

# An Introduction to Hangzhou Dialect

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I choose to investigate Hangzhou Dialect (HZD) in this paper since it's my mother tongue. It is also because it shows some significant properties as a local dialect (or language, we will see). For instance, it shows violation against the existence of *dialect continua*. It cannot be fully intelligible with other Wu dialects in Hangzhou, which brought me some difficulties in communicating with my high school classmates.

## Abstract

In this paper I will introduce the Hangzhou city and distinguish HZD from other languages in Part 1. Then I try to give an outline of HZD, from the dimensions of phonology (Part 2) and grammar (Part 3). After that, I will describe uniqueness which would be hard to recover if the HZD died (Part 4). By going through its social and political status, we will have a picture of its endangerment now (Part 5).

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1. Hangzhou and Hangzhou Dialect

Hangzhou lies at the very heart of the region in the lower Yangtze where the Wu dialects are centered, yet the HZD spoken there does not fit easily within the Wu dialect pattern in terms of its overall characteristics. Population of Wu speaker lists 2<sup>nd</sup> in China, 8<sup>th</sup> in the world. Hangzhou also has a population of no fewer than 8.7 million. But the HZD is only used by 1 million people (Xu Yue, 2005), and spread in an area of 300 sq.km, while the total area is more than 10 thousand sq.km. So, you can imagine the HZD is spoken only in the core area of the city, to be exact, mainly in the Gongshu, Shangcheng, Xiacheng, Jianggan, Xihu Districts(Cao Zhi-yun, 2006). This area used to be the ancient capital of the South Song dynasty.

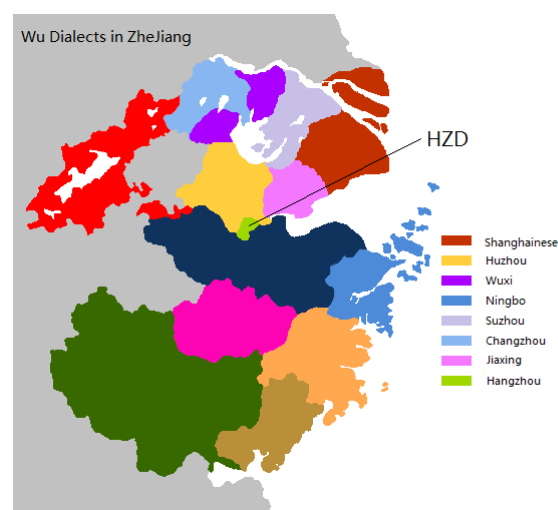


Figure.1. Wu Dialects in Zhejiang

We can see in the map, HZD centers in the core area of Hangzhou

The city itself has a long history which was well documented in different kinds of records. It has been referred since 21 century BC, and has been the capital of several dynasties about 1000

years ago. Now it's the capital of Zhejiang Province, meanwhile the most famous scenic-tourist city in Southeast China (Hangzhou West Lake, a UNESCO World Heritage Site). Despite the tourists, floating population (mainly consists of migrant workers) is as large as 42% of resident population, which means native HZD speaker may be less than half.

## 1.2. Debates over HZD's Genetic Relation with Other Languages

It is said when Song Dynasty relocated its capital to Hangzhou (which was called Lin'an at that time), the suburbs around the cities still said Wu, but the city residents started saying what is indeed assimilated by northern Mandarin. This speculation became even more creditable when Xu finds the population data of that time (Xu, 2005) as below:

	QianDao (1165-1173AD)		ChunYou(1241-1252AD)		XianChun(1265-1274AD)	
	Number of households	Population	Number of households	Population	Number of households	Population
Total	104069	145808	111736	320489	186330	432086
people per household	1.4		2.88		2.32	

*Table.1.1 Population of Hangzhou Residents between 1165AD to 1274AD.  
The Song royal family moved to Hangzhou in 1138AD*

However, there is also history data shows speakers of HZD have already died out in the genocide of Taiping Heavenly Kingdom in 1860s. What we will discuss here is not which history document is more reliable. We are going to have a close picture of HZD's identification. The first thing we should do is to distinguish HZD from Wu and from Mandarin, in a linguistic way.

In broad outline, Hangzhou has been noted to have essentially a Wu type phonology while in grammar and lexicon it shows many Mandarin tendencies (Chao Yuen-ren, 1928). To have a concise view of the situation, Mr. Simmons contrast the Hangzhou dialect with the spoken languages of Beijing and Suzhou according to diagnostic criteria for dialect classification as in Table.1.2 below (Simmons, 1995):

	Beijing (typical Mandarin)	HZD	Suzhou (typical Wu)
(1)3rd person pronoun = ta or cognate	+	+	-
(2)Subordinative part. = de/di or cognate	+	+	-
(3)Ordinary neg. = bu or cognate	+	+	+
(4)Gender marker is prefixed for animals	+	+	+
(5)Tonal register only in ping tones	+	-	-
(6)velars are palatalized before i	+	+	+
(7)'to stand'	站(Zhan\)	立	立(Li\)
(8)'to walk'	走(Zou\)	走	走
(9)'son'	兒子(Er'zi)	兒子	兒子
(10)'house'	房子(Fang'zi)	房子	房子
(11)3-way contrast of initial stops	-	+	+

*Table 1.2.Classificatory Criteria for Chinese Dialects<sup>1</sup>*

<sup>1</sup> I use Pinyin because we are comparing the vocabulary rather than pronunciation here.

In the five areas where Suzhou clearly differs from Beijing, Hangzhou differs from Beijing in three and differs from Suzhou in the other two. The set of criteria on this table provides a graphic illustration of how the Hangzhou dialect straddles the boundary between a typical Mandarin dialect and a typical Wu dialect in terms of its overall features.

Below we examine the feature of HZD in greater details, looking at its phonological, grammatical and other properties. In most cases, I will compare it to mandarin, because it's now not only the official, but also a fully-investigated language in China.

## 2. The Phonology of HZD

### 2.1. Consonants

There are 28 consonants in HZD as in the table below ([ŋ], [l] and [ʔ] only appear in finals):

		bilabial	labio-dental	alveolar	alveolo-palatal	velar	glottal
nasal		m		n	ɲ	ŋ	
plosives	voiced	b		d		g	
	voiceless unaspirated	p		t		k	ʔ
	voiceless aspirated	p <sup>h</sup>		t <sup>h</sup>		k <sup>h</sup>	
fricatives	voiced		v	z			ɦ
	voiceless		f	s	ɕ		h
affricates	voiced			dʒ	dʑ		
	voiceless unaspirated			ts	tɕ		
	voiceless aspirated			ts <sup>h</sup>	tɕ <sup>h</sup>		
approximants							
lateral approximants				l			

Table 2.1.1 Consonants of HZD

Mr. Simmons suggests that HZD's phonology is much more close to Wu dialects rather than Mandarin. It has a three-way contrast of initial stops and affricates property which is the most striking feature commonly shared by Wu dialects (Simmons, 1995). It can be seen that HZD, in strong affinity to the Wu dialect pattern, has a set of eight voiced initials: [b], [d], [dʒ], [dʑ], [g], [v], [z] and [ɦ]; examples include 跑[bɔʌ], 弟[diʌ], 住[dʒɥʌ], 全[dʑyɔʌ], 環[guɔʌ], 晚[væʌ], 杭[ɦaŋʌ].

### 2.2 Vowels

There are no more than 10 basic vowels in O-HZD<sup>2</sup>:

	Front	Near front	Central	Back
Close	i y			u
Close mid	e ø			o
Mid			ə	
Open mid		ɛ		ɔ
Open				ɑ

Table 2.1.2 Basic Vowels of HZD

These two charts only show the basic elements of the pronunciation. To have a fully picture, we need to know how they get along with each other to produce a syllable.

## 2.2. Syllable Structure

Having some idea of what basic elements are in the pronunciation, we can look into HZD's phonology. In the Pinyin system, the traditional Chinese phonetic system, phonetic symbols are divided into initials and rhymes.

We can express the constraints in onset-rhyme model as follow:

1. The onset isn't obligatory. Syllable can begin with a vowel if and only if the [m], [n] or [ɹ] is in the rhyme.
2. The onset isn't complex. It is one consonant exactly.
3. The nucleus may be complex. V, V-V, or V-V-C are all possible nucleus.
4. No coda. But the syllable can be ended with a nasal consonant if there is one in the nucleus [ɹ], [m], [n], [ŋ] and [l].

The complexity of HZD's pronunciation is embodied in its rhymes. Here are all 53 rhymes in O-HZD:

i <sup>1</sup>	ə <sup>6</sup>	ɑ <sup>10</sup>	ɛ <sup>14</sup>	ɔ <sup>18</sup>	o <sup>20</sup>	ø <sup>22</sup>	ei <sup>24</sup>
i <sup>2</sup>	m <sup>7</sup>	ia <sup>11</sup>	iɛ <sup>15</sup>	io <sup>19</sup>		iø <sup>23</sup>	
u <sup>3</sup>	n <sup>8</sup>	ua <sup>12</sup>	ue <sup>16</sup>		uo <sup>21</sup>		ui <sup>25</sup>
ɥ <sup>4</sup>	əl <sup>9</sup>	ɥɑ <sup>13</sup>	ɥɛ <sup>17</sup>				ɥei <sup>26</sup>
y <sup>5</sup>							
ẽ <sup>27</sup>		en <sup>32</sup>	aŋ <sup>37</sup>	oŋ <sup>41</sup>	aɹ <sup>43</sup>	əɹ <sup>47</sup>	oɹ <sup>51</sup>
iẽ <sup>28</sup>		in <sup>33</sup>	iaŋ <sup>38</sup>	ioŋ <sup>42</sup>	iaɹ <sup>44</sup>	iəɹ <sup>48</sup>	ioɹ <sup>52</sup>
	uõ <sup>29</sup>	un <sup>34</sup>	uaŋ <sup>39</sup>		uaɹ <sup>45</sup>		uoɹ <sup>53</sup>
	ɥõ <sup>30</sup>	ɥen <sup>35</sup>	ɥaŋ <sup>40</sup>		ɥaɹ <sup>46</sup>	ɥəɹ <sup>49</sup>	
	yõ <sup>31</sup>	yn <sup>36</sup>				yəɹ <sup>50</sup>	

Table 2.2.1 Rhymes in HZD

10 basic vowels make up more than 50 rhymes. Some rhymes are basically made up of one vowel,

<sup>2</sup> There are several vowels didn't appear in the table because: [ẽ], [õ] is the nasalization of [e], [o]; [ɥ] is the velarization of [u]; [ɿ] is the apicalization of [i].

like [o<sup>20</sup>] or [i<sup>2</sup>]. There may be more than one vowel in a rhyme, like [uo<sup>21</sup>]. There can be a consonant at the end of the vowel as well, for instance [in<sup>33</sup>].

Examples of special rhymes include:

[uoʔ]: 活[huoʔ], alive or live

[ʏaŋ]: 黃[hʏaŋ], yellow; 雙[sʏaŋ], double;

[yn]: 群[dʒyn], a group of

[yō]: 圈[tʂ<sup>h</sup>yō], circle

[iē]: 天[t<sup>h</sup>iē], sky

### 2.3. Tone and Sandhi

As in Mandarin, every character in O-HZD represents a syllable, and has its own tone. The tone is largely due to the character's position in the phrase which we will discuss in the last part of the paper. For a single character, there are 7 basic tones:

	Ping	Shang	Qu	Ru
Yin	Yin-Ping[˥]33	Yin-Shang[˨˨˨]53	Yin-Qu[˨˨˨]55	Yin-Ru[˨˨˨]5
Yang	Yang-Ping[˨˨˨]213	—	Yang-Qu[˨˨˨]13	Yang-Ru[˨˨˨]2

Table 2.3.1 Tones in HZD<sup>3</sup>

Unlike English, HZD seldom violate the constraints and change the vowel or the consonant. But for tone language, when some tones get together (for instance Yin-Ru and Yang-Ru), it becomes extremely hard to pronounce the phrase. This is not a very common phenomenon in modern Mandarin, since there are too few tones in it. Nevertheless, it is the most significant part of HZD's phonology. The tones will change not only due to tones nearby but also the phrase's structure. Maybe the best example for this is:

呆呆交[hɛɛk hɛɛk tɕiɔt]

adv. unlikely

The basic tone of 呆 is [˨˨˨], but it changes into tones, [k] or [ɿ], even in a single word.

As for its complexity, we just discuss the rule when the former syllable word is Yang-Pin [˨˨˨]. For a two-syllable NP (two-character or two-word NP in Chinese), the basic rule is:

**Rule for two-syllable NP (if the former is Yang-Pin [˨˨˨]):**

**a) If the latter isn't Yang-Ping [˨˨˨], the former will be changed into [k];**

湖濱[hɛɛk pin˥]    靈隱[lɪn˥k ʔin˥]    人糞[zen˥k fen˥]    移動[hɪk˥k doŋ˥]  
 \*lake-shore;    Lin Yin;    \*Human-dung;    \*move-move;  
 lakeshore;    Lin Yin (placename);    dung;    to move;

**b) Else, if the latter is also Yang-Ping [˨˨˨], it should be changed into [ɿ], and the former should be changed into [k];**

長城[dʒaŋ˥k dzen˥k]  
 \*long-wall  
 The Great Wall

<sup>3</sup> Here Yin, Yang and Ping etc. refer to traditional Chinese tone classification.

For two-syllable VP phrase, however, there is another rule for the same situation:

**Rule for two-syllable VP:**

a) If the former is Yang-Ping[˥], it becomes [ɿ];

爬山[bəɿɿk sɛ˥˥]	留神[liəɿɿk zen˥˥]	排水[bɛɿɿk sɥei˥˥]	抬轎[dɛɿɿk dzio˥˥]
*climb-mountain;	*keep-mind;	*remove-water;	*carry-chair
climb a mountain;	look out;	to drain;	carry a sedan chair;

b) Else, both tones remain the same;

*blow-wind	*live-sick	*hit-people	wash hands
吹風[ts'uei˥˥ foŋ˥˥]	生病[sen˥˥ bin˥˥]	打人[təɿ˥˥ zen˥˥]	洗手[ɕi˥˥ sei˥˥]
go			
for a blow	have a sick	beat someone	wash hands

## 2.4. Inter-generation Phonological Verifications

Though HZD is spoken by no more than 1 million people, there are some inter-generation phonological verification itself. When we look into this dialect, there is a dividing line between old style (O-HZD) and new style (N-HZD) now. This borderline became much clearer in the last 50 years. Dialect still used today is N-HZD.

The two both have the same 28 initial as we show in table 2.1.1. The most and the only difference is about the vowels. The latest document said there are 49 vowels in HZD, but we can only find 38 vowels still used in today's N-HZD.

We can see the [ɛ̃] to [ɛ] and [ẽ] to [e] change in the table below:

O-HZD	N-HZD	Meaning of words
彈[dɛ̃ɛ˥˥] ≠ 抬[dɛ˥˥]	彈= 抬[dɛ˥˥]	fillip; lift;
肩[tɕiẽ˥˥] ≠ 街[tɕie˥˥]	肩= 街[tɕie˥˥]	shoulder; street;
延[fiẽ˥˥] ≠ 鞋[fiɛ˥˥]	延= 鞋[fiɛ˥˥]	delay; shoes;
敢不敢[kɛ̃˥˥pəŋ˥˥kɛ̃˥˥] ≠ 改不改[kɛ˥˥pəŋ˥˥kɛ˥˥]	敢不敢= 改不改[kɛ˥˥pəŋ˥˥kɛ˥˥]	dare to; change;

Table 2.4.1 Change of [ɛ̃] and [ẽ] in HZD.

In the O-HZD, nasal vowels like [ɛ̃] and [ẽ] are common especially in the end of words. But in N-HZD, they are replaced by [ɛ] and [e]. In the table, different pronounced words in O-HZD may have the same pronunciation in N-HZD. Another big change from [ɿ] to [u] is almost the same, the latter replaces the former in N-HZD.

Here are 2 tables recorded the rhymes in today's O-HZD and N-HZD (Xu Yue, 2004):

ɿ	a	ɛ	ɔ	o	ei	ē	ǣ	ən	oŋ	əʔ	aʔ	oʔ	əl	m	ŋ
i	ia	iɛ	io		iø	iē	iǣ	in	ioŋ	iəʔ	iaʔ				
u	ua	uɛ			ui	uō	uǣ	uən		uaʔ	uoʔ				
ɥ	ɥa	ɥɛ			ɥei	ɥō		ɥən		ɥəʔ	ɥaʔ				
y						yō		yn		yəʔ					

Table 2.4.2 49 Rhymes of O-HZD

ɿ	a	ɛ	ɔ	ou	ei	aŋ	ən	oŋ	əʔ	aʔ	oʔ	əl/ɛ	m	ŋ
i	ia	iɛ	io		iø	iaŋ	in	ioŋ	iəʔ	iaʔ	ioʔ			
u	ua	uɛ		uo	ui	uaŋ	uən		uaʔ					
y				yo			yn		yəʔ					

Table 2.4.3 38 Rhymes of N-HZD

Notice that both of their finals are less than 53 which we illustrated before. Table.2.1.3. records the pronunciation of a women called Xu Song-hen. She was born in 1923 and passed away several years ago. Nowadays O-HZD's finals in 2.4.2 and 2.4.3 are documented according to Wang Yongxiang (77 old). And N-HZD is documented according to later 1950s

It is apparent in N-HZD basic vowel [ɥ] disappeared, and [ē], [ō] were replaced by [e], [o]. The disappearance of nasal sound has happened in almost every Wu family dialect. Syllable of [ɥ] can hardly be heard in any Wu dialect (except the Shao Xing dialect which has a close relationship with HZD). But the Mandarin has never undertaken such changes. Hence, we can say here: N-HZD is much closer to other Wu dialects than the old one. And it seems that Wu dialects have influenced HZD much more than the Mandarin.

### 3. The Grammar of HZD

#### 3.1. Basic Grammar Structure

One may suppose that all the language using Chinese characters would have the same grammar rules, or they won't be intelligible through writing and reading. That's true to a great extent, both of them share these basic properties: a) The basic sentence structure is S-V-O; b) There are hardly any morphological variations; c) Word-order plays an important part in the grammar; d) There are many compound words.

##### 3.1.1. Head Directionality Perspective

Under a more broad vision, when looking into its grammar from the Head Directionality Perspective, we will have a clear and consistent result.

To add new words at the beginning or end of the phrase decide the Head Directionality parameter. When heads follow phrase in forming larger phrase, it's a head-last language, like Japanese. Alternatively, if the heads precede phrases in forming larger phrases, it's a head-first language like English. The value of Head Directionality Parameter settles several aspects of words-orders in the sentence as we can see in the follow table:

Element A	Element B	Mandarin or HZD phrases
Verb	Direct object	狗 咬 人。 [kou˥] [jau˥] [ʒən˥] 狗 咬 人。 [kø˥] [ʔiɔ˥] [zen˥] The dog bites people.
Verb	pre/postposition phrase	走 进 那个房子。 [tsou˥] [tɕin˥] [na˥ ky˥] [fʰaŋ˥ tsɿ] 走 进 那个房间。 [tsei˥] [tɕin˥] [na˥koʔŋ] [vaŋ˥ tɕiɛ˥] to go into that house
Verb	Embedded Clause	我 猜想 他已经到了。 [wo˥] [tsʰŋɕiaŋ˥] [tʰa˥jɿtɕiŋ˥tau˥ly] 我 料想 他老早到得。 [ŋo˥] [liɔ˥ɕiaŋ˥] [tʰa˥lɔ˥tsɔ˥tɔ˥tə] I suppose he is already in.
Pre/post-position	Related noun phrase	笔 在 桌子里面。 [bi˥] [tsai˥] [tɕuo˥tsɿli˥miæn˥] 笔 在 桌子頭。 [piəʔŋ] [dzɛ˥] [tsoʔŋtsɿ li˥dei] The pen is in the desk.
Noun	Related pre/post phrase	书上 的 记号。 [ʃʰu˥sʰaŋ˥] [ty] [tɕi˥gau˥] 書本高頭 的 記號。 [sqʰpen˥kɔ˥dei] [tə] [tɕi˥ŋɔ˥k] *on the book (possessive) mark. (marks on the book)
Complementizer	Embedded clause	No complementizer (introducing a clause) in Chinese.
Auxiliary	Main verb	你 一定 要休息。 [ni˥] [ji˥tiŋ˥] [jau˥ɕiou˥ɕi] 你 定 好好交歇歇。 [ni˥] [din˥] [hɔ˥hɔ˥tɕiɔ˥kɕiəʔŋɕiəʔŋ] You must rest.

Table 3.1.1.1 Word Order in HZD and Mandarin

In English or other head directionality first languages, Element A precedes B.

Well, despite the complementizer, and special auxiliary word “的[ty]”, HZD seems to have exactly the same syntax with Mandarin. Remember the sentences in the chart are the most basic ones. There is no rule without exception. In the next part, we will come through 4 properties in HZD's syntax.

### 3.1.2. Highlights of Construction in HZD

#### 3.1.2.1 O-S-V Structure

The first property is about word order in simple sentence which only has one subject, one verb



and one object. Most of Mandarin sentences have a S-V-O structure. This is illegible in HZD, while the authentic way of speaking is S-O-V, or O-S-V:

Mandarin or Wu: 他 读好 文章 了。 (1.1)  
 [tʰa] [tu˧˥xau˧] [wən˧˥tsaŋ] [lɿ]  
 \*He read the paper has.

Despite the position of the functional word “了”(which shows the completion), the word order will be “*He (has)read the paper.*”, which is a fair English sentence.

HZD: 他 文章 读好 得。 (1.2)  
 \*He the paper read has.

or 文章 他 读好 得。 (1.3)  
 \*The paper he read has.

I should point out this difference is more of degree rather than kind. The last two are understandable in Mandarin, but seldom used. While in HZD, the last two are widely used, and we can hardly hear sentence like the first one. When the intended subject can be recovered from the context, it is always omitted. For instance, we can simply say:

文章 读好 得。 (1.4)  
 \*The paper read has.

We should notice this is not a passive voice (*read* rather than *be read*). To look into the passive or active voice in Chinese, we should focus on “把[pʌ˧]” and “被[pɿ˧]”.

### 3.1.2.2. 撥[pə˧] Structure

Here comes the second property. In Mandarin, every sentence spoken in the passive voice needs a passive acquisition “被”. And another acquisition “把” is used to strengthen the active voice, but “把” is not obligatory. Whenever we use “把” or “被”, the direct object (or subject if there is a direct subject) should appear right after it. Thus the word order changes into S-“把”-O-V+f or O-“被”-S-V+f. f means a functional word like “了”.

However, in HZD, there is only one acquisition “撥[pə˧]”, which replace both “被” and “把”:

Mandarin active voice 狗 把 兔子 咬死了。 (2.1)  
 [kou˧] [ba˧] [tʰu˧tsɿ] [jau˧tsɿ˧lɿ]  
 The dog made the rabbit killed.

(It's a English sentence, but seldom native speaker will speak like this.)

Mandarin passive voice 兔子 被狗 咬死了。 (2.2)  
 \*The rabbit by the dog Is killed.

HZD active voice 狗 撥 兔子 咬死了。 (2.3)  
 The dog made the rabbit killed.

HZD passive voice 兔子 撥狗 咬死了。 (2.4)  
 \*The rabbit by the dog Is killed.

Of course a rabbit can't bite a dog and kill it, at least for a normal one. So we will mistake the intended object for the subject in (2.3) and (2.4). But sometimes there is too little information in the single sentence that both understanding make sense. See this:

HZD active or passive voice 小王 撥 小李 打敗了。 (2.5)  
 [ɕiau˧˥waŋ˧] [pə˧] [ɕiau˧˥li˧] [ta˧˥bai˧] [lɿ]

Well, I can't translate this sentence into English directly, I need to decide which is subject first. In

When “撥” does the job of “被”, there is another subtle difference. I have said before, whenever we use “被”, the direct subject should follow it if there is one. But when we use “撥” in HZD the direct subject **has to** follow “撥”, which means the subject cannot be omitted. The sentence of (2.2) can be:

But if change the “被” to “撥”:

\*兔子 撥 咬死了。 (2.2.2)

### 3.1.2.3. Double-Objects Construction

[illegible][illegible]

#### 3.1.2.4. Verb Complement Construction

If

- a) the sentence is negative;
- b) There is an object and a complement in the sentence;
- c) The object is a pronoun;

Mandarin      我      对不起      你。      (4.1)  
[wo˥]      [tuei˥bu˥tɕʰ˥] [ni˥]  
I'm      sorry (for)      you.

### 3.2. Personal Pronoun

In Mandarin, we add the suffix *[mən]* after singular personal pronoun to make it plural

pronoun and add the suffix 的 [tɿ] after personal pronoun to make it possessive pronoun. When the two suffixes came together, 們 comes before 的. That is the basic rule in the Mandarin pronoun. But we find in HZD the suffix 的 is replaced by 們 in several situations:

A. Before personal pronoun.

跟朝 我 去 我們丈母娘 窩裡 吃飯。  
 [ken˥ tso˥˥] [ŋo˥˥] [tɕʰi˥˥] [ŋo˥˥men˥˥ dzan˥˥m˥˥niaŋ˥˥] [ʔo˥˥li˥˥] [tɕʰio˥˥ʔ˥˥ vɛ˥˥]  
 \*tonight I go we mother-in-law (possessive) house to have meal.  
 I will have dinner in my mother-in-law's this evening.

B. Before public place you spent a lot time with.

他們 社區 冒好類。  
 [tʰa˥˥men] [ɕio˥˥tɕʰi˥˥] [mo˥˥ho˥˥lei]  
 \*they blocks very-good.

The blocks he lives in is a well-governed society.

In the instance A, mother-in-law is the speaker's not the other person's in the dialog. The speaker use 我們 not to suggest the mother-in-law is ours or can be ours. Actually, the 我們 here refer to the speaker and his mother-in-law. They make up the concept of 我們, or we. Unlike Korean, the purpose of using plural pronoun instead of singular pronoun isn't something to show humbleness or intimacy. We can draw a conclusion in HZD: If there is another person not on the scene referred in the dialog, the pronoun grammar forces the speaker to include him or her in the concept of we or you. There seems to be a great gulf between the speaker and the listener.

Examples in B may be an amplification of this conclusion. Exactly the same, 他們 in B(2) referred to all the residents in the blocks he lives.

#### 4. The Uniqueness of HZD

So far, we have gone through the phonological and grammatical properties of HZD. It's also possible to find encoded knowledge embedded in HZD's phonology system or grammar system. Set the personal pronoun feature for instance. Hang Zhou residents seem to use kinship, workplace, living place and much more other aspects to divide the society into numerous groups and to give themselves identification. We find this culture put much weight on the answer to "Who I am?". This may suggest that society of its speakers may undertake an abruptly change in history. There are researches shows this property helps to understand the political meaning of The Water Margin, which is one of the four famous classic novels in China (Yang Zi-hua, 2003). It is written in HZD and other Wu dialects, containing remarkable historical details as well.

Nevertheless, HZD is also rich in its vocabulary. Since HZD is mostly spoken in the Hangzhou city, where hardly any particular animals and plants live, I will give examples of noun for food, adjective to praise someone is good at some skills, and two nursery rhythms. They will show a basic picture of the culture and life state. I have to lay stress on the importance of nursery rhythm in this part. It's a showcase of how child learns the HZD and gets into its culture.

## 4.1. Vocabulary

### 4.1.1. Noun for Foods

泡飯[pʰəʊ̯ vɛ̌ʌ]

Try to imagine what will happen when put rice in soup. 15 or 20 years ago, 泡飯 makes large part of traditional Hangzhou citizens' breakfast. Cooking rice in the soup, or simply pouring boiling water on cooked rice, it's easy and cheap. There are more kind of 泡飯 today, such as shredded chicken & rice in soup, Sea Food Rice Soup. But the original form died out in the breakfast.

刀切饅頭[təʊ̯ tɕʰiəʔ] muōʌ k dei] or 刀切[təʊ̯ tɕʰiəʔ]

饅頭 or steamed bread is a north food in origin. Well, 刀切饅頭 is entirely different. It is much smaller, softer and sometimes has a milk taste. My grandfather used to have it with his afternoon tea. They are still popular today.

蟹糊[ɕiɛ̌ʌ hǔʌ]

蟹 refers to crab, and 糊 refers to paste. This kind food is exactly what crab-paste means. There wasn't fridge in the old days. So crab cooked would go bad in the other day. Housewife pounds the crab meat into paste (sounds cruel) and mixes it with ingredients like vinegar. It's the best 泡飯-mate.

### 4.1.4. Adjective (to describe someone is good at some skills)

Adjectives I list here all have the basic meaning *someone is good at some skills*. But they stress on different aspects:

來三[lɛ̌ʌ sɛ̌ʌ] or 來事[lɛ̌ʌ zɿʌ]:someone who is good at different skills.

的的刮刮[tiaʔʌ tiaʔʌ kuaʔʌ kuaʔʌ]:someone whose skill is authentic, which can be others' model.

活絡[huoʔʌ loʔʌ]:someone who can use different skills according to local conditions.

牢靠[lǒʌ kʰəʔʌ]:someone who is good at learning and practicing new skills.

結棍[tɕiəʔʌ kunʌ]:someone whose skills is based on his/her physical constitution or long-time training.

## 4.2. Nursery Rhythm

[Rhythm 1]

一隻雞，

One chicken,

二會飛，

which can fly,

三個銅板買來滴，

costs 3 coins,

四川帶來滴，

It is from Sichuan,

五顏六色滴，

It is colorful,

駱駝背來滴，

It is brought by camel,

七高八低滴，

whose back is not level.

爸爸買來滴，

It is bought by father,  
酒里浸過滴，  
who cooked it with wine.  
實在沒有滴，  
Well, the story is not true.  
騙騙牙兒滴。  
Only child will be imposed.

[Rhythm2]

杭州小伢兒，  
Hangzhou Children,  
头上戴帽兒，  
with a hat on head,  
坐的小凳兒，  
sitting on the stool,  
吃饭用筷兒，  
having meals with chopsticks,  
喝汤用瓢兒，  
drinking soup with a spoon,  
吃好耍子兒。  
thinking about playing after meal.

## 5. Endangerment of HZD

Words and rhythms in part 4 show the Hangzhou citizen culture and give us a perfect reason to avoid the left of HZD. That's what we will deal with in this part.

HZD is spoken by no more than 1 million people in the city core area, isn't the official language of local government, isn't taught in the public educational system. It may get a A- in Krauss' schema for assessing language endangerment(Krauss 2006)(unstable, some locales where children speak) But the situation is become better now, we have reason it will be back to A level(all speak, children and up) in no more than ten years.

A basic reason is that HZD is easy to pick up, say, you will be influenced to pick up HZD when talk to HZD speaker. John Leighton Stuart(1876-1962)(or Situ Leideng in Chinese pronunciation), the American missionary and diplomat, was born in Hang Zhou and then had been in the other part of China for 18 years, in which time he got to speak a fluent Shang Hai Dialect and Su Zhou Dialect. But when he came back to Hang Zhou, the HZD accent covered other ones.

And enough attention is paid to protect the local accent. There are popular TV shows using HZD only. Now the program has an audience rating of 9.68% (Li Ji-Yun, 2007). A member of CPPCC even suggests that HZD should be used every informal situation. Unlike Tofa or other endangered languages, speaking Mandarin in the official situation and speaking HZD in the home is not hard to do. Actually, an indigenous HZD speaker is able to get the meaning of sentences spoken in

Mandarin.

There used to be a phonological balance in HZD of Wu and Mandarin. And this feature was kept through hundred years because the speakers didn't leave their hometown and there weren't so many nonnatives. Since Mandarin became nation-wide official language, and Hang Zhou became the capital of Zhejiang Province, HZD faces pressures from both side, Wu and Mandarin. We have a glimpse of HZD's phonological change in part 2. The change makes it intelligible (at least to some extent) to other Wu dialects. This change gives HZD more chance to be used in the competition with the Mandarin.

Nevertheless, we cannot say that the HZD using now is stable. A more serious problem is: whether HZD will be assimilated by other Wu dialects, and gradually lose its character? Because the O/N-HZD change is almost taken in pronunciation, embedded culture and knowledge in HZD is perfectly preserved in the N-HZD. However, we should keep an eye on such tendency in the few years.

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