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REALIZATION OF RUSSIAN CONSONANTS IN 3-YEAR-OLDS SPEECH

Abstract

This paper presents an empirical study of errors of various types committed in consonant realization by 20 Russian male and female 3-year-olds. We aimed at ranging Russian consonants according to the difficulty of their articulation focusing on common error tendencies and idiosyncratic error features. The results of the acoustic study of phoneme opposition phonetic manifestation showed that /r/, /rʲ/, /l/, /lʲ/, /ʃ/, /ʃʲ/, /z/, /tʃ/ were the most difficult for 3-year-olds performance. A further finding was high across-speaker variability in the studied age group as far as the level of native language acquisition. Coronals and some labials, but not velars, were consistently palatalized. Doubly articulated /ʃʲ/, /ʃ/, /z/, /tʃ/ underwent [sʲ], [s], [zʲ], [z] and [tsʲ] fronting. Realization of certain consonant clusters involved reduction and a number of errors found for single consonants including gliding, fronting, and palatalizing.

Keywords: language acquisition, consonant system, «normal» errors, palatalization, gliding, fronting, reduction.

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