are used to indicate male while suffix ma² 嬢 is used to indicate female.

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