

On tonal features and tonal accent

A number of prosodic systems show a contrast in the position of stress along with a tonal contrast, where the locus of tone is restricted to stressed positions (Lockwood 1983 calls these “tonal accent” systems). In this talk, I will demonstrate a unified account of tone and accent, drawing on data from two languages of this type: Goizueta Basque (Hualde et al. 2008) and Choguita Rarámuri (Caballero and Carroll to appear).

Building on the idea of autosegmental stress (Hagberg 1993; Dubina 2012), I propose that contrastive accent is an autosegment formally equivalent to the tonal root nodes employed for tonal feature geometries (by e.g., Yip 1989; Hyman 1993). In stress accent systems, this autosegment represents the locus of stress, while in tonal accent systems, it furthermore bears contrastive features specifying the tonal properties. This predicts that tone features may not be realized without the presence of accent, since accent is the only formal element (i.e., a root node) to which those features can link. Crucially, tone and accent do not need to be correlated by ad hoc principles; the representations carry an inherent dependency relation, and tone is automatically constrained by restrictions requiring accent to be culminative/obligatory (cf. Hyman 2006, 2009).

References

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