

## Crosslinguistic Principles underlying Tone Rules

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Tone rules (a.k.a., tone sandhi, tone processes) are complex phenomena, cited as a common occurrence among Sino-Tibetan languages. In addition, tone processes occur in many other language areas around the world. Tone rules seem to cluster geographically and geneologically such that there are rules that are typical of African tonal languages, Sinitic languages, etc. At the same time, some Tibeto-Burman languages have been noted to have African-like tone systems, despite bilingualism in Chinese (e.g., Southern Qiang). It is natural to ask what could account for the clustering of tone rules in a language, such that it can be classified into a type. Why aren't tone rules evenly dispersed across the thousands of tone languages?

This talk investigates whether there are certain parameters of tone phonology that restrict the types of tone rules that can occur within a given language. In particular, two dimensions of variation will be examined:

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| 1. | (Some) contour tones are primary                   | vs. | Only level tones are primary                   |
| 2. | (Nearly) every lexical syllable is marked for tone | vs. | Some lexical syllables are not marked for tone |

Combining these parameter values yields four categories, as below, with sample languages inserted:

	(Nearly) every lexical syllable has tone	Some lexical syllables do not have tone
(Some) contour tones are primary	Mandarin Chinese	Classical Greek
Only level tones are primary	Akan	Southern Qiang

The presentation evaluates the extent to which these classifications are useful in restricting the tone rules that can occur within a language. Examples are drawn from geographically diverse languages, in an attempt to probe the universality of these dimensions of variation.