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Tone in Saxwe

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Tone in Saxwe

Tone in Saxwe

Tone in Saxwe provides a comprehensive look at the tonal system of a Kwa language, including an examination of lexical underlying tone patterns as well as intonational boundary tone and tone which signals grammatical meaning without the aid of segmental information. While a number of Kwa languages have been analyzed as having two underlying tones, the author shows in this study that Saxwe has a three-tone system—likely a result of the historical contact between a two-tone Gbe language which had depressor consonant-related lowering effects and a three-tone Yoruboid language.

Included in the analysis is a series of phonetic studies of the details of tone implementation in Saxwe. The author examines the phenomena known as automatic downstep and non-automatic downstep and notes the variation that is observed among speakers as they implement downstep. This book will be of interest to Africanists, as well as to those interested in tone and intonation studies.

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