The perception of a secondary palatalization contrast: A preliminary comparison of Russian and Irish

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Abstract

The typology of secondary palatalization contrasts reveals certain asymmetries (Kochetov 2002; Takatori 1997), e.g. a contrast in coda position implies one in onset position, and a contrast in labials implies one in coronals. This paper presents results from a perceptual study of Irish and Russian that addresses the positional asymmetry in relation to labial stops and fricatives and provides further support for the hypothesis that a palatalization contrast in coda or word-final position is disfavored for perceptual reasons. The study, which tests both Russian and Irish listeners on both Russian and Irish productions using the same methodology, allows a direct comparison of the results for the two languages.