

## The Vowel Inventory of Tyrolean Aleese Block

This talk is part of a larger project, “New Perspectives on Diphthong Dynamics”, which aims to study the inner temporal dynamics of diphthongs across different languages and diphthong types using Tyrolean and Sardinian as the focus languages. The topic of this talk is the vowel inventory of the Meraner dialect of German, which forms part of the Burggrafenamt of South Tyrol. This dialect belongs to the South Bavarian dialect group, spoken primarily in Southern Austria, Northern Italy, and some parts of Bavaria.

First, previous phonetic descriptions (e.g., Insam, 1936 and Kollmann, 2008) are sometimes difficult to reconcile as they are often small studies done on few speakers with varying transcription conventions that are not always conducive to direct comparison with other accounts. Furthermore, the isolated nature of many communities in this area has led to distinct dialects between villages; no previous studies have been dedicated to establishing the shared characteristics of the dialects of this region. The dialect of Meran is described by locals as having representative features of the larger region and for this reason, it was chosen as a focus of our study.

In the current study, 35 participants were recorded in Meran; all reported being native speakers of the Meran dialect of German and almost all (n=33) grew up directly in Meran. Participants completed a pseudo-interactive task in which they read sentences in an orthography developed in consultancy with a native speaker. All monophthongs were recorded in lexically stressed and unstressed position. The diphthongs were recorded in lexically stressed syllables in in both a focused and unfocused prosodic condition.

In this talk, a preliminary analysis of the vowel inventory of Meran will be presented. First, the acoustic qualities of stressed monophthongs and diphthongs will be discussed with the goal of establishing a basic vowel inventory of this region. Then, as Tyrolean has vowel length, the acoustics of long and short vowels will be discussed as well. Other characteristics of this dialect will also be discussed, for example the monophthongization of [ou] and [ei] in younger speakers to [o:] and [e:] respectively. Additionally, the next steps in our analysis will be discussed with the goal of facilitating discussion on both theory and methodology.

### References

- Insam, M. (1936). *Der Lautstand des Burggrafenamtes von Meran: mit einer dialektgeographischen Studie*. Leipzig: Verlag S. Hirzel.
- Kollmann, C. (2008). *Synchrone und diachrone Laut- und Formenlehre der Mundart von Laurein (Südtirol)*. (Dissertation, LMU München)