CHAPTER 4

INTERROGATIVES

4.0 Introduction

The Akha language has interrogative adjectives, interrogative adverbs and interrogative pronouns, all of which correspond to their counterparts in the English language, both in meaning and position in the syntactic structure. The function and structure of the Akha interrogative adjective *ʔàgɔ̄* directly corresponds to 'which' in English. Similarly, *ʔàjèmínē* and *ʔàsúyà* correspond to 'why' and 'who,' respectively. In addition to these question words, the Akha language has ten particles which mark different types of interrogative sentences: *tʰē* (~*dē*~*tʰè*~*dè*) *tʰā* (~*da*~*tʰà*~*dà*), *tʰɔ̄*, *nē*, *ā*, *ŋā*, *ɲā*, *ló*, *la*, and *lé*.

There are two kinds of interrogatives: yes-no questions and information questions. In the Akha language, those two sub-categories of interrogatives are distinguished by interrogative particles. The first seven particles, *tʰē* (~*dē*~*tʰè*~*dè*), *tʰā* (~*dā*~*tʰà*~*dà*), *ā*, *ŋā*, *ɲā* *tʰɔ̄*, and *nē,* are information question markers. They are labeled as 'inquisitive interrogative particles' in this paper. An interrogative sentence with one of these particles is asking for a new information.

The last three particles, *ló, la* and *lé* are yes-no question markers labeled as 'Yes-no interrogative particles' in this paper. An Akha speaker who asks a question using one of these particles is either trying to confirm some information of which he already knows partially, or simply asking for something that he wants. Actually, the last particle, *tʰǽ*, is not strictly a yes-no particle. It is rather a duplication particle, repeating the same question for a different addressee. Principally, it belongs to the

yes-no category, although sometimes it can be an inquisitive particle in terms of optional answers.

The syntactic structural difference between the two kinds of question is that every inquisitive interrogative sentence has an obligatory question word or two at the beginning, in addition to the interrogative particle that comes at the end of the sentence, but no yes-no interrogative sentence has a question word.

4.1 Inquisitive interrogatives

The seven inquisitive interrogative particles, $t^h\bar{e}$ ($\sim d\bar{e}$ $\sim t^h\grave{e}\sim d\grave{e}$), $t^h\bar{a}$ ($\sim d\bar{a}\sim t^h\grave{a}\sim d\grave{a}$), $\bar{a}$, $\eta\bar{a}$, $\eta\bar{a}$, $t^h\bar{\jmath}$ and $n\bar{\varepsilon}$, are the classifiers of the seven types of interrogative sentences. The difference between the two forms is in syntactic structure. The inquisitive interrogative sentence differs from the yes-no interrogative sentence in that it requires an obligatory interrogative word in the beginning part of the sentence. The trick is that when they do not co-occur with question words, the particles simply become non-interrogative realis sentence particles. However, this rule does not apply to the particles $t^h\bar{\jmath}$ and $n\bar{\varepsilon}$.

4.1.1 Inquisitive interrogative particle $t^h\bar{e}$ ($\sim t^h\grave{e}\sim d\bar{e}\sim d\grave{e}$) (075-2QIS)

In spoken Akha, question words such as $\mathit{Pas\acute{u}y\grave{a}}$ 'who,' $\mathit{Pad\mathit{\jmath}\grave{e}}$ 'what,' $\mathit{Pam^j\bar{a}}$ 'when,' $\mathit{Pag\acute{a}}$ 'where,' $\mathit{Pag\bar{\jmath}}$ 'which,' are often the first word of a sentence when two persons are engaged in a dialogue because, in Akha, first person and second person pronouns are seldom used in a dialogue between two parties as long as they are talking about themselves. They use a pronoun or a proper noun only when they switch to talk about a third party, but they use it for the first sentence only. However the use of pronouns is optional when three parties are involved in a conversation in which all the three parties are participants.

The fact that an Akha sentence does not have pronoun at subject and object position does not mean it does not indicate subject and object at all. Such a sentence is impossible in the Akha language. As explained previously, a particle can function as a marker of both subject and object. In other words, the Akha can read both subject and object in the underlying structure of the sentence as marked by the particle. This is somewhat difficult for outsiders.

The first particle to be analyzed is the second person inquisitive interrogative particle $t^h\bar{e}$. First, a sample sentence will be given to provide a general view of the nature of a $t^h\bar{e}$ interrogative sentence structure and the position of the particle in that sentence. After that, special attention will be given to the description of the functional components packed up in the particle, defining each component with an appropriate grammatical term.

(4.1.1)

?àgə̄	lɛ̄?	-ǎ	?í	$t^h\bar{e}$
Which	market	LOC	go	(075-2QIS)

Which market are you going to?

Example 4.1.1 is from a folktale entitled 'A little chicken who looked for her mother,' in 'Akha legends, stories and myths' (Lewis, 1989). In structure, an inquisitive interrogative sentence usually takes an obligatory question word immediately after the optional subject, followed by an optional locative and an obligatory transitive verb and ends with the inquisitive interrogative particle $t^h\bar{e}$.

Every interrogative particle is multi-functional in Akha grammar. The meaning and direction of an interrogative sentence are carried by the particle. The particle contains the information as to who is talking to whom about what, and in what tense is he doing the talking

The inquisitive interrogative particle $t^h\bar{e}$ has two functions, as summarized in Table 75. While it primarily occurs in positive sentences, it may also occur in negative sentences.

Particle		Functional Categories	Functional Loads
$t^h\bar{e}$ ($t^h\grave{e}$~$d\bar{e}$~$d\grave{e}$) (075-2QIS)	1	Sentence type	Inquisitive interrogative sentence marker
	2	Subject-Person	Second person subject marker
	3	Positive/Negative	Both
	4	Tense	Mid tone is present tense Low tone is past tense marker

Table 75. Functions of the inquisitive interrogative particle
$t^h\bar{e}$ ($t^h\grave{e}$~$d\bar{e}$~$d\grave{e}$) (075-2QIS)

The mid-tone particle $t^h\bar{e}$ and the low tone particle $t^h\grave{e}$ are to be counted as the same particle. However, tone difference represents tense difference. Mid-tone stands for present tense and low tone stands for past tense. As a rule, tones are to be taken as tense markers for the inquisitive particles $t^h\bar{e}$ and $t^h\bar{a}$. Hence, the question $\hat{r}\grave{a}\ g\bar{\jmath}\ l\acute{\varepsilon}a^{\prime}\hat{r}\acute{\imath}\ t^h\bar{e}$ means 'Which market are you going to' while $\hat{r}\grave{a}\ g\bar{\jmath}\ l\varepsilon\hat{r}\text{-}a^{\prime}\hat{r}\acute{\imath}\ t^h\bar{e}$ means 'Which market have you been to.'

There is a voicing assimilation rule that effects every aspirated initial consonant of all inquisitive interrogative particles. Consequently, the particle $t^h\bar{e}$ fluctuates to $d\bar{e}$ and the particle $t^h\grave{e}$ fluctuates to $d\grave{e}$, having voicing assimilation with the vowels of the preceding syllable, because almost all Akha syllables are open. Nowadays, most native speakers tend to pronounce $d\bar{e}$ for $t^h\bar{e}$ and $d\grave{e}$ for $t^h\grave{e}$.

This phonological assimilation rule poses a phonetic discrimination problem on the particle $t^h\bar{e}$. While this particle is pronounced as $d\bar{e}$, it is indistinguishable from hortatory particle $d\bar{e}$. In this case, the distinction is determined by syntactic rather than phonological rules. Native speakers distinguish them by the question words, which occur at the beginning of inquisitive interrogative sentences.

For further clarification, a question word usually co-occurs with an inquisitive interrogative particle, but it is mutually exclusive with any non-interrogative particle of the same sound. The question word determines whether the sentence particle is a question particle or not. With that apparent determination, interrogative *dē* and exhortative *dē* are clearly perceived as two different grammatical units, despite their phonetic similarity.

4.1.2 Inquisitive interrogative particle *tʰā* (~*tʰà~dā~dà*), (076-3QIS)

Like the inquisitive interrogative particle *tʰē* (*tʰè~dē~dè*), (075-2QIS), the position of the particle *tʰā* (~*tʰà~dā~dà*) (076-3QIS) is usually sentence final for simple interrogative sentences, unless the sentence is embedded in another sentence. Both particles are often found in near identical syntactic environments, the chief difference being that *tʰē* refers to second person and *tʰā* to third person.

(4.1.2)

ʔàjè	ə̀	gákɔʔ	bɔ̀dʒà	-ə̄	ʔɛ́	tʰā
What	VS2	matter	discuss	VS1	say	(076-3QIS)

What case does he say we are going to discuss?

Example 4.1.2 is taken from a dialogue between husband and wife in a folktale titled "The Story of a Thief." It is a question from the husband who was told that the village head was summoning every villager to a meeting. Once the subject, the village chief, is introduced, he is identified by particles in the following sentences, instead being mentioned as the subject of every sentence, until a third party joins in the storyline.

The inquisitive interrogative particle has two functions: inquisitive interrogative sentence marker and third person subject marker. This particle is not applicable as positive or negative sentence marker because it occurs in both, although it primarily occurs in positive interrogative sentences.

Particle	Functional Categories		Functional Loads
$t^h\bar{a}$ (~$t^h\grave{a}$~$d\bar{a}$~$d\grave{a}$) (076-3 QIS)	1	Sentence type	Inquisitive interrogative sentence marker
	2	Subject-Person	Third person subject marker
	3	Positive/Negative	Both
	4	Tense	Mid tone is present tense Low tone is past tense marker

Table 76. Functions of the inquisitive interrogative particle

$t^h\bar{a}$ (~$t^h\grave{a}$~$d\bar{a}$~$d\grave{a}$) (076-3QIS)

The only difference between $t^h\bar{a}$ and (~$t^h\grave{a}$) is tone. As in the case with $t^h\bar{e}$ and to $t^h\grave{e}$, tone difference means tense difference. The low tone on the particle $t^h\grave{a}$ is a past tense marker and the mid-tone on the particle $t^h\bar{a}$ is present tense marker. Hence, the interrogative sentence *Ɂà dʒè ə̀ gá kɔ̄Ɂ bɔ̀ dʒà ə̄ Ɂé $t^h\bar{a}$* means 'What is he going to discuss with us? and *Ɂà dʒè ə̀ gá kɔ̄Ɂ bɔ̀ dʒà ə̄ Ɂé $t^h\grave{a}$* means 'What was the case that he said we are going to discuss?'

It has been stated that, being conditioned by a voicing assimilation rule, the second person inquisitive interrogative particles $t^h\bar{e}$ and $t^h\grave{e}$ fluctuate to $d\bar{e}$ and $d\grave{e}$, respectively. By the same phonological rule, the third person inquisitive particles $t^h\bar{a}$ and $t^h\grave{a}$ fluctuates to $d\bar{a}$ and $d\grave{a}$. Nowadays, most native speakers tend to pronounce $d\bar{a}$ for $t^h\bar{a}$ and $d\bar{a}$ for $t^h\grave{a}$; this has no impact on differentiation between the two particles.

4.1.3 Generic inquisitive interrogative particle -$\bar{a}$ (077-3QIS)

The third person inquisitive interrogative particle -$\bar{a}$ (077-3QIS) is a final particle for questions that try to find out the identity of third party persons or things. Stative sentences are preemptive answers to -$\bar{a}$ type questions. Common questions of this type in daily life expressions are *Ɂà dʒè-a* 'What is it?' *Ɂà sú ɣà-ā* 'Who is it?' *Ɂà gā hm̀ Ɂé $t^h\bar{e}$* 'Which one?' etc.

(4.1.3)

> *ʔàdʒè -ā*
> What (077-3QIS)

What is [it]?

An Akha who has a good understanding of English would say that the Akha example and English free translation in example 4.1.3 are exactly corresponding in meaning and structural ordering. The difference is the representation of interrogative components. Speaking in terms of function, the particle *-ā* is grammatically equivalent to the last two words in English, *is it*. However, *-ā* is an independent multi-functional morpheme whereas *is* and *it* are two independent words, each having its own regular function.

Normally, an *-ā* question is short and simple. It never takes a verb. If it does, it can no longer use the same interrogative anymore. For instance, if a speaker want to add the verb *dʒà* 'eat' in the question *ʔà dʒè-ā* 'What is it?' he has to replace particle *-ā* with either *tʰē* or *tʰā*. In that case, the third person inquisitive interrogative sentence *ʔà dʒè-ā* 'What is it?' will be eventually changed to either a second person inquisitive interrogative sentence *ʔà dʒè dʒà tʰē* 'What are you eating?' or a third person inquisitive interrogative sentence *ʔà dʒè dʒà tʰā* 'What is he/she/they eating?'

The interrogative particle *-ā* has four functions, as summarized in Table 77.

Particle	Functional Categories		Functional Loads
-ā (077-3QIS)	1	Sentence type	Inquisitive interrogative sentence marker
	2	Subject-Person	Third person subject marker
	3	Positive/Negative	Positive sentence marker
	4	Tense	Present tense marker

Table 77. Functions of the inquisitive interrogative particle

-ā (077-3QIS)

4.1.4 Visual inquisitive interrogative particle *ŋā* (078-3QIS)

The structure and functions of the third person inquisitive interrogative particle *ŋā* (078-3QIS) are identical to those of the third person inquisitive interrogative particle *-ā* (077-3QIS), except that the former is more specific than the latter. The particle *ŋā* is used only for questions presupposing a visual experience, i. e., asking a person what he has seen. By contrast, the particle *-ā* must be understood as a generic interrogative particle, prompting any kind of answer so long as it corresponds to an inquisitive question.

A *ŋā* question is asked when the addressee is currently looking at or seeing something, and the answer is always marked by the first person visual declarative sentence particle *ŋā* (004-1PSS), reflecting visual realization. For instance, answers like *ʔá lɔ́ ŋā* '[It] is a fish,' or *ʔásì tʰì dʒè ŋā* '[It] is a kind of fruit' are possible corresponding answers to the question *ʔà dʒè-ŋā* 'What is [it]?' (see example 4.1.4)

(4.1.4)

> *ʔàdʒè   ŋā*
> What (078-3QIS)
>
> What is [it]?   (Question)
>
> *ʔálɔ́   ŋā*
> Snake (004-1PSS)
>
> [It] is a snake?   (Answer)
>
> *ʔásì   tʰì   dʒè   ŋā*
> Fruit one kind (004-1PSS)
>
> [It] is a kind of fruit.   (Answer)

The inquisitive interrogative particles *-ā* and *ŋā* function the same as far as simple inquiries such as *ʔà dʒè-ā* or *ʔà dʒè-ŋā*, both meaning 'What is it?' in English, which prompts simple stative answers such as *ʔá lɔ́ ŋā* 'It is a fish,' or *ʔásì tʰì dʒè*

ŋā 'It is a kind of fruit.' etc. However, when it comes to ask questions about events, the particle *-ā* is not applicable anymore (see example 4.1.5). When *ʔà dʒè dʒā́-ə̄ ŋā*, What are [they] doing?' is a correct usage, **ʔà dʒè dʒā́-ə̄-ā*, What are [they] doing?' is never used in either oral or written Akha.

(4.1.5)

> *ʔàdʒè   dʒā́ -ə̄   ŋā*
> What   do   VS1   (078-3QIS)

> What are [they] doing?

> **ʔàdʒè   dʒā́ -ə̄   -ā*
> What   do   VS1   (077-3QIS)

> What are [they] doing?

The visual inquisitive interrogative particle *ŋā* has four functions (see table 78).

Particle		Functional Categories	Functional Loads
ŋā (078-3QIS)	1	Sentence type	Inquisitive interrogative sentence marker
	2	Subject-Person	Third person subject marker
	3	Positive/Negative	Positive sentence marker
	4	Tense	Present tense marker

Table 78. Functions of the visual inquisitive interrogative

particle *ŋā* (078-3QIS)

4.1.5 Non-visual inquisitive interrogative particle *ɲā* (079-3QIS)

The third person visual inquisitive interrogative particle *ɲā* (079-3QIS) is another specific particle whose structure and function are the same as *-ā* and *ŋā*. The only contrast is that *ɲā* is used for questions which ask a person to answer on the basis of what he has realized through non-visual sensations. A *ɲā* question prompts answers based on tactile, auditory, olfactory, and gustatory sensations. Tactile perception could involve either bodily contact or mental feeling.

Just as the answers for the *ŋā* visual questions are marked by the visual declarative sentence particle *ŋā* (006-1NSS), answers for a *ɲā* question are also marked by the non-visual declarative particle *ɲā*. Thus, the respective corresponding answers for the questions *ʔàgá dè-ə̄ ɲā* 'Where did [the bee] sting [you]?' and *ʔà dʒè tʰé sá ɲā* 'What sound is it?' would be *ʔùdù-ə̃́ dè-ə̄ ɲā* '[It] stung me on the head' and *mìbə̄ʔ tʰésá ɲā* 'It is the sound of gunfire' see example (4.1.6)

(4.1.6)

  ʔàgá dè -ə̄ ɲā
  Where sting VS1 (079-3QIS)

  Where did [the bee] sting [you]?   (Question)

  ʔùdù -ə̃́ dè -ə̄ ɲā
  Head LM sting VS1 (006-1NSS)

  [It] stung me on the head.   (Answer)

  ʔàdʒè tʰésá ɲā
  what sound (079-3QIS)

  What sound is it?   (Question)

  mìbə̄ʔ tʰésá ɲā
  Gun sound (006-1NSS)

  It is the sound of gunfire.   (Answer)

Unlike the inquisitive interrogative particle *-ā* (079-3QIS), the interrogative particle *ɲā* is applicable to ask questions based on events, just as the interrogative particle *ŋā* is. When a group of hunters hear a deer coming in the night, an elderly hunter would ask the younger hunters *ʔà gə̄ pʰə̄ ʔǣ -ə̄ ɲā* 'Which direction is [the deer] coming from?' Again, the corresponding answer *ɣàlɔ̀ tʃʰɔ̄tʃʰɔ̄ -ə́ ʔǣ -ə̄ ɲā* '[It is] coming down the valley' is marked by the non-visual declarative sentence particle *ŋā* (006-1NSS) (see example 4.1.7).

(4.1.7)

ʔàgə̄	*pʰɔ́*	*ʔæ̀*	*-ə̄*	*ɲā*
where	direction	come	VS1	(079-3QIS)

'Which direction is [the deer] running from?   (Question)

ɣàlɔ̀	*tʃʰɔ̀tʃʰɔ́*	*-ɛ́*	*ʔæ̀*	*-ə̄*	*ɲā*
valley	through	AS	come	VS1	(006-1NSS)

[It is] coming down the valley.   (Answer)

The non-visual inquisitive interrogative particle *ɲā* has four functions (see table 79).

Particle	Functional Categories		Functional Loads
ɲā (079-3QIS)	1	Sentence type	Inquisitive interrogative sentence marker
	2	Subject-Person	Third person subject marker
	3	Positive/Negative	Positive sentence marker
	4	Tense	Present tense marker

Table 79. Functions of the non-visual inquisitive

interrogative particle *ɲā* (079-3QIS)

Now, it is taken for granted that while all three questions, *ʔà dʒè-ā, ʔà dʒè ŋā* and *ʔà dʒè ɲā*, are natural equivalents of English question 'What is it? each of the last two questions prompts a more specific answer. To be more specific, the English equivalent for *ʔà dʒè ŋā* should be 'What is it [that you saw]?' and *ʔà dʒè ɲā* should be 'What is it [that you heard/touched/felt]?' Therefore, the same sentence construction with the three different interrogative particles must be understood as three different types of questions, since they correspond to three sub-categorical answers, although they contrast with each other in two specific functional comparisons A comparison of functional components is summarized in the table below. Notice the three particles are contrastive to each other only in the stative/transitive and preemption slots.

Function	-ā	ŋā	ɲā
Sentence type	Inquisitive interrogative (contrasting to Yes-no interrogative)	Inquisitive interrogative (contrasting to Yes-no interrogative)	Inquisitive interrogative (contrasting to Yes-no interrogative)
Subject-person	Third person subject	Third person subject	Third person subject
Positive/ Negative	Positive sentence	Positive sentence	Positive sentence
Tense	Present tense	Present tense	Present tense
Stative/ Transitive	Stative sentence only	Both	Both
Preemption based on sensations	Based on all sensations	Based on visual sensation only.	Based on all non-visual sensations

Table 80. Functional comparison of -ā, ŋā and ɲā

4.1.6 Attitudinal interrogative particle $t^h\bar{\jmath}$ (080-2/3QIS)

The attitudinal interrogative particle $t^h\bar{\jmath}$ (080-2/3QIS) is used in questions which show the speaker's blameful attitude towards the addressee. The particle $t^h\bar{\jmath}$ may have been derived from the pronoun $t^h\bar{\jmath}$ which is equivalent to the English pronoun 'that.' However, when used as a sentence final, it can no longer be treated as the pronoun $t^h\bar{\jmath}$, but as an attitudinal interrogative particle which always implies a negative connotation.

When used in the simplest form with the second person pronoun 'you,' as in the first sentence of example 4.1.8, the meaning is equivalent to 'And you?' This form implies a sense of contempt or humiliation.

The negative implication of the particle $t^h\bar{\jmath}$ is stronger when it is used in a transitive interrogative sentence. For instance, the interrogative sentence *ʔàgá ʔí $t^h\bar{e}$* 'Where are you going' is a simple inquiry. However, the question *ʔàgá ʔí $t^h\bar{e}$ $t^h\bar{\jmath}$* 'Where are you going then?' still keeping the same meaning in English, expresses a sense of

dislike or suspicion in Akha. A mother who meets her son, who is expected to be at home, on a street and asks him *Ɂàgá Ɂí tʰē tʰə̄* 'Where are you going then?' is inquiring where he is going as well as expressing her dislike of his going.

An interrogative sentence with such a connotative meaning is usually composed of an obligatory question word, which could be *Ɂàsúyà* 'who,' *Ɂàdʒè* 'what,' *Ɂàmʲā̄* 'when,' *Ɂàgá* 'where,' or *Ɂàgə̄* 'which,' an obligatory verb, an obligatory inquisitive interrogative particle *tʰē (tʰè~dē~dè)* (075-2QIS), or *tʰā (~tʰà~dā~dà)* (076-3QIS), and the attitudinal interrogative particle *tʰə̄* (see the second sentence of example 4.1.8).

(4.1.8)

> *nɔ́   tʰə̄*
> 2S (080-2/3QIS)

And you?

> *Ɂàgá   Ɂí   tʰē   tʰə̄*
> where go (075-2QIS) (080-2/3QIS)

Where are you going then?   (With blameful attitude)

The attitudinal interrogative particle *tʰə̄* only has two functions (see Table 81). It is not applicable as a positive or a negative sentence marker because it freely occurs in both.

Particle	Functional Categories		Functional Loads
tʰə̄ (080-2/3QIS)	1	Sentence type	Attitudinal interrogative sentence marker
	2	Subject-Person	Non-first person subject marker
	3	Positive/Negative	Both
	4	Tense	NA

Table 81. Functions of the attitudinal interrogative particle

tʰə̄ (080-2/3QIS)

4.1.7 Attitudinal interrogative particle *nɛ̄* (081-QIS)

The inquisitive interrogative particle *nɛ̄* (081-QIS) is identical to the particle *tʰə̄* both in meaning and structure. The two interrogatives imply the same degree of negative implication when used separately, and they add negative implication to each other when used together. Both primary attitudinal interrogative expressions *nɔ́ tʰə̄* and *nɔ́ nɛ̄*, having the same English equivalent 'And you?,' imply the same degree of blameful attitude (see example 4.1.9).

The secondary attitudinal interrogative expression *nɔ́ tʰə̄ nɛ̄*, which may still be translated 'And you?' in English, implies a stronger, blameful attitude. In this type of expression, the particle *tʰə̄* always precedes the particle *nɛ̄* (see example 4.1.9).

A good example of the third and final type of attitudinal interrogative expression may be *ʔàgá ʔí tʰē nɛ̄ tʰə̄* 'Where are you going then?' which has stronger blameful attitude than *ʔàgá ʔí tʰē tʰə̄* (see example 4.1.8) although both have the same English equivalent. *ʔàgá ʔí tʰē nɛ̄ tʰə̄* is the strongest possible interrogative expression to show a speaker's blameful attitude towards an addressee. Notice that, in this type of expression, the particle *tʰə̄* follows the particle *nɛ̄*, reversing the ordering in the secondary expression where *nɛ̄* follows *tʰə̄* (see example 4.1.9).

(4.1.9)

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nɔ́  nɛ̄
2S  (081-QIS)
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And you?   (blameful attitude)

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nɔ́  tʰə̄              nɛ̄
2S  (080-2/3QIS)     (081-QIS)
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And you?   (stronger blameful attitude)

Ɂàgá	Ɂí	$t^h\bar{e}$	$n\bar{\varepsilon}$	$t^h\bar{\partial}$
where	go	(075-2QIS)	(081-QIS)	(080-2/3QIS)

Where are you going then?   (strongest blameful attitude)

The attitudinal interrogative particle $n\bar{\varepsilon}$ has two functions (see Table 82). It is not applicable as subject-person marker, because it will take any person at a time. Neither is it applicable as a positive or a negative sentence marker because it freely occurs in both.

Particle	Functional Categories		Functional Loads
$n\bar{\varepsilon}$ (081-QIS)	1	Sentence type	Attitudinal interrogative sentence marker
	2	Subject-Person	Any person
	3	Positive/Negative	Both
	4	Tense	Present tense marker

Table 82. Functions of the attitudinal interrogative particle

$n\bar{\varepsilon}$ (081-QIS)

4.2 Yes-no interrogatives

The yes-no interrogative particles are used to establish the certainty or validity of something of which the speaker is partially informed. There are four particles of this kind, which are often related to each other in a chain of questions seeking to build up information and establish a solution.

The Akha language has rhetorical questions that are similar to the English counterparts. Most rhetorical questions are used in a pejorative sense with disparaging attitude. Some are used in a sympathetic form, especially in such a situation as when a loving mother expresses tender care toward a sick child. Inquisitive particles are not used for such expressions.

In this section, the syntactic structure and functions .of each of the four yes-no particles *ló, lā, lé* and *tʰǽ*, will be discussed. Unlike the inquisitive particles, yes-no particles do not mark the party about which the questions are inquiring.

4.2.1 Yes-no interrogative particle *ló* (082-QYS)

The yes-no interrogative particle *ló* (082-QYS) can be an interrogative sentence final for both positive and negative questions. Adding a negative particle before the verb does not alter the meaning of a question. *ʔí mā ló* 'Will you go?' and *mà ʔí ló* 'Will you not go?' are two variations of interrogative expression for confirming whether a person going or not.

As stated in the previous sections, spoken Akha often omits explicit subjects, while indicating the person of the subject by the final particle. In the positive yes-no question *ʔí mā ló* 'Will you go?' the first person declarative sentence particle *mā* (002-1PSS) is used for the second person subject, which is normally used for first person subject in declarative sentences. When the question takes the third person declarative sentence particle *mē* (001-2/3PSS), the subject of the sentence is changed to the third party. Thus, in the question is *ʔí mē ló* 'Will [he/she/it/they] go?' the declarative sentence particle *mē* indicates that the subject is third party. The particle *ló* does not function as a subject marker for a positive question.

In the negative question *mà ʔí ló* 'Will you not go?' the offensive refutal particle *ø* (014-1NDS). (046-2NIS) indicates the subject as second person. However, when the question is altered as *mà ʔí-ā ló* 'Will [he/she/it/they] not go?' the generic negative statement particle *-ā* (005-3NSS) indicates that the subject of the sentence is the third party. The negative answer to this question is *mà ʔí-ā* '[He/she/it/they] will not go.' At this point, the declarative sentence final particle *-ā* should not be confused with

the inquisitive interrogative particle *-ā* (077-3QIS). It must be noted that the interrogative particle always co-occurs with a question word.

(4.2.1)

ʔí mā   ló
go (002-1PSS) (082-QYS)

Will [you] go?

mà   ʔí   ló
NEG   go   (082-QYS)

Will [you] not go?

ʔí   mē   ló
go   (001-2/3PSS) (082- 2QYS)

Will [he/she/it/they] go?

mà   ʔí   -ā   ló
NEG   go   (005-2/3NSS) (082- 2QYS)

Will [he/she/it/they] not go?

The yes-no interrogative particle *ló* never co-occurs with a question word so long as it is a sentence final. It may co-occur with a question word or two when it is not a sentence final. In a multi-particle sentence where a chain of yes-no particles is used, the particle can be a sentence final or it can be embedded in a superordinate clause. As discussed in the preceding section, the functions of the last particle, dominate the whole sentence, making the functions of preceding particles subordinate to it.

The yes-no interrogative particle *ló* has three functions (see Table 83). It is not applicable as a positive or a negative sentence marker because it freely occurs in both.

Particle	Functional Categories		Functional Loads
ló (082-QYS)	1	Sentence type	Yes-no interrogative sentence marker
	2	Subject-Person	Any person
	3	Positive/Negative	Both
	4	Tense	Present tense marker

Table 83. Functions of the yes-no interrogative particle

ló (082-QYS)

4.2.2 Yes-no interrogative particle *lā* (083-QYS)

The Yes-no interrogative particle *lā* (083-QYS) is a confirmatory question or a counter-question mark. It seems to be closely related to the Burmese interrogative particle *là* and Lahu interrogative particle *lá*, both in structure and meaning. This particle is frequently used in oral as well as written language.

A native speaker would use the particle *lā* to confirm something he has been told of. For instance, if a person is asked to bring a hoe and if there are more than one, he may need to confirm which one the speaker is referring to. In that case, he may ask *jɔ̄ ʃùʔ kʰɑ̃́ lā* 'The new one?' Some speakers would use the yes-no interrogative particles *lā* and *ló* interchangeably and say *jɔ̄ ʃùʔ kʰɑ̃́ ló* 'The new one?' However, it is more formal to use *lā*, rather than *ló*, for a simple confirmatory question (see the first sentence of example 5.11).

(4.2.2)

tsʰɛ̀mā	*hélàʔ*	*ʃé*
hoe	bring	(052-2MS)

Bring [me] a hoe!　　　　　　　　　　　　(Request)

jɔ̄ʃùʔ	*kʰɑ̃́*	*lā*
new	ClF	(083-QYS)

[You mean] the new one?　　　　　　　　　(Formal Yes-no question)

jɔ̄ʃ̀ừʔ kʰǽ   ló
new   ClF   (082-QYS)

[You mean] the new one?   (Informal Yes-no question)

jɔ̄ʃừʔ kʰǽ   ʔɛ́   tʰē   ló
new   ClF   say (075-2QIS) (082-QYS)

[You] say the new one?   (Reiterative Yes-no question)

There is a limitation in interchangeability of the two particles. The particle *ló* will be used if the confirmatory question reiterates the earlier request of the person who requests the hoe, then the confirmatory question would be *jɔ̄ ʃừʔ kʰǽ ʔɛ́ tē ló* 'Did you say the new one?' or 'You mean the new one?' (see sample sentence 3 of example 4.2.2)

The interrogative particle *lā* is sometimes used to express discontent over a statement or a decision. For instance, *ŋá tèʔ-ɛ́ ʔí-ə̄ lā* 'Must I go alone?' is a discontent reaction for having been assigned to go alone on a mission. In this case, the particle is used in the form of rhetorical question and the expected answer or the underlying meaning of that question is 'I will not go alone' (see example 4.2.3). There could be no recognizable syntactic structural difference between reiterative *lā* and rhetorical question *lā* in a written statement. However, diacritic feature such as tenseness in sound and facial appearance will help the hearer to recognize that difference right at the moment the sentence is being uttered. In written statements, such a difference is recognizable in the story-line development of the discourse.

(4.2.3)

ŋá   tèʔ-ɛ́   ʔí   -ə̄   lā
1S   alone   go   VS1 (083-QYS)

I must go alone?   (Rhetorical question)

The yes-no interrogative particle *lā* has three functions (see Table 84). It is not applicable as positive or negative sentence marker because it freely occurs in both.

Particle	Functional Categories		Functional Loads
lā (083-QYS)	1	Sentence type	Yes-no interrogative sentence marker
	2	Subject-Person	Any person
	3	Positive/Negative	Both
	4	Tense	Present tense marker

Table 84. Functions of the yes-no interrogative particle

lā (083-QYS)

The yes-no interrogative particle *lā* must be clearly discriminated from the formally notifying mitigative particle *lā* (054-1PMS) since they are phonetically identical. The interrogative *lā* is a question marker and the mitigative *lā* is a semi-request declaration.

4.2.3 Yes-no interrogative particle *lέ* (084-QYS)

The yes-no interrogative particle *lέ* (084-QYS) is used in an interrogative sentence, which asks the speaker to repeat the same statement again. It is a confirmatory question particle used to ascertain something a hearer has not clearly heard. It is similar to the yes-no particles *ló* (082-QYS) and *lā* (083-QYS) in function and structure. However, its co-occurrence with question words is obligatory unless it is embedded in other types of questions. *ló* and *lā* never co-occur with question words.

One notable feature of the yes-no interrogative particle *lέ* is that it is semi-interrogative in terms of that it is not really a question, but a request to repeat the same statement. It is seeking corroboration rather than information. The hearer is merely asking a question to confirm what he is told when he is in cooperation with the speaker in a certain course. It is not even to confirm the particular item among many that the speaker is referring to as in the case of the interrogative particle *ló* (082-QYS). It is just asking the speaker to repeat what he has said so that the hearer can respond correctly.

The particle *lέ* is very common in spoken Akha. There are two types of *lέ* questions. The first type is a request to repeat a statement and the second type is a request to say yes or no. In other words, the addressee who missed the whole statement asks the first type of *lέ* question, and the addressee who partly missed the statement asks the second type of *lέ* question.

The typical usage of the first type is that when two persons talking loudly to each other from distant hill tops, both of them would often ask each other *ʔàdʒè lέ* 'What did you say?' asking to repeat the same statement louder in order to make it clearer. While the literal translation of *ʔàdʒè lέ* would be 'What did you say?' the dynamic natural equivalent is '[Can you] repeat it again?' Example 4.2.4 illustrates the first type of *lέ* question.

(4.2.4)

       ʔàdʒè lέ
       what (084-QYS)

       What did you say?   (Question)

       nɔ́ ʔí -ɔ̀   ʔέ dē
       2S go (043-2PIS) say (058-2ES)

       [I] said 'You go!'   (Possible answer)

In example 4.2.4, the interrogative sentence *ʔàdʒè lέ* 'What did you say?' is a single-particle interrogative sentence for which *ʔàdʒè* 'What' is an obligatory question word and *lέ* (084-QYS) is the only particle as well as the sentence final. The formal answer for this question is repeating the whole statement, such as *nɔ́ ʔí-ɔ̀ ʔέ dē* 'I said "You go".' (see example 4.2.4). For this type of *lέ* question sentence, a question word such as *ʔà dʒè* (what, *ʔà sú yà* 'Who,' *ʔá mʲāʔ* 'How many,' etc., is an obligatory component.

The second type of *lέ* question is a yes-no question, i. e. a request to say yes or no. This type of question never takes a question word. Instead, the question itself repeats the statement and then add the question mark *lέ* so that the answer could be just yes or no. When a senior village man requests a young man to go somewhere by saying *nɔ́ ʔí-ɔ̀* 'You must go,' the young man's confirmatory question will be *ŋá ʔí-ɔ̀ lέ* 'Do you say I must go?' If the request is *ʔà jɔ̀ʔ bī ʔí-ɔ̀* 'Let him go' the confirmatory question will be *ʔà jɔ̀ʔ bī ʔí-ɔ̀ lέ* 'Do you say he must go?' (see example 4.2.5)

In both examples, the whole statement is repeated. Notice that the first confirmatory changed the subject of the statement from the second person pronoun *nɔ́* 'you' to the first person pronoun *ŋá* 'I' because the person who is asked to go is referring to himself in confirmatory question. However, the third person subject in a statement is not changed in the confirmatory question.

(4.2.5)

    nɔ́   ʔí -ɔ̀
    2S   go (043-2PIS)

    You must go.   (Preceding statement)

    ŋá   ʔí -ɔ̀   lέ
    1S   go (043-2PIS)   (084-QYS)

    Did you say I must go?   (Corresponding *lέ* question)

    ʔàjɔ̀ʔ bī   ʔí -ɔ̀
    3S   PASS go (043-2PIS)

    Let him go.   (Preceding statement)

    ʔàjɔ̀ʔ bī   ʔí -ɔ̀   lέ
    3S   PASS go (043-2PIS)   (084-QYS)

    Did you say 'Let him go?'   (Corresponding *lέ* question)

The yes-no interrogative particle *lέ* has three functions (see Table 85). It is not applicable as positive or negative sentence marker because it freely occurs in both.

Particle		Functional Categories	Functional Loads
lέ (084-QYS)	1	Sentence type	Yes-no interrogative sentence marker
	2	Subject-Person	Any person
	3	Positive/Negative	Both
	4	Tense	Present tense marker

Table 85. Functions of the yes-no interrogative particle

lέ (084-QYS)