Swiss German intonation patterns

Leemann, Adrian

Abstract: Switzerland is renowned for having a diverse linguistic and dialectal landscape in a comparatively small and confined space. Possibly, this is one of the reasons why Swiss German dialects have been investigated thoroughly on various linguistic levels. Nevertheless, natural speech intonation has, until today, not been examined systematically. The aim of this study is to analyze natural Swiss German fundamental frequency behavior according to linguistic, paralinguistic, and extralinguistic variables, using statistical tests against the backdrop of detecting dialect-specific patterns as well as cross-dialectal differences. The intonation analyses were conducted with the mathematically-formulated Command-Response model. This is the first large-scale study that applies this framework on a large corpus of natural, dialectal speech. This contribution provides a holistic account of the truly multilayered features of natural speech intonation and brings to light detailed underlying patterns of Swiss German dialectal fundamental frequency behavior. The book is mainly targeted at linguists, speech scientists, as well as dialectologists.
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by Adrian Leemann
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