

# **The Mechanisms of Rising Tone (*Shangsheng*) Sandhi in Tongcheng Dialect**

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## **Abstract**

This thesis investigates a special tone sandhi of rising tone(*shangsheng*) in Tongcheng dialect(a type of Jianghuai Mandarin dialect). In this dialect, when a rising tone occurs in the non-final syllable position in a prosodic word, it often becomes a very short tone along with a high fundamental frequency (F<sub>0</sub>).The sandhi tone of this type is dramatically different from the corresponding citation tone, which either stands alone or occurs in the final syllable position in a prosodic word. In Tongcheng dialect, this kind of tone sandhi is actually not limited to rising tone. However, it is rising tone that is the easiest one to undergo such a sandhi process -- almost without exception. Based on a detailed investigation into the cases of rising tone sandhi in Tongcheng dialect, this thesis describes the multiple conditions by which this tone sandhi occurs. In addition, with the help of experimental phonetics and generative phonology, this thesis advances a theoretical account for the mechanisms which underlie this sandhi process, finding out the phonological and grammatical factors that are jointly responsible for triggering the occurrence of this tone sandhi.

Key Words: rising tone, high pitch tone, tone sandhi, short syllable, register, phonetics, grammar, mechanisms for generating tone sandhi