

Zhang, H. (2016c). “Focal Prominence Marking in Second Language Chinese Tones,” in Tao, H. (ed.) *Integrating Chinese Linguistics Research and Language Learning*, pp.195-214, John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Abstract:

Focal prominence in Chinese is expressed mainly by expanding pitch range, intensity and duration, but not by changing the general pitch shape of lexical tones. This poses a great challenge for adult learners of Chinese. This paper investigates how forty English and Japanese speaking learners of Chinese mark Chinese focal prominence (specifically, narrow focus) by analyzing the errors made in non-native tonal production of monosyllabic and disyllabic focused words. The research data suggests that the main source of error stems from first language transfer of prosodic structures, although the interlanguage tonal grammars are restricted by some phonological universals. Pedagogical implications are offered at the end of this chapter.