This study is the only one systematic description of the phonology and grammar of the Pingjiang dialect. Although there are so many dialects in China, there are a few reference grammars of these dialects. We can know the basic characteristics of the Pingjiang dialect through this study. This study also depicts how a researcher who is a native speaker of a language describes the language in an objective manner.

Pingjiang is located at the intersection between the borders of Hunan (Xiang dialect), Jiangxi (Gan dialect) and Hubei (Southern Mandarin) Province, where the three dialects contact each other. The research of the Pingjiang dialect will help us to understand the genealogical relation between Gan and Xiang dialect. It will also clarify the history of Chinese dialects. Most previous studies of the Pingjiang dialect have dealt with the phonological aspects of the language, and so grammatical descriptions have largely been out of focus. The aim of this study is to present a comprehensive description of the Pingjiang dialect, dealing with both the phonology and grammar. This study mainly focuses on the urban dialect in Pingjiang County.

Chapter 1 introduces the background, the aim, the research target of this study. Chapter 2 summarises the methods adopted in this study. This study is based on a corpus consisting of the elicited data and conversation data obtained through fieldwork.
Chapter 3 is a literature review of the studies of the Pingjiang dialect.

Chapter 4 sets out to describe the phonetics, lexicon, and grammar of eight varieties of Pingjiang. Even though these eight varieties show lexical variation, commonalities are pervasive. With a few exceptions, they show common phonetic characteristics. I attempt at a recategorisation of the subvarieties of Pingjiang with all these data.

Chapter 5 deals with the phonology of the Urban dialect of Pingjiang. The phonological system of the Pingjiang dialect is as follows.

Vowels 13 /a e i u o y o i u o n/
Consonant 21 /p pʰ m f t tʰ n l ts tsʰ s tsʰ s ³ k kʰ ŋ x kʷ kʷʰ ?/
Tone 7 /33, 13, 35, 21, 55, 22, 4/
Syllable structure (C)V(C)

Besides, based on the descriptions of previous studies, I reconstructed the phonological system of Urban Pingjiang spoken eighty years ago, and of the neighborhood dialects of Pingjiang. I compared these data with my own synchronic description of Urban Pingjiang.

Chapter 6 deals with the word class, noting the syntactic function of each word class and the class-changing derivational processes. I postulate nine word classes. These are: Nominals (nouns, demonstratives, and personal pronouns), Verbals (verbs and auxiliaries), Adjectivals (adjectives and adverbs), Numerals and Classifiers, Prepositions, Particles, Conjunctions, Interjections and Onomatopoeias. There are three demonstratives I (I), Ko (四), and Nu (四) in the Pingjiang dialect. And all of them are used deictically. But only the Ko also has the reference function in discourse. There is a formal distinction between inclusive and exclusive in the first person plural pronouns. If the speaker wants to include the hearer as part of the first person reference, the inclusive form as opposed to the exclusive form could be used. There are two sets of third person forms: one marked set is used for a third person who is a participant of the conversation and/or the focus of the speech. The preposition PA (把) has a number of functions. It designates deposit, instrument, passive agent (especially indirect passive), causative, object and location. The prepositions of location and source are distinguished if the action is Shiran (the action is influenced by the other reason) or Feishiran (the action is not influenced by the other reason). This generalisation is also true for the encodings of passive agent.

Chapter 7 deals with phrase structure and clause structure. The issues taken up here are basic word orders, topicalization and basic construction types such as
existential construction, presentational construction, interrogative construction, and negative construction. There are three negation words in the Pingjiang dialect. Pu (不) is a general negative marker, Mau (毛) is used in past tense and Mo (莫) is used in negative imperative sentences. With regard to phrase structure, I focused on the definiteness, demonstratives and classifiers in noun phrases, and on the tense, aspect and voice in verbal phrases. Aspectuality is marked by aspect particles. The aspect particle Ta (哒) not only expresses such aspectual categories as perfect, progressive, and continuance, but also expresses a certain modality. When the aspectual expresses as “Lo (落) + location” appears after a verb, it expresses progressive. But it expresses continuances when it appears in the end of the sentence.

Chapter 8 describes the morphology of the Pingjiang dialect, with a focus on affixation and reduplications. The prefix Lau (佬) is commonly used to encode kinship terms. The suffixes Pho (婆) and Keng (公) encode genders of nouns. Tse (睬) has a range of functions, the most common of which is as the marker of a toy with appearing after a big object. It also designates a body part of children. It also follows classifiers, adverb-adjective phrase, or kinship terms. Lau express respect on the part of the speaker when it follows the first part of the last name.

Chapter 9 deals with the system of the terms of address. Pingjiang has different terms for seven generations, and different terms for man and woman.

In Chapter 10, the final chapter, I compare the characteristics of phonetics, morphology, lexicon, and grammar of the Pingjiang dialect with those of the dialects of Gan and Xiang. I show that the Pingjiang dialect is closer to the Xiang dialects than the Gan dialects. That relation was also proven by the contrast between these characteristics lexicon of these dialects.

Li Lan (1994) pointed out that Pingjiang is a mixed dialect, where the tone system is not close to other dialects, and the consonants system is similar to that of Xiang dialect, but the vowel system is similar to that of Gan dialect I also point out that there are similarities in lexicon and grammar between Pingjiang and Xiang. But some phonetics characteristics are shared by Gan dialect, not Xiang dialect. So the conclusion is that the Pingjiang dialect is a subclass of Xiang dialect, but it is also influenced by the Gan dialect.