The Distribution & Representation of Nasalized Clicks

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A survey of click consonants in 25 languages reveals a universal implication between oral clicks & nasalized clicks: anywhere oral clicks are allowed in a language, nasal clicks may also occur. Thus, there are languages that restrict oral clicks more than nasal clicks, but not vice versa. This implication cannot be explained by treating nasal clicks as [+nasal], since nasals typically show the opposite pattern (nasal → non-nasal). I propose that pulmonic airflow is what distinguishes oral & nasal clicks: nasal clicks are actually [+pulmonic] clicks. This representation derives the phonetic nasality in clicks, as well as the [!]→[n!] implication.