Preface

This dissertation addresses the issue of prevocalic consonant epenthesis in selected Germanic and Slavic languages. The Germanic languages discussed are English (Received Pronunciation, American English, and South African English), German, and Dutch. The languages representing the Slavic language family are Polish (alongside its dialectal varieties – rural Polish, Podhale Goralian, and Kurpian Polish), Kashubian, Ukrainian (two varieties – Modern Standard Ukrainian and its south-western dialects), Slovak (and its colloquial, non-regional dialect), Bulgarian and Czech. The dissertation is divided into six chapters.

Chapter 1 introduces the concept of prevocalic consonant insertion and its motivation. The chapter also lists the goals of the dissertation and introduces the theoretical models relevant for the analysis.

Chapter 2 provides a typological outline of prevocalic consonant epenthesis in the languages listed above. The typology is divided into two main parts, discussing the site of epenthesis and the quality of the epenthetic segment, respectively. Concerning the position in which prevocalic consonant insertions occur, the following distinction is adopted: vowel hiatus, and the left edge of a vowel-initial constituent, such as the morphological word, morphological root, or stressed syllable. The typological overview indicates that onsetless syllables are avoided in both environments. The part devoted to the quality of the epenthetic segment shows that epenthetic consonants may be of several types. This part of Chapter 2 aims to demonstrate that the quality of the inserted consonant may vary depending on several factors, including the aforementioned site of epenthesis.

Chapter 3 presents selected formal analyses of prevocalic consonant epenthesis proposed to date. It is shown how different theoretical approaches have captured the process cross-linguistically. The chapter is divided into two main parts, which illustrate generative and listener-oriented approaches, respectively. The discussion of generative models includes SPE Phonology, Autosegmental Phonology, and Optimality Theory, alongside one of its extensions, Derivational Optimality Theory. It is argued that models such as Optimality Theory, which aim at optimizing syllable structure, provide a more insightful perspective on prevocalic consonant epenthesis than SPE-based analyses. In optimality-theoretic accounts, prevocalic consonant

insertion is assumed to be motivated by the need for syllables to have onsets. The section describing the listener-oriented approach to sound change shows that the account sheds new light on certain phenomena, such as intervocalic glide insertion. The discussed account shows that intervocalic transition from or to high vowels requires a formant transition perceptually similar to a glide. Thus, the listener-oriented account finds an explanation for the emergence of intervocalic glides in phonetics and perception. Consequently, according to some sources, a diachronic, perception-driven explanation is sufficient to account for these processes, with no need to refer to phonological universals (i.e., the need for syllables to have onsets).

Chapter 4 puts forward a theoretical analysis of prevocalic consonant epenthesis, drawing on the assumptions of the aforementioned theoretical models. The proposed model of analysis considers word-initial and intervocalic epenthesis separately. It is argued that word-initial glide epenthesis is onset-driven, as the glides which appear word-initially cannot be a result of an intervocalic transition. On the theoretical side, it is shown that Optimality Theory has the proper tools to account for the process. As for intervocalic glide insertion, which is common cross-linguistically, it is proposed that phonological universals are not necessary to explain the process. Instead, the listener-oriented model is employed, according to which the intervening glides emerge as a natural phonetic effect, and thus intervocalic glide insertion should not be viewed as an onset-driven process. However, there is no consensus in the literature as to the phonetic realization of lexical and transitional (or epenthetic) glides. It remains unclear, whether there is an articulatory and perceptual difference in the realization of those different types of glides. Thus, two experimental studies, described in Chapter 5 are conducted to examine the perception of those glides by users of Polish.

Chapter 5 discusses the methods, goals, procedures, and results of two behavioral studies conducted on users of Polish. In the first study, an experiment was run on a group of phonetically trained speakers of Polish, while the second, main experiment was conducted on users of Polish with no phonetic background. Both studies aimed to determine whether there is a perceptual difference between lexical and transitional/epenthetic glides. In Polish, there are words that end in <uła> in spelling, such as *buła* [ˈbuwa] ‘big bread roll’. It is universally agreed in the literature that such words are realized with a lexical glide. However, there are also words that end with <ua> in spelling, such as *statua* [staˈtua]/[staˈtuwa] ‘statue’, which lack a

unanimous interpretation. The results of both studies, in which the participants were exposed to the recordings of nonce words spelled <uła> and <ua>, indicated that there is no perceptual difference between lexical and transitional/epenthetic glides. Such an outcome suggests that the proposed model of analysis of intervocalic glides as transitional segments, as laid out in Chapter 4, is sufficient to account for the emergence of intervocalic glides.

Chapter 6 presents the conclusions and provides directions for further study.