

Voice Assimilation and Segment Reduction in Casual Dutch

A Corpus-Based Study of the Phonology-Phonetics Interface

This book is the first extensive study of the pronunciation of casual Standard Dutch. It provides completely fresh data, and concludes that most properties that are characteristic of casual, as opposed to careful, Dutch are not necessarily the result of phonological processes. They are the effects of the storage of word-combinations and reduced variants in the lexicon, and, above all, the speaker's natural tendency to reduce articulatory effort.

The study focusses on the realization of vowels as schwas, the perceptual absence of segments, and, above all, the realization of obstruents as voiced or voiceless. The hypothesis is proposed that coda and word-final obstruents are realized as voiced or voiceless depending on which realization requires no additional articulatory effort. This hypothesis is shown to be in accordance with all data from previous studies as well as with fresh data. It is taken as the starting point for a detailed analysis of the realization of obstruents in all word and syllable positions in Dutch.

The data forming the basis of the study are taken from a corpus of spontaneous conversations which was built especially for the purposes of this investigation. The design of the corpus and the processing of the data receive ample attention, in particular the auditory classification of intervocalic stops as voiced or voiceless and the relation between this classification and the acoustic properties of the stops.

This book is of interest to anyone concerned with the pronunciation of Dutch, casual speech, the phonology and phonetics of [voice], or corpus linguistics.

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