

## Tone Pattern Theory: A Phonetics based Mandarin tone Phonology

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Chinese is a tone language in which tone is crucial in distinguishing lexical meanings. Naturally, the issue of the Mandarin tone system has been remaining the center of both Chinese Phonetics and Phonology over the past few decades. Among the phonological theories advanced in recent years, Tone Pattern Theory, an important subset of the Phonetics-based Phonology theory-- Sound Pattern Theory, is one of the most successful and widely applied theories in processing this important suprasegmental feature of Mandarin Chinese.

In this talk, we will first provide an overview of Tone Pattern Theory by introducing its theoretical basis, methods of data processing, and application in Standard Chinese, dialects, and other tone languages. Then, we will present an example of the application of Tone Pattern Theory in analyzing Mandarin lexical tones produced by Chinese prelingually deaf people. With this example, we will try to display the merits of Tone Pattern Theory such as the good theoretical interpretability, the widespread and flexibility in application, and the visuality of the results. Moreover, we will discuss the limitations of Tone Pattern Theory and the possible directions of development in the future.