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Temporal Organization of the Compounds in Standard Chinese

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The study investigates the temporal organization of the bisyllabic, trisyllabic and quadrisyllabic compounds in Standard Chinese. Results of the analysis of the speech data from six speakers show that (a) the rime durations, the durations of the syllable-initial voiceless fricatives and the VOT of the syllable-initial voiceless aspirated stops and affricates are conditioned by the position of the component syllable in the compounds; (b) the rime duration decreases as the component syllable moves from the final toward the initial position in the compounds; (c) the mean duration of the rimes is longer in the final position than in the initial and medial positions; (d) the voiceless fricatives and the voiceless aspirated stops and affricates are shorter in the medial position than in the initial and final positions; (e) the cross-speaker variation is less in the rime duration than in the duration of the voiceless fricatives and VOT of the voiceless aspirated stops and affricates; and (f) no temporal patterns have been observed in the voiceless unaspirated stops and affricates. The results will be discussed in terms of articulatory programming and timing (Kozhevnikov and Chistovich, 1965; Allen, 1975). A temporal model of the compound production in Standard Chinese will be proposed.