

Tone and Prominence

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There is a well-established relationship between tone and metrically prominent positions: metrically prominent positions attract high tone, and high toned moras attract metrical prominence. The empirical aim of this paper is to show that the converse is also true: there is an attraction between lower tone and metrically non-prominent positions. In addition, it is argued that these attractions hold at every prosodic level, from the mora to the Intonational Phrase. The theoretical aim of this paper is to provide a mechanism to account for tone-prominence interactions. Crucial to this proposal is the Designated Terminal Element of Liberman & Prince (1977). When combined with the elements of a tonal prominence scale, sets of constraints in fixed rankings are produced. Various rankings of these constraints with respect to stress- and tone-placement constraints produce the variety of attested tone-prominence interactions. To justify both the empirical and theoretical claims of this paper, the relation between tone and stress in three Mixtec dialects – Ayutla, Molinos, and Huajuapán – is examined. Conditions of adequacy on theories of prominence-driven stress are also considered.

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