



Tone in Chinese: Preserving Tonal Melody in Strong Positions

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Abstract

It has been argued that Shanghai Chinese has a smaller tonal domain than other Chinese dialects including Standard Chinese, Xiamen, and Taiwanese. The difference has been analyzed by setting an edge parameter (Selkirk and Shen 1990) or by ranking edge-alignment constraints (cf. Truckenbrodt 1999) at the syntax-phonology interface. Unlike these analyses, this paper argues that differences between tonal domains derive from different phonological settings for maintaining Structure Preservation in strong positions, which are defined as the most embedded parts of syntactic constituent structure (cf. Cinque 1993). We claim that Shanghai puts complement in a different tonal domain (in which Tone Deletion suppresses tones following the first contour tone) from head, in order to preserve the citation tone of complement in the strong position. In contrast, tone sandhi rules in other dialects change all the tones except the final tone in a domain; the tone of complement in the strong position is kept intact even when head and complement are in the same domain. This renders both the edge parameter and the ranking of edge-based constraints unnecessary. Thus, tone in Chinese ensures the universal validity of Structure Preservation in strong positions, which has been widely attested in cross-linguistic research.

Keywords

structure preservation, strong position, tonal domain, tone sandhi, Shanghai Chinese

中國語的聲調—聲調保存在強位置

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提要

上海話比中國其它地方的語言的聲調域都要小一些，例如普通話，廈門方言和台灣話。這種差異是由邊緣參數或者制約用優選理論來分析決定的。本文認為聲調域的差異來自不同的音韻規則來保存聲調的在強位置，這被定義為句法成分結構的最根本條件。我們主張上海話在聲調域從中心語中把輔助語分離出來，這個音韻規則刪除掉出了第一聲調的其餘聲調，因此，輔助處於強位置並且保持引用聲調。與此相反，漢語其他的方言除了最後聲調沒有改變，其餘的聲調均發生規則改變，輔助語在同一聲調中與中心語保持一致。這使邊緣參數和邊緣制約變得無關緊要。

關鍵詞

構造保持，強度關係，聲調領域，連續變調，上海話