

Prosodic boundaries and anticipatory pharyngealisation spread in Arabic: a cross-dialect study

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1. Introduction

Recent studies have shown that the phonetic realization of speech varies as a function of *prosodic boundaries*, e.g. phrase (McClellan 1973), word and syllable (Krakow 1989). In this presentation I introduce preliminary results from my PhD on *the effects of prosodic boundary strength on anticipatory pharyngealisation spread across two modern Arabic dialects (Egyptian and Libyan)*. It has been claimed that speakers of different Arabic dialects take different pharyngealisation domains, i.e. syllable in Egyptian Broselow (1976) and word in Libyan Ghazeli (1977).

What is still unclear is the extent to which prosodic boundaries may influence pharyngealisation spread. On the basis of the literature, we predict that anticipatory pharyngealisation effects would be blocked or at least significantly attenuated in each dialect by the boundary of the domain it takes for its spread.

2. Method

Materials: Four sets of materials were constructed, i.e., one set for within word effects, and three sets for across word boundary effects. The across word boundary conditions were elicited using three syntactic constructions numbered below from C1 to C3 in order of increasing strength.

Test sequences are [aba], followed by an emphatic trigger [T, D, S], and from which separated by our hypothesized boundary types as shown in the table:

condition	pharyngealised	plain
Within word	[mabaaDish] “it did not lay eggs”	[mabaadish] “it did not wear out”
C1: [NP[N ADJ]]: (Word)	[dibbaaba#Daay?a] “a missing tank”	[dibbaaba#daafya] “a warm tank”
C2: [S[NP][VP]]: (Phrase)	[il-iddibbaaba#daa?it] “the tank went missing”	[il-ddibbaaba#daabit] “the tank melted”
C3: Parentheticals: (Intonational phrase)	[...binnisba li-dibbaaba#Daa?] “... is, according to the tank, went missing”	[...binnisba li-dibbaaba#daab] “... is, according to the tank, melted”

Procedure and measurements: Two repetitions were recorded from one speaker of each dialect. Data were analyzed and segmented in PRAAT. F2 measurements were taken at both (V1 and V2) segments, i. e., {V2 [a] + b + (V1) [a]} in sequences like: [m**abaa**Dish].

3. Results: Preliminary results show that pharyngealisation domains in both dialects do not seem to be as previously defined (i.e., syllable in Egyptian and Whole word in Libyan). This is so because syllable boundaries did not block spreading in the Egyptian data, and word boundaries did not block it in the Libyan data. More data will be collected and analyzed.

4. References

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