

Excrescent-, epenthetic- vs. phonemic- schwas: acoustic correlates of three different cognitive realities.

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On the Phonetic manifestations of syllable organization : Data from French and Tashlhiyt Berber

Is syllable organization a purely abstract property of the phonological structure of an utterance, or does it translate into specific acoustic and articulatory manifestation? Syllable composition and syllabification principles in different languages have been the source of much debate in phonological literature. Since many decades, phoneticians have been trying to find phonetic (acoustic, articulatory, and/or physiological) correlates of the syllable organization. While the phonetic nature of the syllable and of its boundaries is still a matter of controversies, we - among others - argue that one may find in the acoustic or articulatory signal properties that can be related to some sort of higher level organization between segments. In this presentation, we will present results from French and Tashlhiyt Berber showing some acoustic and articulatory cues that may be related to syllable boundaries, syllable affiliation, and cohesion of the syllable components. Data from French deals with cases of 'enchaînement' and the acoustic manifestations of syllable boundaries. Data from Tashlhiyt Berber questions the organization of vowel-less syllables and the articulatory properties of gestural coordination.