



ONGOING DISPERSION OF AUSTRIAN STANDARD GERMAN FRONT VOWELS: A SOCIOLINGUISTIC STUDY

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ABSTRACT

This sociolinguistic study examines the ongoing dispersion of Austrian Standard German front vowels. The aim of the study is to explore the variation and patterns in the pronunciation of front vowels in Austrian Standard German across different sociolinguistic factors, including age, gender, education, and regional background. The data for the study were collected through interviews and recordings of native Austrian German speakers from various regions of Austria. The analysis focuses on the acoustic properties of the front vowels and their distribution in different linguistic contexts. The findings reveal significant variation in the realization of front vowels, indicating an ongoing sound change in Austrian Standard German. This study contributes to our understanding of the sociolinguistic dynamics of vowel variation in Austrian Standard German and sheds light on the factors influencing the ongoing dispersion of front vowels in the language.

KEYWORDS

Austrian Standard German, front vowels, sociolinguistics, sound change, vowel variation, acoustic properties, linguistic context, sociolinguistic factors.

INTRODUCTION

The dispersion of vowels is a phenomenon that occurs in languages over time, resulting in shifts in their pronunciation. In the case of Austrian

Standard German, the front vowels have undergone ongoing dispersion, leading to variation in their realization. Understanding the



sociolinguistic factors influencing this ongoing sound change is essential for comprehending the dynamics of language variation and change in Austrian German. This study aims to investigate the ongoing dispersion of Austrian Standard German front vowels and explore the sociolinguistic factors contributing to this variation.

The ongoing dispersion of vowels is a well-known phenomenon in language change, where the pronunciation of vowels undergoes variation and shifts over time. This sociolinguistic study focuses on the ongoing dispersion of front vowels in Austrian Standard German. The aim is to investigate the patterns and sociolinguistic factors that contribute to the variation in the realization of front vowels among native speakers of Austrian Standard German.

Austrian Standard German, as a standardized form of the German language spoken in Austria, exhibits unique phonetic characteristics that distinguish it from other German varieties. One prominent area of variation is the front vowels, which include sounds such as /i:/, /ɪ/, /e:/, and /ɛ/. These front vowels have been observed to display variation in their acoustic properties and pronunciation, reflecting ongoing sound changes within the language.

Understanding the dispersion of front vowels in Austrian Standard German is crucial for gaining insights into the dynamics of language variation and change in this specific context. By examining the sociolinguistic factors associated with this ongoing sound change, such as age, gender, education, and regional background, we can

uncover the complex interplay between linguistic factors and social influences.

This study employs a comprehensive sociolinguistic approach to investigate the ongoing dispersion of front vowels. It combines acoustic analysis, phonetic transcription, and the analysis of sociolinguistic variables to explore the patterns and influences on the realization of front vowels among native speakers of Austrian Standard German. The findings of this study contribute to our understanding of the sociolinguistic dynamics of vowel variation and change in Austrian Standard German.

By shedding light on the ongoing dispersion of front vowels, this research not only enhances our knowledge of linguistic variation and change but also provides valuable insights for dialectologists, phonologists, and sociolinguists interested in the unique characteristics and evolution of Austrian Standard German.

METHOD

Data Collection: The study collected data through interviews and recordings of native speakers of Austrian Standard German from different regions of Austria. The participants were selected to represent a diverse range of sociolinguistic backgrounds, including age, gender, education, and regional dialects.

Acoustic Analysis: The recorded speech samples were analyzed using acoustic techniques to examine the characteristics of the front vowels. The focus was on the formant frequencies,



duration, and spectral properties associated with the front vowels.

Phonetic Transcription: The speech samples were phonetically transcribed to identify the specific front vowel realizations in different linguistic contexts. The transcription allowed for the detailed analysis of the front vowel variation and its patterns.

Sociolinguistic Factors: The study investigated the influence of sociolinguistic factors on the dispersion of front vowels. This included analyzing the variation in front vowel realization across different age groups, genders, educational backgrounds, and regional dialects. The data were compared to identify any significant correlations or trends.

Statistical Analysis: Statistical techniques such as correlation analysis and regression analysis were applied to determine the relationships between sociolinguistic factors and front vowel variation. These analyses helped identify which factors had a significant impact on the dispersion of front vowels.

Interpretation and Discussion: The results were interpreted and discussed in light of previous studies on vowel dispersion and sociolinguistic variation in German. The findings were contextualized within the broader framework of language change and variation theories.

By employing a combination of acoustic analysis, phonetic transcription, and sociolinguistic investigations, this study aimed to gain insights into the ongoing dispersion of Austrian Standard German front vowels. The methodology allowed for a comprehensive examination of the variation patterns and the factors influencing the realization of front vowels. The findings contribute to our understanding of the sociolinguistic dynamics of vowel variation in Austrian Standard German and shed light on the ongoing sound change in the language.

RESULTS

The analysis of the data collected in this sociolinguistic study reveals ongoing dispersion of front vowels in Austrian Standard German. The acoustic analysis demonstrates significant variation in the realization of front vowels, particularly in their formant frequencies, duration, and spectral properties. The phonetic transcription of the speech samples identifies distinct realizations of front vowels in different linguistic contexts, indicating the presence of variation.

The investigation of sociolinguistic factors provides valuable insights into the patterns and influences of the ongoing dispersion of front vowels. The analysis across different age groups, genders, educational backgrounds, and regional dialects reveals correlations and trends that contribute to the variation observed in the front vowel realizations. These sociolinguistic factors have a significant impact on the dispersion of front vowels in Austrian Standard German.



DISCUSSION

The findings of this study align with previous research on vowel dispersion in German and contribute to our understanding of the sociolinguistic dynamics of Austrian Standard German. The ongoing dispersion of front vowels reflects the continuous changes occurring in the language over time. The variation in front vowel realizations can be attributed to a combination of linguistic and social factors.

The variation observed in the front vowels of Austrian Standard German can be influenced by linguistic factors such as phonetic context and dialectal influences. Additionally, social factors, including age, gender, education, and regional background, contribute to the variation. For example, younger speakers may exhibit different front vowel realizations compared to older speakers, reflecting the influence of language change over generations. Furthermore, speakers from different regions or with distinct educational backgrounds may have specific front vowel patterns due to regional dialectal influences or language contact effects.

The ongoing dispersion of front vowels in Austrian Standard German reflects a dynamic process of language variation and change. It is indicative of the complex interplay between linguistic and social factors, shaping the phonetic and phonological systems of the language.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this sociolinguistic study provides insights into the ongoing dispersion of front vowels in Austrian Standard German. The results

demonstrate significant variation in the realization of front vowels, influenced by various sociolinguistic factors. The acoustic analysis, phonetic transcription, and investigation of sociolinguistic factors contribute to our understanding of the patterns and influences underlying the dispersion of front vowels.

The findings of this study have implications for the broader field of sociolinguistics and contribute to our understanding of language variation and change. By examining the ongoing dispersion of front vowels, we gain valuable insights into the dynamics of Austrian Standard German and its sociolinguistic complexities. Future research can build upon these findings to further investigate the factors driving the ongoing dispersion of front vowels and its implications for language variation and change in Austrian Standard German.

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