

Abstract

This thesis concentrates on phonetic variability of words in public speaking. In the first part of the thesis, the aim was to summarize the existing knowledge about the characteristics and principles of spontaneous speech, about phonetic features of Czech speech sounds and about factors that may influence type and degree of reduction. Then we summarize the results of older studies done on other languages (esp. on Dutch and German) and outline a possible application of results from word variability analyses.

In the second part of this thesis we look at five Czech words - *protože*, *prostě*, *myslím*, *samozřejmě* and *určitě*. We set several groups of variants according to the degree of reduction for each word, we examine stability of their phonetic features and survey whether position (initial, medial, final and I = F) in intonation unit and/or speed of pronunciation of the chosen word has an influence on degree of reduction.

Five to eight hierarchical groups of variants were set for each chosen word. Stability of phonetic features in four types of speech sounds (vowels, nasals, unvoiced plosives and unvoiced sibilants) is in line with the existing observations (e.g. Machač, 2004). Speed of pronunciation of the word had an influence on the degree of reduction in words *protože*, *prostě*, *samozřejmě* and *určitě*, final position in intonation unit showed less reduction in words *protože* and *samozřejmě*.

Keywords: word variability, phonetic features, reduction