



Regional variation of vowels in Saterland Frisian

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ABSTRACT

Saterland Frisian is spoken in three neighboring villages in North-West Germany, Strücklingen, Scharrel, and Ramsloh. In this study, we examine whether there is regional variation between the vowel systems of the three varieties. Speakers were instructed to read monophthongs and diphthongs in a neutral /hVt/ frame. Acoustic measurements included vowel duration, mid-vowel F1 and F2, the amount of Vowel Inherent Spectral Change (VISC, Nearey and Assmann, 1986), and the spectral rate of change (cf. Fox and Jacewicz, 2009). Results confirm large inventories for the three varieties of Saterland Frisian, although some vowels have undergone a merger with neighboring categories. The comparison of single vowel categories in the three varieties did neither reveal variation of vowel duration nor of dynamic spectral properties. Regarding static spectral properties, however, dialectal variation was observable. In Scharrel, monophthongs are more centralized in the F1 dimension. This finding is discussed with respect to the common view of local people that speakers from Scharrel speak faster than speakers from the other two places.



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