Abstract

The present thesis deals with rhythmic differences between Welsh English and the British Standard. It focuses on the varieties spoken in Cardiff and Aberystwyth in particular.

The first part of the theoretical chapter summarises the approaches towards rhythm from the physiological, acoustic, perceptual, and phonological perspectives. The second part provides a basic description of the British Standard, Welsh, and Welsh English. It concerns itself with the existing information related to the subject matter especially as regards Welsh varieties of English. The last, third part, serves as an overview of the most common approaches towards the search of the acoustic correlates of rhythm (%V, ΔC, ΔV, PVI, varco, RR, YARD).

The following chapters of the thesis present a material based study of the data obtained for the purposes of the thesis. The segmentation was carried out according to the principles proposed by Machač and Skarnitzl 2009. Rhythm was measured for four respondents for each selected location of Wales. The age span was 35-39 years for the group from Cardiff and 29-39 for that from Aberystwyth. The values measured were compared with the research of Volín and Pollák from 2009, which, among other things, provided the results of the rhythmic values for %V and ΔC for the British Standard on the basis of the same text that was used during collecting the data for this thesis.

The Welsh varieties of English of the eight respondents have turned out to exhibit values for %V and ΔC rather similar to the speakers of the British Standard. In general, the results would appear to suggest that the existing approaches to rhythm are not indicators sensitive enough for dialectological differences, with the exception of nPVI-v.

The recordings obtained for this study also serve as a basis for a corpus of Aberystwyth varieties of English.

Key words: rhythm, British Standard / Received Pronunciation, Welsh English, Cardiff, Aberystwyth