

Aspects of Pharyngeal Coarticulation

This book reports on a research project investigating pharyngeal articulation in normal Arabic speech. Pharyngeal consonants are rarely used in the sound inventories of the world languages. They are complex and difficult to learn by native and non-native speakers alike. Several experiments were conducted at Stockholm University, Sweden aiming to obtain empirical data on pharyngeal articulation and coarticulation. The project deals with numerous research questions such as: What is the connection, indicated by several phonological observations, between laryngeal, pharyngeal and nasal articulations? As seen in published x-ray pictures, the jaw is open during pharyngeal consonant production, why is that?

Video fiberscopic imaging, electromagnetic transmitters for movement tracing and acoustic analysis are some of the techniques used to provide the important findings in this book. The complexity of pharyngeal consonant production is found to be caused by several coordinated movements of various articulators. Mechanical constraints on the jaw movement due to pharyngeal articulation are significantly affecting the structure of the Arabic language, both at the prosodic and the segmental level. This considerably affects the process of acquisition of these sounds as well as the phonotactics of the word structure of Arabic. The results have implication for the use of the pharynx in speech, for syllable structure universals, for phonological developments and for articulatory modeling.

This book gives an all-round and comprehensive treatment of pharyngeal coarticulation, a highly relevant topic in general phonetics. It is informative and is likely to serve as a future reference on pharyngeal phonetics.

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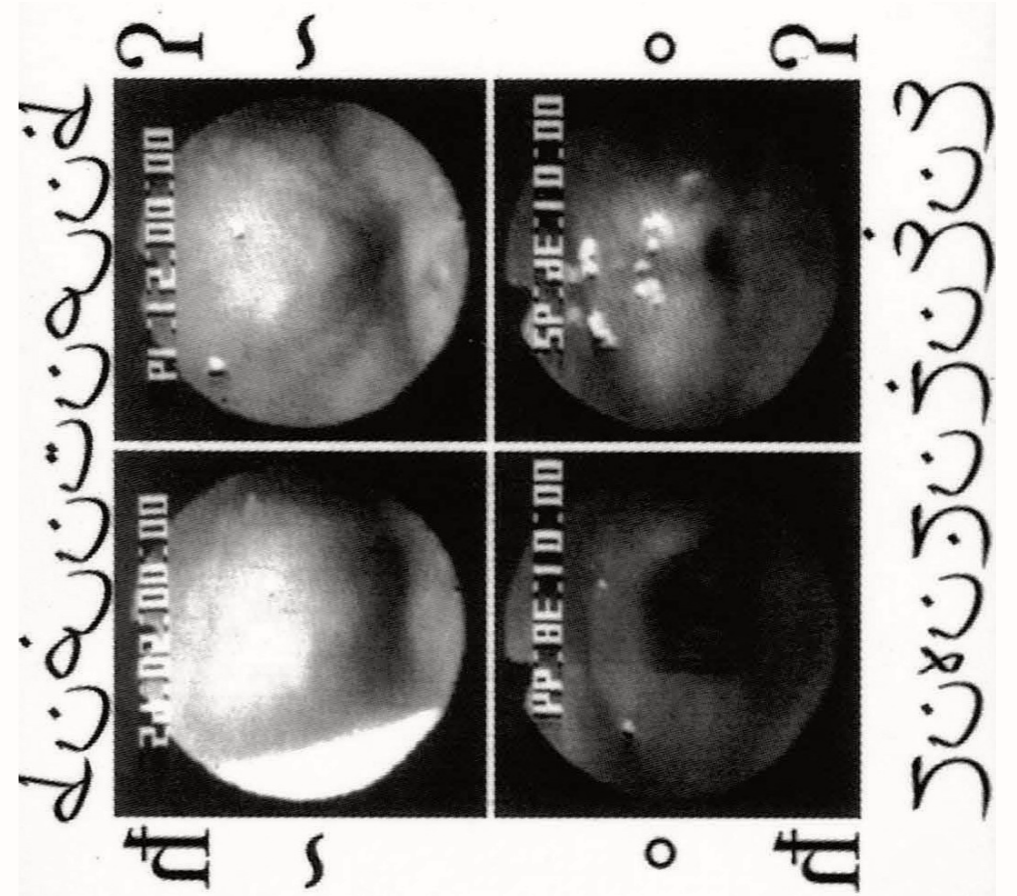
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