

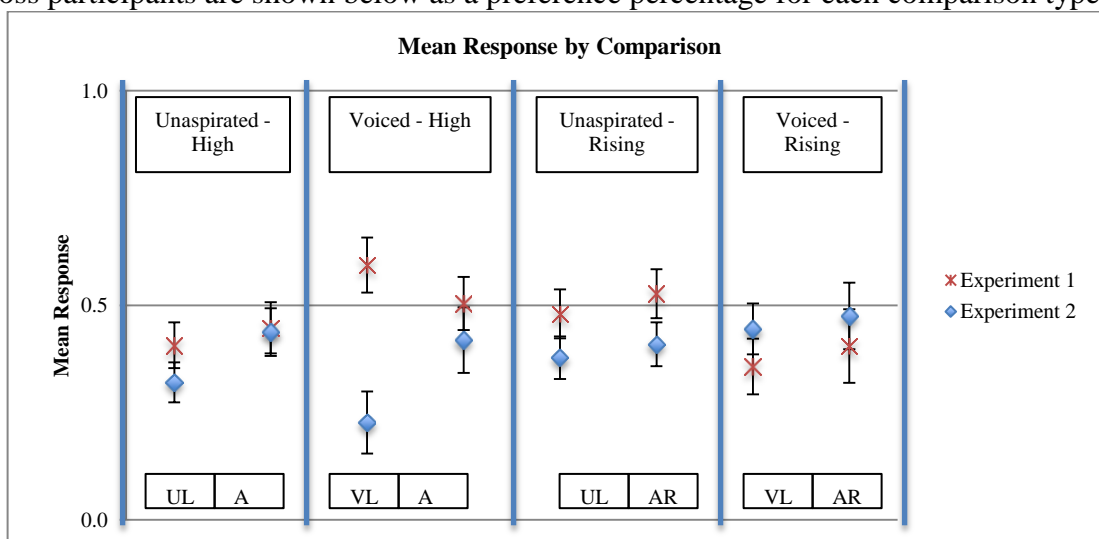
# Distinct Lexical Strata in Thai Consonant-Tone Interaction

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**Introduction** The grammatical status in native and loan strata of four lexical gaps concerning consonant-tone sequences in Thai are investigated via a pair of judgment experiments. There are no CV: syllables in Thai, that have voiced or unaspirated obstruent onsets along with high or rising tone in Thai (Ruangjaroon 2006). The experiments test whether these consonant-tone sequences are ungrammatical, and if so, whether there is evidence for lexical strata effects in Thai, similar to those in Japanese.

**Methods** Minimal pairs of nonce CV: stimuli were presented to native Thai-speaking participants, who chose which of the stimuli sounded more likely to be a Thai word. Stimuli differed only in tone or onset consonant with the same stimulus set used in both experiments. In Experiment 1, 14 participants were recruited in the USA with an English-speaking experimenter. In Experiment 2, 16 participants were recruited in Thailand with a Thai-speaking experimenter. Unlike experiment 1, participants in Experiment 2 were told that one of the two stimuli was an ancient Thai word, following Vance (1980) and Kawahara (2012). Therefore, in experiment 2, the stimuli were treated as native Thai, while in experiment 1 they were treated as English loans.

**Results** The results show that separate lexical strata exist in Thai, like Japanese (Ito & Mester 1995, 1999, 2001). All four consonant-tone sequences investigated are ungrammatical in the native Thai stratum; however, only one of these was ungrammatical in the English loan stratum. This result agrees with Ito & Mester (1995, 1999, 2001) in that loan strata restrictions are a subset of those holding in native strata. The results across participants are shown below as a preference percentage for each comparison type.



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