

Exploring Phonetic Properties of Northern Min: A Case Study of Shibe

by

SHEN, Ruiqing

Division of Humanities

The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology

Abstract

This study seeks to describe and analyze the phonetic properties of Shibe variety of Northern Min Chinese, and demonstrate how an acoustic analysis may be done to the tonal system and segmental phonology of a Chinese dialect. The study gives a detailed analysis of the complex tonal system in Shibe, with its nine non-stopped tones contrasting in pitch contour, duration and phonation type. An investigation into the segmental phonemes includes measurement of VOT, plotting of vowel charts and discussion on typologically unusual variations and contrasts.

Interestingly, the phonology of Shibe also challenges the current phonological theory. This issue is also explored in the thesis.

Keywords: Acoustic phonetics, Tone, Phonation type, Chinese dialects, Northern Min