

Abstract

The importance of rhythm for speech communication was recognised by ancient orators. Since the forties of the last century, this phenomenon has become more systematic subject of interest of Speech Sciences and there has been a rapid development in this research area in the last decade. Throughout the years concerned, however, this concept was somewhat hazy due to the context, in which it was used in some studies. This master thesis begins with a selective overview of approaches to given issue in the field of phonetic research, trying to identify their critical moments, noticing used methodology and applicability of outputs in particular. Special attention is paid to the rhythmic aspects of Czech and issues of their description. We also bring a message of selected studies, which have already been made in this respect. The aim of this work lies in the experimental study focused on assessment of philologically oriented students' ability to imitate speech rhythm according to given pattern in following modes - word by word, on the monotone syllable and by tapping. The results confirmed the hypothesis that the imitation accuracy depends on the type of repetition - the overall data show significant differences in terms of the lowest, higher and the highest deviations from the model, respectively. To a certain extent, it also depends on the length of the repeated item. Various strategies that can convey a deeper insight into the process of imitation are discussed on the basis of analysis of individual respondents' performance in the task. The submitted work provides a relatively detailed description of the examined issue and its findings can serve as a foundation for further investigations, whose possible form is outlined in the text.

Keywords

speech rhythm, temporal structure, perception, imitation