

The Composition of Phonological Tone in Burmese

James Gruber
Georgetown University

In this study, I present an autosegmental analysis of tone in Modern Burmese that requires only the specification of an H tonal autosegment and a [+CONSTRUCTED GLOTTIS] feature to describe the tonal contrasts. This specifically differs from prior analyses (Yip 2002, Green 2005) that posit phonological L tones or contour tones (such as HL for Creaky tone). Instead, I argue that the moraic alignment of only H better captures the four tones' contrasting pitch peaks. This claim is supported by acoustic data where pitch contours reflect a High pitch target, but fail to indicate active Low or Mid pitch targets.