



Universiteit
Leiden
The Netherlands

Phantom stress in tone sandhi: evidence from Shaoxing Wu Chinese Wen, X.

Citation

Wen, X. (2026, September 17). *Phantom stress in tone sandhi: evidence from Shaoxing Wu Chinese*. LOT dissertation series. LOT, Amsterdam. Retrieved from <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/4309711>

Version: Publisher's Version

License: [Licence agreement concerning inclusion of doctoral thesis in the Institutional Repository of the University of Leiden](#)

Downloaded from: <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/4309711>

Note: To cite this publication please use the final published version (if applicable).

Phantom stress in tone sandhi
Evidence from Shaoxing Wu Chinese

Published by

LOT
Binnengasthuisstraat 9
1012 ZA Amsterdam
The Netherlands

phone: +31 20 525 2461

e-mail: lot@uva.nl
<https://www.lotschool.nl>

Cover illustration: *Beneath the Surface*, linocut by Xinyi Wen.

ISBN: 978-94-6093-509-1

DOI: <https://dx.medra.org/10.48273/LOT0724>

NUR: 616

Copyright © 2026 Xinyi Wen. All rights reserved.

Phantom stress in tone sandhi

Evidence from Shaoxing Wu Chinese

Proefschrift

ter verkrijging van
de graad van doctor aan de Universiteit Leiden,
op gezag van rector magnificus prof. dr. S. de Rijcke,
volgens besluit van het college voor promoties
te verdedigen op donderdag 17 september 2026
klokke 13.00 uur

door

Xinyi Wen

geboren te Shaoxing, China
in 1994

Promotores: Prof. dr. Yiya Chen
Prof. dr. Lisa L.S. Cheng

Promotiecommissie: Prof. dr. Nancy Kula
Prof. dr. Shengli Feng (Beijing Language and Culture
University)
Prof. dr. Brechtje Post (University of Cambridge)
Dr. Benjamin Storme

Contents

Acknowledgments	ix
1 Introduction	1
1.1 General background	1
1.2 Motivation	4
1.3 The current studies	9
1.4 Outline	13
2 Coexisting left- and right-dominant sandhi in disyllabic words	15
2.1 Introduction	15
2.2 Methods	19
2.2.1 Participants	19
2.2.2 Stimuli	20
2.2.3 Procedure	20
2.2.4 Data preparation	21
2.2.5 Data analysis	21
2.3 Results	22
2.3.1 f0 trajectories	22
2.3.2 Duration	38
2.4 Discussion	39
2.5 Conclusion	42
3 Tonal realizations and sandhi domain formation in trisyllabic compounds	45
3.1 Introduction	45
3.2 Methods	53

3.2.1	Participants	53
3.2.2	Stimuli	53
3.2.3	Procedure	54
3.2.4	Data preparation	54
3.2.5	Data analysis	55
3.3	Results	56
3.3.1	The distribution of sandhi patterns	56
3.3.2	f0 trajectories	57
3.4	Discussion	61
3.5	Conclusion	69
4	The verb-object and subject-predicate distinction in phrasal-level tonal realizations	71
4.1	Introduction	71
4.2	Experiment 1	79
4.2.1	Methods	80
4.2.2	Results	83
4.3	Experiment 2	90
4.3.1	Methods	90
4.3.2	Results	92
4.4	Discussion	98
4.5	Conclusion	105
5	General discussion and conclusion	107
5.1	Main findings	107
5.2	Theoretical implications	110
5.2.1	Tone sandhi and stress	110
5.2.2	Tone sandhi across Northern Wu: General tendencies	112
5.2.3	Syntax-prosody mapping	118
5.3	Limitations and future research	119
5.4	Conclusion	120
	Bibliography	123
A	Stimulus list in Chapter 2	135
B	Stimulus list in Chapter 3	137
C	Statistical results of the GAMM analyses in Chapter 3	143

D Pilot study on quadri-syllabic compounds	151
D.1 Participants	151
D.2 Stimuli	151
D.3 Procedure	152
D.4 Data preparation and analysis	152
D.5 Preliminary results	153
E Stimulus list in Chapter 4	155
English Summary	163
Nederlandse Samenvatting	167
中文摘要	171
Curriculum Vitae	173

Acknowledgments

It is a joy to reach this stage, wrapping up my dissertation and acknowledging the wonderful people who have helped me through this journey, through years of turbulence in both the world around me and the world within.

First and foremost, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my supervisors, Prof. dr. Yiya Chen and Prof. dr. Lisa L.S. Cheng. Thank you for your support and guidance throughout my PhD journey in all aspects of my life, and for pushing me forward so that I could reach this stage. I have come to realize that, much like with my parents, I instinctively hide my struggles and share only good news with you, quietly worrying whether I am meeting your expectations. Thank you for seeing through this, and for always offering your understanding and help.

My gratitude also extends to Dr. Ting Zeng, who first led me into the world of phonetics and whose passion for the field ignited my own. Part of me wishes I could continue your ambitions, but I know you would be happy for me whichever path I choose. To Qian, who inspired my pursuit of PhD in Leiden, for your unwavering support and companionship. To Prof. Aijun Li, whose care and encouragement have continued ever since my master's studies.

I would like to thank my reading committee, Prof. dr. Nancy Kula, Prof. dr. Shengli Feng, Prof. dr. Brechtje Post, and Dr. Benjamin Storme, for your invaluable feedback on this dissertation. I am also grateful to the scholars I met

at conferences over the years, whose insights helped sharpen this work. My deep thanks go to all the participants who made this work possible.

This journey would not have been the same without my PhD fellows and friends. Thank you all for the laughter and support you brought into my life. Special thanks to Qing, Tingting, and Hang, for helping me find my footing and continuously sharing your knowledge and experience. To Hana and Alice, for walking this journey side by side with me from the very beginning. To Xin, Priscilla, and Katrina, for sharing so much of life with me along the way. To Yaqian and Kedi, for the fun hangouts and the memorable nights we spent together. To Jiahui, for our cinema trips and for sharing your experience with analogue cameras with me. To Ruixue and Ruoyu, for your warmth and care for people around you. To Fei, for generously sharing your workspace with me at a time when it really made a difference. To Menghui and Zhaole, for your kindness and help from time to time. To Zhuoyi and Jiang, for the practical wisdom and helpful life tips. To Hester and Bente, for the knitting stitches and the conversations. To Ariëlle, for our lovely chats and for kindly helping translate my summary into Dutch.

I am also grateful to my landlords and housemates from 2019 to 2022, who made the pandemic period less lonely. Donna and Henk, thank you for making my first home in Leiden such a welcoming place. Your kindness and generosity even spoiled me into thinking all landlords in the Netherlands were just like you. Zili and Miao, thank you for helping me settle in during those early days and patiently teaching a kitchen novice how to cook.

Finally, to my family, thank you for your unconditional love. Special appreciation to my aunt, uncle, and cousin, who helped a lot during my field trip. To my parents, thank you for being my strongest support.

This dissertation was funded by the Chinese Scholarship Council, with additional support from the Leiden University Centre for Linguistics and the NWO-VICI project “Melody in Speech”.