Prosodic or Suprasegmental Features

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Those properties that occur *above the level* of segments (regardless of their place or manner of articulation) are called *suprasegmental (or prosodic) properties*.

These are *pitch, loudness, and length*.
the auditory property of a sound that enables us to put it on a scale that ranges from low to high

Especially noticeable in sonorous sounds like, vowels, glides, liquids, and nasals.

Pitch function linguistically differs from one language to another.

Is differentiated into: tone language and intonation language
Tone Languages

- languages that use pitch to differentiate words meaning.

- Types: Level/register & contour tones
Level/Register Tone

- Level tones that signal meaning differences are called *register tone* of which norm is two or three register tones (low, high or low, mid, high).
- A single tone may be associated with more than one syllabic element, e.g. Mende, a language spoken in West Africa.
  - pélé
  - háwámá
  - ‘house’
  - ‘waistline’

E.g. Nupe (spoken in Nigeria)

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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[ba]</td>
<td>[ba]</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘be sour’</td>
<td>‘cut’</td>
<td>‘count’</td>
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- This type of notation is known as *autosegmental notation*. 
Contour Tone

- changes pitch on a single syllable

  e.g. Mandarin

  ma ‘mother’ (high level)
  ma ‘hemp’ (high rising)
  ma ‘horse’ (low rising)
  ma ‘to scold’ (falling)
# Contour Tone

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tonomer</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Syllable</th>
<th>Example</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><code>\</code></td>
<td>low tone</td>
<td>napshot</td>
<td>“a nickname”</td>
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<tr>
<td><code>-</code></td>
<td>mid tone</td>
<td>naphot</td>
<td>“rice paddy”</td>
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<td><code>´</code></td>
<td>high tone</td>
<td>naphot</td>
<td>“young maternal uncle or aunt”</td>
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<td><code>^</code></td>
<td>falling tone</td>
<td>naphot</td>
<td>“face”</td>
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<tr>
<td><code>^</code></td>
<td>rising tone</td>
<td>naphot</td>
<td>“thick”</td>
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Register vs Contour

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<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>MH</td>
<td>MLH</td>
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<td>[ma]</td>
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register    contour    contour    contour
Languages of which pitch movement does not differ the words meaning, although intonation serves to convey information to broadly meaningful nature.

- *Terminal contour*: falling intonation at the end of an utterance
- *Non-terminal contour*: rising intonation often signals incompleteness.
The auditory feature of a sound that enables us to place it on a scale that ranges from short to long.

A vowel can be lengthened by prolonging it; a consonant is lengthened by maintaining the closure or obstruction longer.

Length is indicated by the use of colon [:]

e.g. Finnish:
  - laki [k] ‘law’
  - lakki [k:] ‘cap’
  - tuli [u] ‘fire’
  - tuuli [u:] ‘wind’

Dannish:
  - bunde [ˈbɔnə] 'bottoms'
  - bundne [ˈbɔnnə] 'bound' (pl.)
  - bundene [ˈbɔnənə] 'the bottoms'
Stress

- The auditory feature of a sound that enables us to place it on a scale that ranges from soft to loud.
- It can be seen in stressed vowels or syllables; stressed vowels will be louder than unstressed ones.
- Stress is indicated by an acute accent [´] to show primary stress and a grave accent [ˈ] to show secondary stress, or ¹ for a primary and ² for a secondary.
- Eg. [thèləgræfɪk] or [thèləgræfɪk]

Representation:
- Primary stress : an acute accent [´ ]; ¹
- Secondary stress : a grave accent [ˈ ]; ²