

The thesis discusses the topic of word stress in Spanish and its acoustic correlates. The fact that studies in the last decades have shown conflicting opinions regarding the subject demonstrates the complexity of the phenomenon. Stress is not only language-specific, but also bound to context. When acquiring a second language, speakers have the tendency to transmit the phonetic and phonological system of their mother tongue to the target language. The aim of the thesis is to examine the acoustic correlate of duration in the Spanish of English speakers, considering the impact of language transfer. Twelve English speakers were recorded speaking Spanish. The duration of vowels in both stressed and unstressed syllables was measured in disyllabic, trisyllabic and quadrisyllabic words with different positions of the stressed syllable. The results indicated variation across stress schemes. Overall, a longer duration of the vowel in stressed syllable was found in disyllabic and trisyllabic oxytone words, and in quadrisyllabic paroxytone words. In trisyllabic paroxytone and proparoxytone words, the relative difference of vowel durations between stressed and unstressed syllables was less significant, likely due to the tendency of final syllable lengthening, which was recorded in all word types. No significant difference was found in disyllabic paroxytone words.