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Sommario/riassunto

This paper describes the phonetic form, the distribution and the possible functions of ejectives in English and German, proposing that ejectives are on the increase in different varieties in English. The problems of teasing apart the different contributions of allophonic regularity, interactional function, sociophonetic variability and epiphenomenal inevitability in accounting for ejectives in English are discussed. Possible production mechanisms behind ejectives in both languages are explored and doubt is cast on previous epiphenomenal accounts which have ignored the importance of a pulmonic