

Current Issues in Linguistic Theory 312

Consonant Structure and Prevocalization

Natalie Operstein

JOHN BENJAMINS PUBLISHING COMPANY

This monograph proposes a new interpretation of the intrasegmental structure of consonants and provides the first systematic intra- and cross-linguistic study of consonant prevocalization. The proposed model represents consonants as inherently bigestural and makes strong predictions that are automatically relevant to phonological theory at both the diachronic and synchronic levels, and also to the phonetics of articulatory evolution. The monograph clearly demonstrates that a wide generalization of the notion of consonant prevocalization provides a uniform account for many well-known processes generally considered independent — from asynchronous palatalization in Polish to intrusive [r] in nonrhotic English, to vowel epentheses in Avestan, and to pre-/s/ vowel prothesis in Welsh. Consonant prevocalization has not played a significant role in the development of modern phonological theory to date, and this monograph is the first to highlight its broad theoretical significance. The monograph develops important theoretical insights, with a wealth of supporting data and a rich bibliography. It will be of great interest to phonologists, phoneticians, typologists, and historical linguists.

“On the basis of a wide selection of languages, Natalie Operstein proposes a model of the bigestural composition of consonants in a forceful effort to explain the hitherto understudied phenomenon of consonant prevocalization. The book is obligatory reading for those interested in the question of how the interaction between phonology and phonetics shapes the sound structure of human language.”

Leo Wetzels, *Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam & Laboratoire de Phonétique et Phonologie, CNRS, Paris*



JOHN BENJAMINS PUBLISHING COMPANY

CILT 312

Natalie Operstein Consonant Structure and Prevocalization

