

# Contents

**Acknowledgements — IX**

**Abbreviations and symbols — XI**

**List of figures — XIII**

**List of tables — XIV**

**List of maps — XIV**

**1 Introduction — 1**

**2 Analytical framework — 6**

2.1 Introduction — 6

2.2 Language data — 6

2.2.1 Sources of language data — 6

2.2.2 Citation and transcription — 7

2.3 Quantitative analysis — 8

2.4 Morphological analysis — 10

2.5 Phonological analysis — 13

**3 The Maaloula Aramaic Speech Corpus (MASC) — 18**

3.1 Introduction — 18

3.2 The data included in the corpus — 19

3.3 Data computerization and annotation — 20

3.3.1 Scanning and digitizing the transcriptions — 20

3.3.2 Correcting errors and adding informative tags — 21

3.3.3 Lemmatizing the transcriptions — 22

3.3.4 Denoising the audio recordings — 24

3.3.5 Automatically aligning the transcriptions with the recordings — 24

3.4 Corpus structure and use — 24

3.4.1 The transcriptions — 26

3.4.2 The lemmatized transcriptions — 29

3.4.3 The audio files and time-aligned phonetic transcriptions — 31

3.4.4 The SQLite database — 32

3.5 Discussion: Applications — 32

**4 Phoneme inventory — 35**

4.1 Introduction — 35

4.2 Consonants — 35

4.2.1 Stops — 39

- 4.2.2 Affricates — **44**
- 4.2.3 Fricatives — **44**
- 4.2.4 Nasals — **52**
- 4.2.5 Liquids — **53**
- 4.2.6 Glides — **54**
- 4.3 Vowels — **55**
- 4.3.1 Short vowels — **57**
- 4.3.2 Long vowels — **58**
- 4.3.3 Diphthongs — **59**
- 4.3.4 The epenthetic vowel — **62**
- 4.4 Conclusion — **62**

**5 The distribution of bilabial stops — 64**

- 5.1 Introduction — **64**
- 5.2 Singleton bilabial stops — **65**
- 5.2.1 Bilabial stops in postvocalic position — **65**
- 5.2.2 Bilabial stops in preconsonantal position — **69**
- 5.2.3 Bilabial stops in word-initial position — **73**
- 5.3 Geminate bilabial stops — **75**
- 5.4 Conclusion — **79**

**6 Morpho-phonological alternations in feminine nouns — 80**

- 6.1 Introduction — **80**
- 6.2 Feminine marker alternation — **80**
- 6.2.1 Spitaler's account — **81**
- 6.2.2 Open questions — **82**
- 6.2.3 Data and method — **84**
- 6.2.4 Results — **86**
- 6.2.5 Summary of results — **92**
- 6.2.6 Formalization — **93**
- 6.3 Plural marker alternation — **95**
- 6.3.1 Previous accounts — **96**
- 6.3.2 Data and method — **98**
- 6.3.3 Results — **99**
- 6.3.4 Formalization — **102**
- 6.4 Conclusion — **104**

**7 Local and long-distance assimilation — 106**

- 7.1 Introduction — **106**

- 7.2 Assimilation — **106**
- 7.2.1 Assimilation of the preposition *b-* — **106**
- 7.2.2 Assimilation of base-final /t/ — **109**
- 7.2.3 Assimilation of the prefixes *č-* — **111**
- 7.2.4 Assimilation of suffix-final /t/ — **114**
- 7.2.5 Assimilation of /d/ in *hōd* — **116**
- 7.2.6 Assimilation of preposition-final /s/ — **118**
- 7.2.7 Assimilation of /n/ — **121**
- 7.2.8 Assimilation of /l/ — **123**
- 7.2.9 Lexically restricted assimilation — **128**
- 7.3 Umlaut — **129**
- 7.3.1 Regressive umlaut — **129**
- 7.3.2 Progressive umlaut — **141**
- 7.4 Conclusion — **143**
  
- 8 Syllable structure and syllabification — 144**
- 8.1 Introduction — **144**
- 8.2 Previous accounts — **144**
- 8.2.1 Syllable structure and syllabification — **144**
- 8.2.2 Vowel epenthesis — **146**
- 8.2.3 Glottal epenthesis — **153**
- 8.3 Syllable-based analysis — **154**
- 8.3.1 Data and method — **156**
- 8.3.2 Syllable weight — **156**
- 8.3.3 Syllabification — **158**
- 8.3.4 Stray consonants — **159**
- 8.3.5 Vowel epenthesis and resyllabification — **161**
- 8.3.6 Glottal epenthesis and resyllabification — **166**
- 8.3.7 A cross-linguistic perspective — **168**
- 8.4 Two adjacent stray consonants — **169**
- 8.4.1 Epenthesis in the case of *C'C'* — **171**
- 8.4.2 *C'C'* yet no epenthesis — **173**
- 8.5 Summary and discussion — **179**
- 8.6 Implications — **182**
  
- 9 Gemination — 185**
- 9.1 Introduction — **185**
- 9.2 Underlying and surface geminates — **187**
- 9.2.1 Underlying geminates — **188**

## **VIII — Contents**

- 9.2.2 Surface geminates — **192**
- 9.3 The phonological and phonetic properties of Maaloula Aramaic geminates — **194**
  - 9.3.1 Methodology — **195**
  - 9.3.2 Word-medial geminates — **199**
  - 9.3.3 Word-final geminates — **203**
  - 9.3.4 Word-initial geminates — **208**
- 9.4 Conclusion — **212**

### **10 Stress — 214**

- 10.1 Introduction — **214**
- 10.2 Stress algorithm — **214**
- 10.3 Stress-dependent processes — **217**
  - 10.3.1 Pretonic raising of short mid vowels — **217**
  - 10.3.2 Pretonic shortening of long vowels — **219**
- 10.4 The distribution of vowels — **224**
  - 10.4.1 Positional restrictions on the distribution of long vowels — **224**
  - 10.4.2 Positional restrictions on the distribution of short vowels — **230**
- 10.5 Summary and conclusion — **235**

### **11 Conclusion and outlook — 239**

### **References — 241**

### **Index — 247**