

ABSTRACT

This thesis is an analytical and functional description of a number of important aspects of Chaoshan grammar which include core grammatical structures as well as constructions known to diverge from other Sinitic languages, particularly the official language of China, Putonghua. The Chaoshan dialect refers collectively to a group of mutually intelligible sub-dialects spoken in the coastal Chaoshan or Chaozhou region in eastern Guangdong province, PRC. The Chaoshan dialect belongs to the Southern Min branch of the Min dialect group, which is among the most conservative dialect groupings in China, retaining many archaic linguistic features.

The thesis includes eleven chapters. Chapter 1, the introduction, presents demographic and ethnographic information about the Chaoshan dialect group of which the Jieyang dialect is an integral part. Chapter 2 describes the phonological system of the Jieyang dialect, including a brief description of one of the most salient phonological features in the Chaoshan dialects, tone sandhi. Chapter 3 covers three derivational processes in the Jieyang dialect: affixation, reduplication and compounding. In Chapter 4, I discuss personal pronouns, reflexives and nominal demonstratives. Chapter 5 deals with three topics involving the noun phrase: numeral classifiers, possessive structures and relative clauses. Like other Sinitic languages, the Jieyang dialect has a very rich aspectual system, which is covered in detail in Chapter 6. Chapter 7 describes a set of constructions, collectively called 'the pretransitive construction', which are similar but not identical to the much studied BA-construction in Mandarin. The pretransitive construction is salient because of several syntactic and semantic features which differ from those of a canonical SVO sentence. In Chapter 8, I discuss three constructions with similar morphosyntax, 'the *ɲɛʔʔ* *ɲ* constructions', two of which encode passive meanings while the third one marks overt unaccusativity. Chapter 9 deals with negation, which is an area where many features dating back to Old Chinese are preserved. Chapter 10 describes interrogative constructions, which show close connection with negation. Finally, Chapter 11 explores the constructions of comparison which are also one of the areas where greater divergence is found between the more conservative dialects such as Chaoshan dialect and the more modern dialects such as Mandarin.

摘要

通行于中国广东省东南部的潮州方言是中国一个极为古老的方言之一。她继承并保留了古汉语的许多特征，包括语音，构词和语法结构，被称为研究古汉语的活化石。潮州方言同时也具有许多本身特有的语法现象及规律。然而，在此之前，在中国或海外对潮州方言都没有进行过任何较完整和系统的研究。本文的撰写，其首要目的，就是为了填补这一空缺，并希望所研究的结果能起抛砖引玉的作用，有助对潮州方言进一步深入的调查。无疑，本研究所提供的语料也将有助于中外语言学的研究和探索。

本论文从共时角度，描述和分析了潮州方言（以揭阳话为代表）的语音系统和构词法，以及八个语法范畴。第一章为导论，简单介绍潮汕地区历史人文与语言背景；第二章描写语音系统；第三章为构词法；第四章描写人称代词及名物指代词；第五章讨论名词短语结构中三个重要范畴：名量词，领属关系以及关系从句；第六章详细分析和讨论体貌系统；第七章论述‘处置句’的类型，构成与语义；第八章论述被动式以及非自主动词‘被动式’；第九章描述否定结构；第十章描述疑问结构。最后一章描写比较式的各种类型并分析其历史层次。