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Mutual intelligibility of Chinese dialects : an experimental approach

Tang, C.

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Stellingen
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Mutual intelligibility of Chinese dialects

An experimental approach

van

Chaoju TANG

1. The degree of mutual intelligibility between language varieties can be established through experimental tests and it is a useful index to distinguish dialect from language. (this dissertation)
2. Tree structures based on mutual intelligibility scores obtained through both functional and opinion testing methods can be used to validate proposed claims about dialect groupings. (this dissertation)
3. Listeners whose native language is a Southern Chinese dialect, understand Mandarin (Northern Chinese) varieties much better than the other way around. This asymmetry is only partly due to non-linguistic factors. (this dissertation)
4. Differences in lexical tones between Chinese dialects do not impede mutual intelligibility. (this dissertation)
5. Despite the similarity suggested by the Chinese writing system and other non-linguistic considerations, the mutual intelligibility between some Chinese dialects is so low that they should be classified as different languages.
6. Differences in syntax between related languages do not greatly affect mutual intelligibility.
7. Pronunciation training of Chinese learners of English should be different depending on the native dialect of the learner.
8. Research is needed to establish the mutual intelligibility of Chinese speakers from different dialect backgrounds, when they communicate in Standard Mandarin (Putonghua).