

Title: Stereotypes and /n/ variation in Patras, Greece: results from a pilot study

Panayiotis A. Pappas and Pagona-Niki Efstathopoulou
Simon Fraser University
8888 University Drive
Department of Linguistics
Burnaby BC V5A1S6
Canada

e-mail: papappas@sfu.ca

In our presentation we will discuss the result of a pilot study concerning the variation in coronal nasal pronunciation in Patras, Greece. As is the case in several varieties of Modern Greek, the realization of a lateral (/l/) or a coronal nasal (/n/) followed by a high front vowel (/i/) in Patras can vary between the standard alveolar pronunciation ([l]) and ([n]) and more posterior variants, which are stereotyped and very often stigmatized.

Papazachariou (2003) showed that in the case of the lateral variable there are actually three variants: alveolar, laminal-postalveolar and apical-postalveolar. The same study showed that the variation is not phonologically conditioned, while Papazachariou (2004) demonstrates the effect that social factors have on the pronunciation of /l/. Our study is based on tape-recorded interviews with 20 participants representing two genders (male and female), three age-groups (20-35, 40-55, and 60-75), and three educational levels (elementary schools, high school and University). Our analysis shows that there are also three variants of the coronal nasal: alveolar, laminal-postalveolar and apical-postalveolar. and that while the variation is not phonologically conditioned, the effects of gender, age and style are clearly observed. Most interestingly, a preliminary comparison of the /l/ and /n/ production reveals that some speakers have different realizations for each variable. e.g. a laminal-postalveolar lateral but an apical-postalveolar nasal. We will discuss the significance of our results in light of the role that these variants play as stereotypes in the local community.

References

- Papazachariou, D. (2003) I pragmatosis tis phonologikis monadas /l/ tis Patriniis dialektu. [The realizations of the phoneme /l/ in the Patras Dialect]. Ms. University of Patras.
- Papazachariou, D. (2004) Formation of a new variant in the early stages of Koineization. Paper presented at the 2nd International Conference on Greek Dialects and Linguistic Theory. Mytilene Greece, October 2004.