

Prominence Location in Languages with Tone and Pitch Accent

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In this paper, I will consider the location of prominence in languages with tone and pitch accent, which include African and Chinese languages and Japanese. If we try to discuss the location of phonological prominence in languages of the world, we need to define the prominence of these languages as well as that of stress languages. Haspelmath, et al. (2005) (*WALS*) do not include any chapters on the typology of languages in terms of the prominent position of tone and pitch accent, although Goedemans and van der Hulst (2005) show a typology of stress types and stress location. Maddieson (2005) is the only chapter on the typology of tone in *WALS*, which only discusses the complexity of tone and does not describe the location of tonal prominence in languages.

On the other hand, Yip (2002) and Duanmu (2008) argue that tone languages/dialects in Africa and China have different locations of tonal prominence in a tonal domain, i.e. left-prominent or right-prominent. If these studies are on the right track, we can discuss the typology of prominent positions in languages of the world. I will argue that we can decide the location of prominence in languages with tone/pitch accent by investigating tonal change and tone sandhi in a tonal domain in the language.

A particular topic I would like to focus on is the correlation between the location of prominence and word orders such as verb-object/object-verb and preposition-object/object-postposition. I will consider as a case study the difference of prominent positions and prosodic domains between Shanghai and other Chinese dialects such as Mandarin and Taiwanese. Although all these dialects have the same verb-object order, the tonal prominence is on the left in Shanghai and on the right in other Chinese dialects. I will argue that Shanghai has smaller tonal domain than other Chinese dialects in order to keep the tonal prominence on objects. Thus, we can keep the generalization that languages with verb-object/preposition-object order have prominence on objects.

I will also show that Japanese has left-prominence by arguing that low pitch in a word/compound-initial position is prominent. This argument allows us to keep the generalization that object-verb languages have left-prominence in a prosodic domain.

References

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