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«T»-TYPE STOPS IN KYNGSANG KOREAN

Abstract

This paper studies specific features of three-member opposition of stops in Kyungsang Korean by the example of «t»-type pre-dental consonants. Despite it is customary that there is three-member opposition in Korean, researchers have no consensus about the phonetic cues relevant for differentiating the three phonemes. According to our acoustic data, all «t»-type phonemes in Kyungsang Korean are somehow aspirated. All initial allophones of «t»-type phonemes are voiceless. The statistics shows that in the initial position, relative duration of the sound, occlusive phase duration and the duration of aspiration cannot differentiate between /t1/ (lenis) and /t2/ (fortis) or between /t1/ (lenis) and /t3/ (aspirated), however it can be a reliable cue to differentiate between /t2/ and /t3/. Considering that this cue can be relevant only for /t2/ and /t3/ differentiation, and the fact that there are no other relevant cues for /t1/ in the initial position, a conclusion was made that in the initial position only /t2/ or /t3/ can occur. In the intervocalic position, the occlusive phase duration was not relevant to differentiate between /t1/, /t2/, /t3/. Meanwhile, voicing of the aspirated phase turned out an important cue for /t1/. No difference was found for /t2/ and /t3/ patterns in the intervocalic position. These findings support Kim and Duanmu conclusion about the two-member opposition of the front stops in Korean, but the relevant feature acoustic manifestation turned out different.

Keywords: experimental phonetics, acoustic phonetics, the Korean language, front stops, duration, occlusive phase, aspiration.

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