

Nancy C. Kuhla - University of Essex/UK

Tonal patterns and phonological processing in Bantu

The talk will investigate High tone spreading patterns in two dialects of Bemba (central Bantu) contrasting differences in bounded and unbounded spreading. Two contrasting patterns of binary versus ternary spread will be illustrated, focusing on how these interact with the OCP and downstep. The talk further presents results of a perception experiment that investigates the perceptual robustness of the tonal patterns discussed to test whether speakers can distinguish binary, ternary and unbounded spreading, shedding some light on the status of derived tones in contrast to lexical tones.

Nancy C. Kula is professor of Linguistics in the department of Language and Linguistics at the University of Essex. She did her PhD at the University of Leiden, The Netherlands on the phonology of Bemba. Her research focuses on Bantu Languages where she primarily works on phonology and the phonology-syntax interface, but has also worked on various aspects of Bantu morphosyntax. She has published on a range of topics in various international journals and is co-editor of the Bloomsbury Companion to Phonology (2013).