THEORY OF TONE

FACT SHEET

Project Information

THoT
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European Research Council (ERC)

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€ 2 418 010,95

EU contribution
€ 2 418 010,95

Start date
1 September 2023
End date
31 August 2028

Coordinated by
INSTITUT NATIONAL DES LANGUES ET CIVILISATIONS ORIENTALES
France

Objective

Tonal languages are no longer perceived as exotic. According to modern concepts, about 50-60% of the world's languages are tonal. However, the main shortcoming of the majority of research dedicated to tones consists in a narrow panorama of research. It is most often limited either to the description of the tonal system of a certain language or to a particular problem, like correlation of tone and accent, etc. The goal of the project is twofold: (a) to prove that any tonal system can be classified into one of the (presumably) four categories and b) typical trends of change of these systems in diachronic perspective are movements from one category to another according to rules that have to be identified. It will be done on the basis of rich language data. The project covers all major areas of localization of tonal languages.
Within a five-year project, it is impossible to explore all the tonal languages of the world. Thus, a balanced sample of 150-200 languages will be carefully studied. This sample takes into account the language family, area of distribution and other relevant parameters including information on language structure, characteristics of the tonal system, functions of tone, tonal density index. This ambitious goal can be achieved through the participation of leading specialists in tonal languages, like Larry Hyman and other prominent tonologists.

The present project is a break-through as it will make possible to discover substantiate in-depth correlations between suprasegmental characteristics of a language, correlations between suprasegmental system and other parameters, such as genetic affiliation, areal distribution or morphological structure. The adopting the terminological system that can be applied to any tonal system of any language, will lead the research team to an adequate comparison of tonal systems. Special attention will be paid to intermediate types. The study of languages will combine typological, genetic and areal approaches.

Keywords
- Linguistic tone
- Tonal Density Index
- tonal systems
- suprasegmental systems
- toneme

Programme(s)

HORIZON.1.1 - European Research Council (ERC) - MAIN PROGRAMME

Topic(s)

ERC-2022-ADG - ERC ADVANCED GRANTS

Call for proposal

ERC-2022-ADG

See other projects for this call

Funding Scheme
Coordinator

INSTITUT NATIONAL DES LANGUES ET CIVILISATIONS ORIENTALES

Net EU contribution

€ 2 418 010,95

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Region

Ile-de-France > Ile-de-France > Paris

Activity type

Higher or Secondary Education Establishments

Links

Contact the organisation
Participation in EU R&I programmes
HORIZON collaboration network

Other funding

€ 0,00

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European Union, 2023