

## ACOUSTIC PATTERNS IN HONG KONG CANTONESE HESITATION MARKERS: VOWEL QUALITY AND OMNISYLLABIC TONE

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### ABSTRACT

Hesitation markers (HMs) lie somewhere on the dividing line between linguistic and sub-linguistic, evincing at the same time crosslinguistic commonalities as well as language-specific features (Candea et al. 2005; Dingemanse and Woensdregt 2020). This study seeks to expand on understanding of these lexically peripheral items by analyzing their acoustic properties in Hong Kong Cantonese (HKCT), including vowel quality and F0. Recent work by Dingemanse and Woensdregt (2020) discusses phonetic similarities in HMs across languages, which are constrained by adherence to the phonologies of their respective languages. However, it is unclear how HMs are incorporated into HKCT tonal phonology, which can be characterized as ‘omnisyllabic’ (Matisoff 1995), every syllable being associated with a lexical tone. The present study gathers acoustic data (F0, F1–F2, duration) from the PolyU Corpus of Spoken Chinese (<http://wongtaksum.no-ip.info:81/corpus.htm>) across 10 speakers and 196 HMs, comparing them against 525 lexical items. Results for F1–F2 clustered around mid-front / $\epsilon$ /, which is in line both with crosslinguistic trends and HKCT phonology. Results for F0 clustered

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## 香港粤语犹豫标记的声学模式： 元音音色及全音节

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### 摘要

犹豫标记置身语言学与副语言学的边界，占据一个既有跨语言共性又具特定语言特征的区域(Candea et al. 2005; Dingemanse and Woensdregt 2020)。本研究旨在透过分析犹豫标记在香港粤语中，包含元音音色及F0的声学特性，扩充对这些语义周边项目的理解。Dingemanse and Woensdregt (2020)最近的研究论及犹豫标记有跨语言声学相似性，亦受制于各语言对自身的音段音韵学的持守。不过，香港粤语作为“全音节语言”(Matisoff 1995)，每个音节均附上声调，犹豫标记应如何纳入香港粤语的声调音韵学，这仍不清楚。本研究从理工大学中文口语语料库(PolyU Corpus of Spoken Chinese, <http://wongtaksum.nip.info:81/corpus.htm>)集结F0、F1-F2及时长的声学资料，横跨十位语者，共196个犹豫标记，与525个词汇作比较分析。F1-F2的结果围绕半开前元音/e/丛集，与跨语言趋势及香港粤语音韵学均能匹配。F0的结果则丛集于近乎最低的音高，接近调三及调六，合乎最少付出倾向的预想。可是，要与特定字词声调建立联系仍很复杂，因为调三及调六相似，不能以统计学区分。跨语者分析显示F0有相当变化，提示语境、语调或个人习语变化可能有重大影响。这对理解全音节语言(如粤语)如何应对犹豫标记等等周边项目有所提示。

### 关键词

香港粤语 犹豫标记 声学语音学 音韵学