

## Abstract

The purpose of this thesis is twofold: i) in the theoretical part to provide a comprehensive overview of the research on glottalization, focusing on representative studies of word-initial glottalization in several languages, and ii) in the research part to bring an analysis of the phenomenon in the read speech of British English native non-professional speakers. The mechanism of distribution and form of word-initial glottalization is not yet fully understood and although its almost unpredictable character has attracted some attention in recent years, descriptions of the phenomenon for the English language are still scarce, if not non-existent in the case of British English. This study aims to serve as a probe in this direction. The material consisted of 1307 word-initial vowels produced by 5 male and 5 female speakers. Based on perceptual and acoustic criteria, three types of glottalization were distinguished: canonical, creaky and breathy. Although the analysis of the corpus showed the expected inter-speaker differences, a clear tendency was discernible for pitch accent to have an effect on glottalization. To a lesser extent, this can be also said about the semantic factor, where content words were glottalized more often. This conclusion, however, was problematised. No clear pattern was distinguished in the distribution of the different kinds of glottalization.