

Production and perception of /st/-cluster in the Augsburger dialect

Véronique Bukmaier

The aim of the present study was to investigate to which extent speakers of the Swabian dialect spoken in Augsburg (city in Southern Germany/Bavaria) neutralize the /s-f/ opposition in /st/-clusters in production and perception. In the Augsburger dialect /st/-clusters are pronounced as [ʃt] in wordinitial, wordmedial and wordfinal position (Renn & König, 2009). In Standard German, on the other hand, /st/-clusters are pronounced as [st] only in wordinitial position. We tested whether young and old speakers differ in their degree of dialectal pronunciation and whether young speakers tend to a more standard-like articulation. Furthermore, we tested whether there are perceptual differences (i.e. neutralization) between young and old dialect speakers and between dialect and standard speakers, respectively.

There were 8 old and 10 young speakers. In addition 6 speakers of Standard Southern German served as the control group. Every subject participated in both the production and in the perception experiment. For the production experiment we conducted a blending task in order to elicit dialectal productions of wordmedial /st/-clusters.

For the forced choice perception experiment a continuum (16-steps) from /s/ to /ʃ/ was generated. For each auditory stimulus, the subjects saw two corresponding word alternatives in orthographic form. The subjects had to identify which word they heard.

Preliminary results of the perception experiment showed a tendency for the dialectal group (compared to the Standard German speaking control group) to perceptually neutralize the /s-f/-opposition.