Do You Want Fries With Thaat?
Investigating vocal fry in young female Canadian English speakers

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Methodology

Part 1: recorded 21 female Canadian English speakers, ages 18 to 25, reading a standardized passage using a microphone and PRAAT software, then researchers made a perceptual judgment about whether or not they perceived fry

Part 2: 55 male and female participants, ages 17 to 47 completed a 5-minute online questionnaire in which they were asked to listen to audio recordings of speakers with and without fry and make judgments about the level to which they believed each speaker portrayed a variety of positive and negative personality characteristics, and provided one open ended response

Results

Percentage of speakers who exhibited some degree of fry

General Trends in Attitudes towards Fry vs. No Fry

Objectives & Hypotheses

1. To determine if vocal fry is prevalent among female, university aged Canadian English speakers

H0: The majority of female Canadian English participants, ages 18 to 25, will present some degree of vocal fry in their speech

2. To investigate the attitudes people hold towards young, female Canadian English speakers who demonstrate vocal fry

H0: Male and female Canadian English speakers would have negative attitudes towards speakers with vocal fry compared to speakers who did not demonstrate vocal fry.

Discussion

These results support the hypothesis that vocal fry is extremely prevalent in university aged female speakers.

These results support the hypothesis that vocal fry has become a stigmatized feature, and that people hold generally negative attitudes towards the characteristic vocal fry.

This has implications in the field of speech-language pathology, as clinicians should be aware of the prevalence of vocal fry register in normal speech in young women when diagnosing vocal pathologies, and should also watch out for any long term effects of the use of the vocal fry register.

This also has implications for women who exhibit vocal fry, as they may be unfairly judged or discriminated against, for example, in professional settings.

Future Directions

Further research should investigate the extent to which vocal fry has entered other populations, for example, men and different age groups.

Linguistic studies should investigate the possible discourse functions of vocal fry.

Long term studies should be conducted to investigate if there are any detrimental effects of long term use of the vocal fry register in normal speech.

References


