

Jin Chinese Entering Tones: Acoustics, Types and Evolution

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Abstract

This thesis studies Jin Chinese entering tones, especially from the perspectives of acoustics, tonal typology, and tonal evolution. The “multi-register and four-level” tonal model, the universal tonal inventory, and the evolutionary comparative method are the main methodologies applied in this study. Base on the first-hand acoustic data collected from 64 localities of Bìngzhōu, Lǚliáng, and Shàngdǎng Jin dialects, this study first describes the tonal patterns of non-entering tones and investigates the acoustic properties of entering tones. We find that the entering tones can be short or mid-short in duration; have level, falling or dipping contours; present different pitch heights; and most importantly, with the accompaniment of creaky voice phonation. Secondly, this study explores the evolutionary process of Lǚliáng entering tones. The Lǚliáng T4as

have been evolving from a high tone to a low tone and from a short tone to a mid-short tone. The T4bs are now in a process of lengthening its duration from mid-short to long and raising the tonal head from low-dipping to back-dipping tone. Thirdly, this study offers an acoustic and phonological account for the “flip-flop” phenomenon of Jin entering tones. The Bìngzhōu entering tones have a “Yīn-low vs. Yáng-high” contrast, which is opposite to the Lǚliáng “Yīn-high vs. Yáng-low” contrast. By reconstructing the evolutionary path for the two entering tones, we argue that the contrast of Bìngzhōu entering tones has evolved from that as seen in Lǚliáng. To sum up, through experimental, typological and evolutionary analyses of Bìngzhōu, Lǚliáng, and Shàngdǎng dialects, this study presents a linguistic depiction of both synchronic variation and diachronic evolution of Jin entering tones.