Voiced Aspiration

The use of aspiration to contrast voiced sounds was investigated. In languages that display this feature there is a subset of aspirated sounds that contrasts at several places of articulation with the corresponding unaspirated sounds. Indo-Aryan Indus Kohistani exemplifies such a system in which several voiced consonants display aspiration contrasts. Some examples of aspirated voiced consonants and corresponding unaspirated voiced consonants are given in (1).

1. Indus Kohistani [mvy] (Indo-Aryan)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| a. | /bʰiːjũː/ | ‘sister’ (MVY-KinHU:008) |
|  | /biː/ | ‘seed’ (MVY-ValQuestHU:071) |
| b. | /ɡʰaĩː/ | ‘big (f)’ (MVY-KinHU:025) |
|  | /ɡiːl/ | ‘song’ (MVY-ValQuestHU:053) |
| c. | /nʰaːlũː/ | ‘to see’ (MVY-40listHU:029) |
|  | /naũ/ | ‘nine’ (MVY-NumHU:009) |
| d. | /ʐʰaː/ | ‘brother’ (MVY-KinHU:007) |
|  | /ʐamʈʂuː/ | ‘son-in-law’ (MVY-KinHU:045) |

It should be pointed out that the treatment of aspirated series is an issue which is far from straightforward. In some cases, the distribution and manifestation of aspiration co-occurring with voicing has led linguists analyzing individual languages (including Indus Kohistani) to apply a suprasegmental or a cluster analysis rather than positing an entire subset of aspirated voiced units.

Voiced aspiration contrast is a minority feature in the region, possibly present in only a few of the varieties. All of those, except Iranian Parachi, are Indo-Aryan languages spoken in the southern and central parts of the region.

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| Feature value | # of varieties displaying it | % |
| Present | 8 | 14 |
| Absent | 51 | 86 |
| Indeterminate | 0 | 0 |