ABSTRACT

LARS NABORN. A Quantitative Study of the Dutch /Tj/ Cluster Realization Among Multicultural Speakers in Amsterdam. (Under the direction of Professor Robin Dodsworth.) This study examined the consonant cluster /tj/ among Dutch speakers of different ethnicities and age groups in Amsterdam. This cluster is usually realized as an alveolar-palatal affricate like [tɕ] in mainstream varieties of Dutch. The aim of this study was to see whether speakers of a Moroccan-based ethnolect pronounced this cluster more like the English affricate /t∫/. This distinction was measured using center of gravity of frication. The data consist of acoustic measurements of /tj/ tokens (N=1328, Speaker N=31), which came from the Amsterdam portion of the corpus of the ongoing Roots of Ethnolects project (Hinskens 2016, van Meel 2016). The speakers were divided into four ethnic categories: Moroccan, Turkish, endogenous Dutch with significant interethnic ties, and endogenous Dutch without interethnic ties. Based on previous research with this data, it was hypothesized that 1) endogenous Dutch speakers without interethnic ties pronounce the cluster like [tɕ] the most (lowest center of gravity) 2) Moroccan speakers have the highest center of gravity (most like [t∫]) (3) speakers’ center of gravity varies based on interlocutor ethnicity and (4) ethnolectal differences are stronger among older speakers because social identities become more solidified in early adulthood. The results are generally consistent with the hypotheses, especially in terms of the large differences between endogenous Dutch speakers with and without interethnic ties, as well as far more ethnic variation of /tj/ realization existing among the older group. Among older speakers /tj/ varies by both speaker ethnicity and interlocutor ethnicity, and that there is a relationship between the two factors.