

## ASPIRATES AND MAHĀ-PRĀNA IN SINDHI

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Chomsky and Halle (1968) have invoked the feature [+ heightened subglottal pressure] to characterise the contrast between aspirated & unaspirated and murmured & non-murmured sounds. They claim that [ph], [bh] etc. are produced with heightened subglottal pressure, and their unaspirated counterparts without it. This claim is controverted by experimental data from Sindhi, which shows that although [bh, dh, ḍh, gh] are produced with higher subglottal pressure than their non-murmured counterparts, the palatal sound [ɟh] has less subglottal pressure than its non-murmured counterpart [ɟ].

It is therefore proposed here to introduce the feature [+ increased airflow rate] i.e. 'mahā-prāna' to replace Chomsky and Halle's feature [+ heightened subglottal pressure] which does not seem to be phonetically well-motivated. Instrumental findings clearly indicate that both 'voiceless aspirated' and 'murmured' sounds differ from the 'voiceless unaspirated' and 'voiced' sounds by having higher airflow rate, which concurs with the phonetic labelling of the distinction between aspirate and non-aspirate, namely 'mahā-prāṇa' and 'alpa-prāṇa' as suggested by the ancient Hindu grammarians.