ABSTRACT

Phonological strength is not merely an abstract theoretical construct but also an empirical phenomenon based on phonetic parameters and acoustic cues. This thesis intends to focus on the notion of positional asymmetries registered across the phonological patterns of Yemeni Arabic of Hugariyyah variety with reference to some phonological theories such as Positional faithfulness theory (Beckman, 1998), Licensing by cue approach (Steriade, 1997), and Dispersion theory (Fleming, 2005) to mention a few.

This research work brings to you the fact that voicing assimilation is operational among the segments of same sonority value and blocked between the segments of asymmetric sonority value in HYA. The constraint *[-phar, αPlace, βVoice][-phar, αPlace, -βVoice] can perfectly predict the voicing pattern of the dialect. Emphatics behave in the same way like other guttural pharyngeal sounds with regard to the process of voicing assimilation. Voicing value of [~/+/continent] pharyngeal is not preserved in clusters across word boundaries that are sharing identical place and manner regardless of whether it originates on the first or second consonant. In a nutshell, this thesis is a supporting evidence for the generally accepted claim of positional faithfulness to the onset.

The acoustic correlates in chapter four claim that in voicing assimilation pattern C1 is always prone to the voicing feature of the following C2 and this is what positional faithfulness demands. The Manner of articulation plays a crucial factor to determine voicing assimilation pattern in emphatics.
Even the adaptation process of loanwords in HYA shown in chapter five conforms to the structural constraints of nature Arabic Phonology. During the process of adaptation onset positions are treated as mere salient them coda positions. Deletion is not allowed in onset position and the ranking schemata is ONS>>*Complex>>Max>> SSP >>*Coda. In the similar fashion devoicing of the voiced obstruents is mere favourable in coda positions. In HYA English loanwords the segments which are less salient and less sonorants are altered or deleted than their stronger counterparts in coda positions which further support the main claim of our thesis in an explicit canvas.

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