

The Department of Linguistics
is pleased to present

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speaking on

**The interaction between lexical and grammatical tone
in Choguita Rarámuri (Tarahumara)***

Friday, November 9, 2018

1:20 PM

Location: HUM 1 - Room 210

Abstract:

The cross-linguistic study of tone has largely focused on its lexical phonological properties, its phonetic implementation and interaction with other prosodic phenomena, but the morphological role of tone is still under-documented: What kind of morphological information may tone convey across languages? And what mechanisms regulate the outcome when there are lexical and grammatical tones in conflict? This talk addresses these questions through the lens of Choguita Rarámuri (CR; Uto-Aztecan), a prosodically complex language of northern Mexico.

CR has three lexical tones exclusively realized in stressed syllables. Stress-accent is morphologically conditioned and tonal patterns are partially predictable from stress. Yet there is evidence for grammatical tone and tonal classes independent of stress. We argue that the full range of grammatical tone patterns in CR follows from an analysis that incorporates tonal underspecification and construction-specific tonal patterns as output-oriented schemas. This analysis captures several properties of this system, including: (i) arbitrary relationship between tone patterns of related forms, (ii) heterogeneous nature of morphosyntactic classes expressed by tone melodies, and (iii) overwriting/avoidance of lexical tone by grammatical tone. We contrast this analysis with an alternative morphemic analysis that has been proposed in the literature (Spahr 2016), and argue that a construction-based analysis makes the correct empirical predictions.

* Work in collaboration with Austin German (UCSD/UT Austin)