

Abstract

The objective of this thesis is to identify those features of the Czech accent in English that are the most salient in the perception of the Czech listener and that may disturb the communication process. The purpose of the introductory chapter is to familiarize the reader with the subject of the foreign accent, to provide a brief summary of the current state of research and to introduce a series of empirical studies. The research part of the thesis analyzes the individual realizations of the selected speech sounds /θ, ð, ŋ, r, w, æ, ɜ:/ and ventures to draw meaningful conclusions from the results. The material analyzed consists of a total of 3568 speech sound tokens, recorded by 9 male and 19 female speakers. Each respondent produced two recordings, one in the British standard mode and another where the speaker imitated the Czech foreign accent. The 3568 tokens were individually rated and the two modes were then compared for each speaker. The results showed /r/ to be favoured by the largest number of speakers as an indicator of the Czech accent, while /θ, ð, ŋ/ often had the same rating in both modes. However, additional factors such as speaker proficiency and number of tokens from individual speech sounds must be taken into consideration before any final conclusions can be drawn from the raw data.

Keywords

consonant, vowel, foreign accent, Czech English