

## **Positional faithfulness in the Bum verb lexical tone**

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Tones carries a significant functional load in Bantoid languages, although not much is known about it when it comes to central ring Grassfields Bantu languages such as Bum. This work sets out to identify and describe the Bum grammatical and lexical tonal melodies within the verb. The data collected for this present study is taken from an earlier study and will be analyzed using Positional Faithfulness Theory, a sub theory of Optimality Theory. Basically, Bum verbs are classifiable into two tone melodies: L and H, which surface with four melodies: L, HL, LHL and HHL in citation form, depending on whether the verb is monosyllabic or disyllabic. While the final L is intonational, the other tones are either lexical or attributable to the imperative. This complexity is intensified when the verb is placed in various grammatical contexts which contribute H, L, LH and HLH tone melodies. They interact with lexical tones in various algorithms. This interaction may force these tones to behave differently, sometimes replacing or merging with other tones. The resulting tonal phenomena: High Tone Spread and Tone grounding are identified and rules formulated. This study also investigates whether these tones are actually faithful or not. We will see how H tone strives to remain faithful, though this is not the case with the L tone class.