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Diplomová práce

Alternative Methods of Teaching English Pronunciation
(and their Effectiveness at Lower Secondary School)

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I declare that I have worked on this thesis independently, using only the primary and secondary sources listed in the bibliography.

Author's signature

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1 Introduction

„Many students learn to make the individual sounds correctly enough, yet their speech remains barely intelligible to the English ear. The reason for this paradox is usually to be found in faulty rhythm and intonation “(J.D. O’Connor, 1963, p.3).

I deliberately put this statement at the beginning of the introduction, as it is a known fact that the teaching of prosodic phenomena of language at primary school is relatively neglected, even though it is a crucial component of spoken language. It is important to note that the incorrect use of rhythm and intonation does not only impact on the poor delivery of utterances but more importantly on the unintelligibility of the utterance or the misunderstanding of the speaker's intentions (Gilbert, 2008).

Derwing & Rossiter (2003) have a similar perspective, stating that prosodic phenomena are one of the most important in second language learning. Therefore, it is very strange that prosodic phenomena are not taught purposefully at lower secondary school. Gilbert (2008) states that the main reason why pronunciation phenomena are partially neglected at primary schools is the lack of teachers' time in the classroom and especially their willingness to use the time given to teach such a complex objective. Derwing (2015, p. 78) in turn mentions teachers' perception of their lack of education regarding pronunciation as a reason.

If we aim our teaching towards the acquisition of communicative competence, it will not be possible without knowledge of the prosody of the target language. To acquire quality English pronunciation, drilling individual sounds is frustrating and almost impossible. Gilbert (2008) even compares this effort to learning to dance without music and a partner.

All of these listed aspects are my motivation and a subject for approaching the issue at hand with a focus on prosody of the language and possibly outlining potential activities for English classes at lower secondary school. At the same time, it will be very interesting to investigate what influences prosody in terms of its correct use.

As already mentioned, this thesis focuses on a selected group of suprasegmental elements in the context of pronunciation. This is due to several aspects that, after reviewing the literature, played a major role in the choice of the focus of this thesis. One of them is the aforementioned neglect of prosody with the fact that textbooks for primary education tend to focus more on the pronunciation of individual phonemes within pronunciation. Another reason is certainly

the importance of rhythm and intonation within English language communication, which is mentioned in almost every publication that deals with prosodic elements.

This thesis will be divided into two parts. The first is the theoretical part, which will focus on prosody as a whole. We will explain the modulation factors of prosody, the differences of these factors between English and Czech, the most common mistakes of Czech learners in these elements and the possibilities of teaching them at primary school. The theory will also cover terminology and teaching methods crucial for the practical part of this theses. In the practical part, we will focus on a comparison of pupils' sensitivity to prosodic phenomena of the language between two different classes taught in different methods. One class is taught only in the target language while the other uses both, target and source languages.

2 Hypothesis

The pronunciation of the English language is a very wide concept, and it would not be a question of a diploma thesis to focus in detail on all aspects of spoken language due to its scope. In this thesis, therefore, we will focus mainly on English prosody. This aspect of English pronunciation is considered by many authors to be one of the most important, and for this reason it has been chosen as the main topic for this thesis. I have already dealt with English pronunciation before, in my bachelor thesis, where the main issue was the relationship between graphics and pronunciation. One of the aims of this thesis was to simplify the learning process by exposing challenging graphemes in terms of their sound realization for lower secondary school students. I have decided to carry on this approach in my diploma thesis, in which one of the aims is to show possible alternative methods of teaching pronunciation that could be used at lower secondary school to acquire prosody.

This thesis is based on the examination of differences in the level of rhythm and intonation of pupils attending different classes taught by different methods. One class was taught for one year using a method where only the target language, English, is used in the lessons. This type of teaching is referred to as the English Only Approach (EOA). The other observed class was taught for one year using a more traditional approach, i.e. one in which both the source and target language are used. Schreiber (2009) talks about the fact that the acquisition of correct intonation is mainly due to the surroundings in which the learner occurs. In a similar vein, Skaličková (1982) talks about rhythm, which can be developed in learners by, for example, listening activities, music, rap, etc... An opportunity has arisen to compare the two classes mentioned above and to clarify whether this theory is valid. From the above information, it is likely that the class taught in the English Only Approach will report a higher level of acquired prosody, as the pupils are far more exposed to the English language in general. To obtain an understanding of each class level of rhythm and intonation, pupils will be exposed to nine sentences that target their level of prosody. Pupils from both classes will make audio recordings of these sentences, which will be analysed and assessed in the practical part of the work. For this assessment will be used the computer software "PRAAT" which is directly used to record and analyse phonetic features. The final assessment will then confirm or reject our hypothesis. As already mentioned, it is not possible to target all aspects of pronunciation, but the results obtained from the research part of the thesis can serve as a kind of stepping stone in the modern communicative style of English language teaching at lower secondary school.

3 Terminology

3.1 RP and American English

Received Pronunciation (RP) was chosen as the standard form of English in this thesis. Although RP is still evolving and is certainly not constant, it is still the dominant variant used in the Czech education system. For this reason, RP was the explicit choice for writing this thesis. According to J.C. Wells' (2000) dictionary, it is the most widely used form of pronunciation in EFL teaching.

However, for the research in the practical part of the thesis, the pupils under investigation are those who are exposed only to American English in their classes due to their teacher's focus. At the same time, the vast majority of alternative methods of teaching prosodic phenomena of language are based on American English. Examples include Jazz chants, rap in ELT and music in ELT explained in chapter (6 Teaching English Prosody at lower secondary school). For this reason, it is necessary to describe American English in Terminology and outline the basic differences from RP that may affect the research results.

American English, or "AmE", is a set of dialects of the English language used in the United States of America. This set of dialects evolved from British English after the arrival of colonists in the 17th Century. AmE is characterized by its own specific pronunciation features. The term rhotic accent is the most commonly associated with the AmE, which carries a distinctive feature, namely the retroflex /r/ sound at the end of words, which differs in intensity from the British alveolar pronunciation of /r/ sound (Colins, 2021).

3.2 The syllable

From a phonological point of view, Krčmová (1984) describes the syllable as the basic building block of spoken language, which usually consists of a single vowel and accompanying consonants pronounced together. Words can contain at least one syllable but also more syllables. Examples of this are the one-syllable word "tree" or the three-syllable word "elephant". In terms of phonetics, Melen (2010) explains a syllable as a unit consisting of a nucleus that creates no obstacle to the exhaled stream and is relatively loud compared to its beginning and end. The syllable can also be thought of as a rhythmic unit. It is in fact the smallest carrier of intonation, which is why it is so important to explain it in terminology as it directly relates to this thesis.

Syllables can be divided into those that are stressed and those that are unstressed. Stressed syllables are distinguished from unstressed syllables mainly by their intensity and tonal pitch. While the tone of stressed syllables is dynamic and varies, the tone of unstressed syllables is more constant and unchanging. This dynamism in the pronunciation of stressed syllables makes it possible to effectively emphasise certain parts of words and sentences, which is crucial for intonation, rhythm and, above all, correct communication.

Melen (2010) further divides syllables into open and closed. A syllable ending with a vowel is referred to as open and a syllable ending with a consonant is referred to as closed. In English, we tend to encounter a tendency to place consonants at the end of words, so we can say that the closed syllable is more common. The opposite is the case in Czech, where consonants tend to occur at the beginning of words.

3.3 Stress

Crystal (1986, p.454 - 455) describes the word "stress" as a measure of the force used when pronouncing syllables. These are divided into stressed and unstressed syllables (see subsection 3.2 The Syllable). The stress given to syllables is reflected in speech by an increase in volume, length and tone. These aspects are the basic dividers between English and Czech prosody and are crucial for stress-timed rhythm.

For students who are native speakers of Czech, acquiring the correct placement of stress in English can be difficult. In Czech, the stress is usually placed on the first syllable of the word, except in specific cases such as monosyllabic prepositional phrases, where the stress moves to the preposition. In English, on the other hand, stress placement has no fixed rules and can appear on any syllable of the word. For example, the word "mother" has stress on the first syllable. The word "intonation" on the third syllable and word "experience" on the second syllable. If the stress is placed incorrectly, it can lead to major misunderstandings or even change the meaning of the word. This flexibility in stress placement requires students to pay close attention and practice in order to learn how to interpret and use English rhythm and intonation correctly in their speech (Skaličková, 1982)

If we wanted to explain the rules of stress placement to pupils, it would be a very complex process for pedagogical practice. In fact, on which syllable of a word the accent is on is based on knowledge of the origin of the words, the number of syllables, the grammatical category and the phonological structure. Melen (2010) reports that the simplest procedure we can

choose is to learn the stress of individual words by memory and by listening coupled with the acoustic image and meaning of the word and to mechanize this procedure.

As evidence for the importance of stress in English pronunciation, we can provide an example of how we can use stress to separate phrases from compound words, for example (all ways/always), and how we can use stress to separate word types. Nouns and adjectives are stressed on the first syllable while verbs are stressed on the second syllable. Possible confusion can lead to misunderstanding in speaking (Melen, 2010, p.43)

Roach (2009) describes that English stress is divided into two main types. These are word stress and sentence stress. Both of these two types are crucial to the melody and rhythm of the language and understanding them is central to proper communication. Word stress refers to the already mentioned stressed and unstressed syllables whose meaning is explained above in subsection "3.2 The syllable". Sentence stress, as described by Cruttenden (2014), is characterised by the modification of the meaning of sentences through changes in stress. Essentially, it helps us to distinguish important information from less important information. Some words such as nouns, verbs, or adjectives carry more stress than words such as conjunctions or prepositions. Such a division of words in the English language shapes our rhythm and makes it easier to understand the meaning of sentences. According to Zita (2023), sentence stress is closely related to the terms content and function words. These two types of words are found in all English sentences carrying meaning. This division of words reflects to us the way language works in communicating meaning. Overall, the differences between content and function words make it easier for us to communicate, and understanding them is essential for English stress and rhythm. Content words in a sentence carry the main meaning of the sentence. Without their usage, we would not be able to decode what the speaker was trying to tell us. These words include nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs. In English, these words carry a stress when they are monosyllabic words or multi-syllabic words in which the stress is carried by their stressed syllable. At the same time, these words separate the "feet". Function words also known as grammar words as described by Wells (2006) serve a completely different purpose compared to content words. Their importance is to provide a grammatical framework and thus hold content words together, ensuring sentence coherence. These words include mainly auxiliary verbs, prepositions, pronouns and conjunctions. Overall, function words are shorter and more frequent than content words. In stress-timed rhythm, in general, there should be similarly regular time gaps between content words, regardless of how many function words are in those gaps. This brings us to the point where we need the compression

of function words to keep these time gaps at similar time, thus preserving the rhythmicity of English speech. As an example, consider the sentence (I have sold my house and moved to Spain). If we extract the content words from this sentence, which are the words "sold, house, moved, Spain", we are still able to understand at least partially the meaning of the sentence. In this case, the other words from the sentence "I, have, my, and, to" are function words, which link the sentence together for us and preserve the coherence of the content words. Sentence stress essentially helps us form English rhythm.

3.4 Foot

The English rhythm which is so important for communication is the carrier of the individual feet. The stressed syllables of these feet follow each other at approximately regular intervals, creating the rhythm of the spoken language. For this reason, it is necessary to explain the term "foot" in terms of terminology.

The stressed foot is the higher superordinate unit of the syllable. It forms a unit composed of one or more syllables. Individual feet always begin with a stressed syllable. The feet can be made up of one or more words depending on the number of stressed syllables in the sentence. Dividing sentences into individual feet is very difficult for Czech pupils. The problem is that in Czech the stress is on the first syllable of the words. In English, the division of the feet is much more complicated. The stress can also be in the middle of the word and for this reason a foot can begin and end in the middle of the word (Skaličková, 1982, p.45).

The division of sentences into foot segments can be illustrated by an example. Roach (2009) shows an example of five-foot sentence, which illustrates the aforementioned difference between Czech and English in the fact that a foot can end and begin in the middle of a word as seen in the transition from the fourth to the fifth foot.

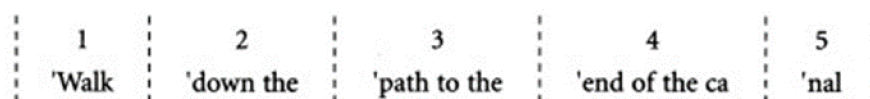


Figure 1 from *ENGLISH PHONETICS AND PHONOLOGY: A Practical Course*

Skaličková (1982) argues that English "foot" can tear apart word units, although it is the word unit that is taken as the main communicative value. We have to look at the stressed foot from a slightly different perspective, which is a melodic one. It is the melody, when properly used, that reveals to us the boundaries of individual feet, and also shows us how closely related the

two terms are. For example, for sentences with the same transcription in Czech /zasebouráno/, we can get multiple meanings depending on where the melody and the feet boundary take place. /'za sebu/'rano/ or /'zase/'bouráno/. The first phrase tells us that in the past we have spent the morning as part of the day, the second tells us that something is being demolished again so totally different translations. Whether the foot has a boundary at the beginning of the word or in the middle is indicated by the pitch of the voice.

As already mentioned, in the Czech language, foot is usually a word boundary signal, whereas in English it is not. This difference can be confusing for the Czech learner, because it is often not possible to find an independent meaning in the English foot, whereas in Czech it is. The meaning of English feet is often only known with the context of the neighboring feet, which results in English speech that can be confusing to the learner when listening. At the same time, foot boundaries are far more often the initiators of pauses in Czech whereas they rarely are in English. The reason for this is the use of articles and prepositions in full-meaning English words which, although belong to the word, but do not belong to the foot. Therefore, the main difference is that the foot is a semantic unit in Czech, while in English it is a rhythmic and melodic unit (Melen, 2010).

4 ENGLISH PROSODIC SYSTEM

The term 'prosody' exhibits a multifaceted definition, with varying interpretations evident across diverse research disciplines. Some scholars conceptualize prosody as the phonological arrangement of speech segments into higher-level constituents. Conversely, other researchers use prosody synonymously with suprasegmental features such as pitch, tempo, loudness, and duration, emphasizing its role in speech realization. (Cutler, Dahan, & van Donselaar, 1997 , p. 142).

Skaličková (1982) states that the prosodic properties of language depend on so-called modulation factors. These factors include intensity of speech (stress), intonation, rhythm, and timbre of voice. Timbre of voice, which is more a matter of the speaker's personal style is not as central to this thesis. Therefore, in this chapter, the main focus will be on rhythm and intonation. According to Gilbert (2008), the term prosody is sometimes mentioned only in relation to rhythm and intonation is not included in this categorization. In pronunciation, however, it is important to keep in mind that rhythm and intonation interact very closely and are inextricably linked in spoken language. This connection in the English language creates the musical components that gives the language its typical character.

It is therefore clear that the term prosody in different publications and articles includes slightly different components. For the above reasons, the term "prosody" used in this thesis will always refer to its two elements, which will be intonation (melody) and rhythm.

4.1 Intonation

According to Gilbert (2008) all languages have methods to emphasize crucial information, distinguishing between old and new details in speech. English uniquely uses intonation (melody), with pitch variations clarifying and connecting ideas, and signalling new information. Effective listening involves interpreting these pitch changes to grasp the speaker's connections and anticipate future points, similar to how readers use textual cues like "furthermore" or "on the other hand." The great example of the importance of intonation can be these two sentences:

- a. Jane said, "Is that Mister Fogg?"
- b. Jane said, "Is that mist or fog?"

If you try to tell these sentences aloud without any changes in your pitch, both sentences would sound exactly the same. The reason for this is that the only factor which is

distinguishing these two sentences is an intonation. In the sentence (a), Jane speaks about a person but in the sentence (b), she speaks about a weather. (Gilbert, 2005, p.136)

What is interesting about intonation is that although it is seen as a relatively complex phenomenon of English pronunciation, studies indicate that its correct use is largely due to how learners receive it from their surroundings. Schreiber (2009) argues that from the beginning of the babbling phase, children begin to create 'utterances' that reflect the distinctive prosodic melodies of the language they are exposed to. For this reason, we can assume that intonation is far more natural to pupils than learning individual segments of speech.

According to Roach (2009), there is no definition for intonation that is sufficiently explanatory. To understand the basis of this suprasegmental element, he uses a simile that describes intonation quite well. The basic unit of intonation is "tone", which in spoken language is distinguished by the pitch of the voice. The tone can be: rise, level, fall, fall-rise and rise-fall. However, it is central to intonation that the difference between raising and lowering of the voice has an informational or linguistically relevant impact, hence that it has meaning for communication. For example, if we talk to a person riding a horse and he is talking while doing so, his voice will fall and rise depending on the trot of the horse, but this difference in pitch changes is not informationally relevant and therefore it is not intonation.

As mentioned earlier, the key aspect that determines the form of intonation is tone. Speaking with an 'even' melody would be unclear to the listener, as they would not be able to determine whether it is a question or a statement, nor to identify whether it is a complete sentence or just a part of it. Only a drop in pitch at the end would let the listener know that the utterance is a statement and that the sentence is finished. On the other hand, if there was a significant rise in the pitch, it would signal a question, while a slight rise would indicate that the utterance was about to continue. Falling intonation is typically used in sentences that carry information, in commands, exclamations, or questions beginning with "Wh" that are not answered with a simple Yes or No. In contrast, rising intonation appears in questions requiring a Yes or No answer, in unfinished sentences, and in requests. (Melen, 2010, p.59)

Skaličková (1982) points out the similarities between Czech and English intonation, where both languages use two main types of sentence endings: falling and rising. In both cases, the highest point of the melody is formed by the first stressed syllable or the first foot. The unstressed syllables before this peak are held on a lower pitch, and after the first stressed

syllable, the melody falls in the following beats, leading to a sentence ending with either a falling melody in a statement or a rising melody in an interrogative sentence. This rising or falling section of the sentence always begins with the last stressed syllable, which is also the beginning of the last foot of the sentence. Melen (2010) argues that this segment is the most important for understanding the overall meaning of an utterance and is technically called "cadence". Although the intonation rules of both languages are basically the same, their practical application differs. In Czech, sentences usually begin with a stressed syllable and the melody gradually drops off, whereas in English it is more common for a sentence to begin with an unstressed element before rising to a peak on the first foot (Skaličková, 1982, p.176)

Although we could talk about more rules and differences of English intonation such as pauses between words, division of intonation phrases, etc. For this thesis, this information is not important. Krčmová (2008) talks about the fact that the most effective way to master English intonation is listening to native speakers and possibly imitating individual phrases rather than mechanically learning the rules. This approach is logical because it is not possible for a learner to constantly think about where the stressed syllable is or is not in a sentence in spoken language.

4.2 Rhythm

English is perceived as a rhythmic language. Rhythmization of English speech is given great importance. This is mainly due to the intelligibility of the language, which is the reason behind English rhythm. Originally, there was a relatively simple theory that told us that English rhythm is produced by regular intervals between stressed syllables. It was said that these intervals were the same length whether the stressed syllables were separated by unstressed ones or not. However, oscillographs in more recent research have shown that complete regularity of speech rhythm is not a necessary prerequisite for the rhythmicity of the English language. So, it is certainly not the monotonous regularity of a ticking clock. New research speaks of English rhythm as a segmentation of the sound stream or quantization in time. It is therefore more of a relative regularity that is influenced by many factors (Roach, 2009)

Quantization of sound is fundamentally different from monotonic. The main difference is that monotonic sound is the repetition of something same and regular. Something like this can never create a rhythm. The essence of quantization in time is that the individual members of the series are different. If we combine this statement with the fact that a given speech segment

is clearly defined, we get what is called a rhythmic pattern. Quantization in English refers in particular to those elements which are subject to changes in quantity, i.e. those whose tension can vary in length. From this statement we come to the crucial point, which is that the basic unit of rhythm is the syllable (Skaličková, 1982, p.60).

Compared to intonation, which has essentially the same rules in Czech, the situation is quite different with rhythm. English rhythm is completely different from Czech rhythm, which is why Czech pupils often make mistakes in it. Skaličková (1982) even claims that we would hardly find anything more different in English and Czech than the rhythm of the two languages. Indeed, it is rhythm that matters most in communication. According to Ladefoged (1993), two types of rhythm can be distinguished according to different timing, i.e. quantity. English is characterized by the use of stress-timed rhythm, while Czech is characterized by syllable-time rhythm.

Stress-timed rhythm is achieved by the regular occurrence of stressed syllables, which are arranged in such a way that the intervals between them tend to be approximately equal in length, allowing speech to be divided into individual feet. Roach (2009) describes a foot as a "unit of rhythm" that always contains only one stressed syllable, which also determines the beginning of the foot. Each foot in English must contain at least one stressed syllable. However, it may be followed by several unstressed syllables. Thus, if one foot contains only a stressed syllable and the following foot contains a stressed syllable and several unstressed syllables, compression of these unstressed syllables must occur to preserve the duration of the intervals between the individual feet.

Syllable-time rhythm occurs in Czech. This is because there is a tendency to have all syllables of the same length and the duration of the track depends on the number of syllables (Ladefoged, 1993). Therefore, the Czech learner will have some difficulty in acquiring the English rhythm. As described by Melen (2010), the biggest problem is usually maintaining similarly long intervals, between stressed syllables. This is achieved by the mentioned reduction of unstressed syllables. This is based on the higher number of unstressed syllables that stand in the preceding or following foot.

As already mentioned, many factors influence the rhythm of English speech. Skaličková (1982) talks about the style of the speech, i.e. whether it is a public speech, which will have a more regular rhythm, or a speech that is accompanied by, for example, nervousness or hesitation, which will take the form of a less regular rhythm. Even if the pronunciation of

each phoneme is perfect, an incorrect rhythm will negatively affect communication. The question therefore remains how to acquire rhythm at primary school.

Several sources mention listening exercises in which individual sentences are repeated in order to imitate rhythmic patterns. This imitation can be accompanied, for example, by clapping on each stressed syllable. Another way to develop rhythm is to draw rhythmic patterns, where sequences of stressed and unstressed syllables can be marked (Melen, 2010, p.51). However, there are also many other ways to develop rhythm in the classroom, see chapter 6 (teaching English prosody).

4.3 Summary

Understanding English prosody is crucial to this thesis. The research part of the thesis will unfold around intonation and rhythm, so in this subsection we will summarise the most important points of the chapter.

Rhythm and intonation are key elements of English pronunciation and communication that complement and interact with each other. In communication, intonation helps to distinguish and link ideas, to signal new information, and to give meaning to a spoken utterance. Rhythm, on the other hand, is very important for the intelligibility of the speech. Czech intonation and rhythm are, however, quite different from English ones and their acquisition can cause Czech pupils considerable problems. Proper mastery of intonation and rhythm is therefore essential for effective communication in English. Achieving a certain level of these listed components of prosody does not require mechanical learning of the rules, but rather imitation and listening to native speakers or very qualified teachers.

5 Czech pupils' errors in prosody

Skaličková (1982) provides a complete chapter on the most common errors in English pronunciation. We will be mainly interested in errors in rhythm and in intonation a.k.a. melody in this chapter, as these two suprasegmental elements are the main focus of this thesis. In order to teach prosodic phenomena of English effectively, it is necessary to understand the main problems that might arise when teaching Czech learners. By uncovering the most common mistakes made by Czech learners, it is possible to target or actively eliminate them during lessons.

As already mentioned in the chapter "English prosodic system", the essential feature of English rhythm is the quantity of syllables in sentences and words. This is the problem most often encountered by Czech pupils who do not pay attention to the correct quantity and especially the timbre of individual words. For example, the English word "mummy", where the second syllable of the word is longer than in the Czech word "mami". The same example occurs with the English word "tackle" and the Czech word "tekl". A similar problem occurs with words that have more syllables. Words such as "preferable" or "usually", for example, can cause considerable problems for learners in terms of reducing the quantity of unstressed syllables in a word. Such errors can, over a long period of speech, break the rhythmic characteristic of the whole speech unit. (Skaličková, 1982, p.190). Melen (2010) describes the aforementioned quantity of stressed syllables as another recurring error. The Czech learner finds it difficult to realise that the space between the stressed syllables in English must be perceived as one word and pronounced as such. Scientifically, we call this section of the sentence a "foot". Inside the foot, the individual components are not separated when speaking, e.g. "some of us" is read as one-word /samovaz/. We do not encounter anything like this in Czech. Last but not least, it is a common mistake that often breaks the rhythmic characteristics of longer sections of speech when the number of unstressed syllables differs from one stressed syllable to another. The reason for this error is the main difference between English and Czech rhythm.

If we focus on melody, the principle is the same in English and Czech. What is different, however, is the placement of the stress on individual words. As in Czech, the words with stressed syllables are most often at the beginning of the sentence when the intonation slowly descends like stairs and only at the end of the sentence there is a difference in intonation whether it is a question, statement etc.. We encounter errors by Czech pupils when this is not the case in English and there is an unstressed syllable at the beginning of the sentence. In that

case the melody must be low until the first stressed syllable when the intonation is at its highest point. Thus, Czech learners tend to place the highest point of the melody always at the beginning of the sentence, as in English. The overall impression of poorly acquired melody among Czech pupils is reflected in monotonous speech instead of melodic and variable speech (Skaličková, 1982).

Most of the mentioned mistakes of Czech students in English prosody correspond closely to the use of their mother tongue. In other words, the pupil often applies the acquired habits from the Czech language to the English language. This is a very crucial point for the research part of this thesis, as the use of the mother tongue in English lessons is one of the main problems addressed in the research in terms of the effectiveness of teaching prosody.

6 Teaching English prosody at lower secondary school

6.1 Jazz Chants

According to the creator of jazz chanting Carolyn Graham (1986), Jazz chant is a way to teach English using the rhythm and intonation that is typical for regular spoken English. This method helps students better understand how English is naturally used in everyday situations. Jazz chant uses a rhythm similar to jazz music to express common phrases and sentences in English. The goal is for students to not only better understand rhythm and intonation, but also to learn how to use these elements to express emotion and intentions in the English language. Jazz Chants is a teaching tool designed to develop students' ability to perceive and appreciate how rhythm and intonation affect the meaning of words. When students perform these chants, they not only improve their pronunciation of difficult vowels, but also actively participate in the dialogues that they can use in their own conversations.

In practice, jazz chants can cover topics ranging from basic daily activities to more complex social interactions, providing a rich environment for learning English in a context that is relevant, memorable, and motivational for students. This approach transforms traditional English language learning into a more interactive and fun format that promotes communicative skills and increases students' confidence in using the English language. Jazz chanting has its roots at the American Language Institute of New York, but its use is spread in other countries such as Poland, Australia, Canada, and Mexico (Graham, 1986).

To highlight the emphasis on intonation, rhythm and stress, chants are most typically oriented towards human emotions that students encounter in everyday life, such as frustration, anger, positivity, etc. Chants are mainly written in the form of dialogue, but it is also possible to create a rhythmically repeating monologue. In the case of dialogue chants, we can encounter with several types. These are question and response, command and response and response to a provocative statement. Graham (1986) points out what is important to note, namely that jazz chants are nothing more than a replica of how a student hears a native person speak. Only the rhythmic and possibly intonation is more prominent.

Teaching with jazz chants is itself quite difficult for a foreign language learner at first. Turning to the use of jazz chants at lower secondary school, Graham (1986) mentions six basic steps of an typical jazz chant activity. These are:

1. Explain the context of a chant and present new vocabulary that are unclear to the class.

2. Provide the first line in normal speed and let learners to repeat together after you. Continue with rest of the lines. Stop at any point to correct any mistakes whether in pronunciation or intonation.
3. Provide a clear and strong beat. It can be followed by clapping, counting, finger snapping or using musical instrument such as wooden sticks. Repeat step 2 with the beat.
4. Divide class into two groups with the same number of students. First group repeat the first line of the chant and the second group repeat the next line. Each group have their line to the end of the chant. Every line is followed accompanied by the beat. Important fact is that the learners are still repeating after teacher.
5. The chant is a two-part dialogue between teacher and learners. The class is answering to the teacher. It should be repeated several times till the moment you hear nice choral voice of the whole class.
6. Divide learners into two groups again. Give a strong beat and let the two groups proceed the Jazz Chant dialogue without your help. At the beginning of the stage 6 is by Graham (1986) suggested to let the pupils have the chant text before their eyes. Teacher just maintain the tempo and hold on the beat.

This is basically a simplified example of what an activity using jazz chants might look like. According to the research conducted by Hynkova (2016) in her bachelor's thesis, it is evident that some pupils do not always enjoy the constant repetition and a couple of them stated in the questionnaire that they found some steps of the activity boring. However, Graham (1986) mentions more modifications of the use of jazz chants in the English language classes. One of these is the inclusion of a pantomime or movement that could accompany the chant. The use of the role-play method is also a possibility. At this point, however, it is necessary to be aware of the age group for which the chant will be used and then adapt the activity to the needs and demands of the class. Therefore, it is not always necessary to follow these six steps.

For the needs of teachers, there are many different books that contain already created chants with a methodology that can be used in the English language classes. Nevertheless, the teacher is free to create his/her own jazz chant or to modify an existing one, for example by changing the vocabulary in the chant. The advantage is that the teacher chooses exactly the topic he wants to develop with the pupils, whether it is grammar, vocabulary, or pronunciation. Again, Graham (1986) has created a summary of steps to help the English

language teacher create a proper chant. At the beginning, it is necessary to create a chant topic that corresponds with the syllabus of the class. The second step is to list the vocabulary related to the topic that we want to practice with the students. These vocabulary words are then divided according to the number of syllables. At the same time, we need to come up with words that rhyme with the words on our worksheet. In the last step before creating the chant, we need to come up with adjectives, which we will also divide according to the number of syllables. All of these selected words then serve as the basis for creating our own chant.

As already mentioned, jazz chants do not always develop only pronunciation, but also other language skills. For vocabulary, it is usually common practice such as explain, translate or give synonyms for words, as Ur (1996) states. However, this process can be replaced in a very original way in jazz chants, for example by movements during the chant, which help to memorize the new vocabulary better. Graham (1986) also talks about the visual aspect that can also follow chants. In this case, it can be pictures or supporting videos.

As far as teaching grammar is concerned, with jazz chants it is important to choose a level that the class can handle. Ideally, the grammar that the class already knows, and the chant serves in a means of mastering it. The author of jazz chants argues that the rhythm that is present helps students remember grammatical patterns (Graham, 1986).

6.1.1 Jazz chants – example

In this part of the subsection, I would like to show an example of an already created chant according to Graham (1978), its structure and methodology for better illustration:

Sh! Sh! Baby's Sleeping!

I said, Sh! Sh! Baby's sleeping!

I said, Sh! Sh! Baby's sleeping!

What did you say?

What did you say?

I said, Hush! Hush! Baby's sleeping!

I said, Hush! Hush! Baby's sleeping!

What did you say?

What did you say?

I said, Please be quiet, Baby's sleeping!

I said, Please be quiet, Baby's sleeping!

What did you say?

What did you say?

I said, Shut up! Shut up! Baby's sleeping!

I said, Shut up! Shut up! Baby's sleeping!

WAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA

Not anymore.

The jazz chant "Sh! Sh! Baby's sleeping!" is the very first one Graham (1978) included in her book, and even for its simplicity I chose it as the perfect example. The above chant, as stated by Graham (1978) practices the pronunciation of the words Sh, Hush, Please and quiet. The main focus of this chant is on the reduction of the word "did" in the phrase "did you". The rhythm must be respected, and this chant directly encourages this. As far as grammar is concerned, the chant practises present continuous and simple past tense. In terms of usage, it shows us four variations that a student can use when complaining about a loud sound, ranging from the polite "Sh" to the rude "shut up". In this case, it is a command and response type of chant and should be practiced in the classroom as a dialogue between the class groups or teacher and the class.

6.2 Music activities

According to Budden (2008), the use of music in the English language classes is a very beneficial teaching method. Not only we can focus on many different attributes of the language through music, but it is also a very crucial motivational element that can help us to awaken the interest of the learners.

If we focus on music in contrast to the teaching of prosodic phenomena, it is obvious that rhythm will come first in this case. Richards (2014) states that songs have a naturally steady rhythm that occurs at regular intervals and is mixed with varying numbers of unstressed syllables. This rhythm is similar to the stress patterns used in spoken English. This similarity between music and language shows how important rhythm is to understand and speak English effectively, making music a useful tool for teaching and learning English rhythm. By learning English pronunciation using music, the teacher can focus on teaching sounds, the smallest

units of speech, as well as teaching words and connected speech. Ebong & Sabbadini from British council in their article "Developing pronunciation through songs" argue that connected speech is the way we usually speak, by connecting together words and putting emphasis on some of them instead of pronouncing each word separately. For example, word linking, where two words are combined into one, shows how connected speech works. This joining of words affects both spoken and written language and shows the fluent way we communicate on a daily basis. Understanding this fact can greatly improve effective communication in the English language.

Lynch (2022) talks about learners being exposed to multiple types of accents through music. Listening activities in the English language textbooks are in vast majority recorded in RP. But the fact remains that in reality a learner may be exposed to people who use a completely different accent. Accordingly, we can choose other artists, for example from the USA or Australia, for the lessons.

There is a whole spectrum of activities that can be used with music and the internet is full of them. Focusing on prosody Richards (2014) mentions some examples such as accompany the music by clapping or snapping fingers, where pupils are encouraged to keep a steady beat. Another possibility is to circle or underline the stress in the sentences. The most important thing, however, is to keep the difficulty of any activity appropriate to the group being taught.

6.3 Rap as a tool in ELT

Rap, similarly to "Jazz Chants", contains a beat that very clearly emphasizes the prosodic phenomena of English and therefore its use in teaching rhythm and intonation is very appropriate. Segal (2014) underlines this statement with a program called the "Rapping English project".

At the University of Hong Kong, the "Rapping English" programme makes creative use of rap music to teach English, specifically focusing on improving prosody, which includes rhythm, stress and intonation in spoken language. This approach to teaching is particularly effective because it involves a genre that is culturally relevant and popular among students, which boosts the engaging nature of the lesson. By including rap in mainstream lessons, the program helps students naturally acquire rhythmic patterns typical for English, an essential skill especially in areas where the structure of the native language is significantly different (stress-timed rhythm X syllable-timed rhythm). Although the implementation of this innovative method presents challenges, such as the need for teachers to know the rap and master the

technical aspects of the audio equipment, the benefits, including increased student motivation and improved language skills, are significant. This approach not only makes learning English more enjoyable but also empowers students by increasing their confidence in using the language (Segal, 2014).

Apart from teaching prosody, the inclusion of rap has many more advantages that should be taken into account when using it in the English language classes. In an article by the American TESOL Institute (2023), it is mentioned that rap music is a versatile tool for academic purposes, especially for cross-curricular relationship. Artists often mention social issues such as poverty and racism in their lyrics. Furthermore, lyrics may enrich the listener with historical figures or events. Overall, rap lyrics often lead listeners to reflect and develop critical thinking. Therefore, content analysis of rap music is another possible option for use in the English classroom.

6.4 Drill patterns

Drill patterns are another way of teaching the prosodic phenomena of English. They are most often encountered in textbooks, as their methodology is easily illustrated graphically. They are exercises combining listening, transcription or choice-making. Celce-Murcia (2001, p.120) mentions that since English is characterized by stress-timed rhythm, the beats of sentences can be represented in regular intervals, which can be accompanied by clapping, for example. An example of this is the following exercise in Figure 2, where the students are asked to read each sentence and use clapping to emphasise the rhythm. In this case, the more prominent dots represent stressed syllables while the less prominent dots represent unstressed syllables.

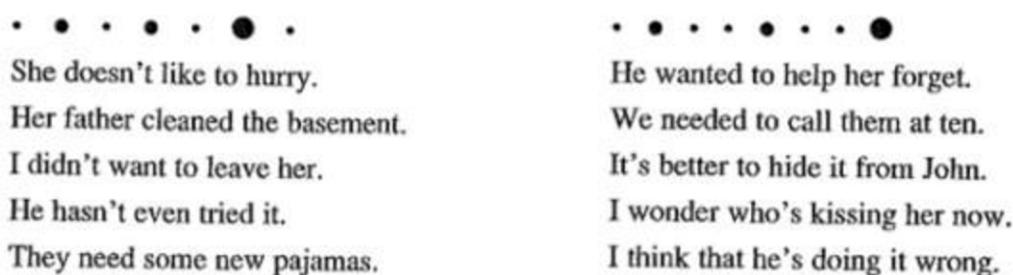


Figure 2 Rhythm task (Celce-Murcia et. al., 2008, p. 156)

In exercises for intonation, a line is used to mark the intonation pitches as we can see in the figure 3 in a sentence “It seemed hopeless”. Again, pupils can just read the individual sentences and follow the line to focus on the rising and falling of the voice.

However, Doff (2005) mentions that for intonation, it is preferable if pupils learn it naturally and not through drill.

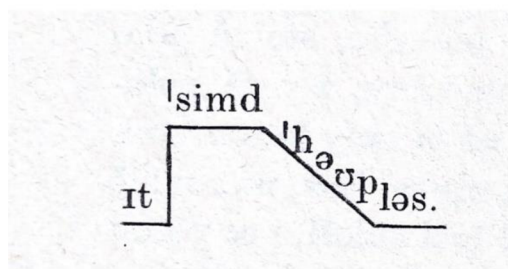


Figure 3 from Fonetika současné angličtiny (Skaličková, p. 176, 1982)

6.5 Drama

According to Kawasaki (2021), dramatic activities in the classroom create an environment where students feel safe and can experiment with language without fear of making mistakes. Specifically, she states that this is an ice breaker that can help even less active learners engage in the lesson. Activities such as drama or role-play mimic real-life communication situations, leading pupils to use language in real-life contexts.

As we learned in Chapter 4, "The English prosodic system". Rhythm and intonation are key aspects for effective speaking. Gasparro (1994) mentions that it is the prosodic features of the English language that can be developed through dramatic activities and the role-play method. Through these methods, the teacher can target at the specific intonation and rhythmic patterns that, as Gilbert (2008) describes, are typical for the English language.

Practical involvement of drama activities can include simulations, improvisations, or dramas where students practice use of English language in different emotional and social contexts. This develops pupils' ability to express different emotional levels which are reflected in communication on intonation, rhythm, and stress (Kelly, 2000).

Gasparro (1994) talks about how dramatic activities and role-play can help improve not only English skills in terms of cognition, but these techniques can also be thought of as multiversal approaches that engage students both physically and emotionally. Drama often contains highly emotional themes, where pupils are exposed to working with both non-verbal and verbal aspects of language. Therefore, the prosody is much more developed than in descriptive or neutral dialogue. Overall, it is a fun and informal form of teaching that motivates pupils and removes the fear and shame of speaking a foreign language.

7 English only approach

As the research part of this thesis is related to this approach of teaching, the aim of this chapter will be to clarify the benefits and possible problems of the English Only Approach. At the same time, the chapter will focus on possible strategies for integrating this approach into the classroom.

Krashen (1983) describes that total immersion in the language is the most effective way for students to develop fluency. Consideration of the learning environment is a crucial guide to the success of this approach. In a simplified way, the "English only approach" is a method that promotes the use of only English, the target language, in the classroom. Cummins (2000) supports this claim by stating that the use of English maximises learners' exposure to the language and therefore facilitates faster language acquisition and even cultural understanding. In fact, the English-only approach reflects the principles of Swain & Johnson's (1997) immersion models of teaching, where fluency in a second language is promoted by using the language as a tool for teaching other subjects. At the same time, Krashen (1983) mentions that source language acts as interference in the classroom. By this is meant that our knowledge of the first language gets in the way of the second language especially when the two languages are different in nature as is the case with English and Czech.

Trends in the use of the mother tongue in the English language teaching have evolved greatly over the years. Some methods such as the grammar-translation method use both, the source and target language. In contrast, methods such as the communicative approach or the direct method, sometimes referred to as the natural approach, use the target language almost entirely (Mukalel, 2005). Thus, it is not possible to state 100% that any method is right or wrong, but each method has its pros and cons that must be taken into account.

Focusing on the cons of the English only approach, Baker (2011, p. 196) mentions that there was some criticism. This is due to the possibility of limited student knowledge which reduces their understanding of the teacher. These factors can lead to increased anxiety for weaker students. In this case, however, the book only mentions students who are new to English or whose level of proficiency is very low. The question therefore remains as to what the situation is like at the lower secondary school, when pupils are already relatively familiar with the language. Krashen (1983) talks about several cons of this method in his publication. Overall, the approach is "teacher focused" which can have unfortunate consequences on lesson dynamics and possible discipline problems. In fact, miscommunication can have the effect of

deteriorating the teacher-student relationship. Harmer (2007, pp. 132-133) discusses another problem that relates to student shaping. He argues that there is a high probability that our identity is to some extent shaped by the language we are surrounded by especially when we are children. Communicating in our native language is simply part of who we are and an outright ban in the classroom may not always have good results. Another point that Harmer mentions concerns the fact that whether the teacher wants to or not, the classroom will never be completely "English only". Pupils will talk to each other in their native language despite the rules and at the same time, for example, translate sentences from L2 to L1 in their brains. This is a perfectly natural process that should not be denied to pupils.

But let's find out what strategies can be chosen to run an English only classroom properly. One method that is good to combine with the English only approach is TPR (Total physical response). Professor Asher, who invented this method, points out that children acquire their first language through interaction, which includes both verbal and physical components. Teaching should therefore mimic this natural process (Asher, 1996). Integrating physical activity into teaching using the English only approach, where language elements are linked to movement, is therefore a very effective way of making the understanding between pupil and teacher better.

As already mentioned, the disadvantages of using the English only approach can be encountered, especially in the deterioration of the relationship between teacher and pupils. This can be prevented by a relatively simple strategy where the teacher chooses activities that reflect the interests of the pupils, such as music or sports activities. These activities increase students motivation and also their engagement, which is very important since, as already mentioned, this approach is considered "teacher focused" (Harmer, 2007, p.83-84).

In conclusion, it is important for the teacher himself to follow the rule of using only English language in the classroom. He or she should be a role model to the students and help the students to adopt the English language naturally. This is one of the roles a teacher (participant) should represent (Harmer, 2007, p. 109). All these aspects will help the teacher to create an English-infused environment that not only helps the students to learn the language but also strengthens their language confidence.

8 Introduction to the research

This research aims to investigate whether two different teaching approaches have an effect on the level of quality of prosodic phenomena in pupils language. The aim of the research is to examine the difference between pupils taught using the 'English Only Approach' and the regular T and S language method. The result of the investigation will help teachers to clarify whether the "Only English Approach" is a valid tool for improving the pronunciation in terms of prosody of pupils at lower secondary school. As this research is focused on the didactics of the second stage of primary school, it is necessary to narrow down the prosodic problems to the most basic phenomena a pupil may encounter with. For this reason, there will be examined only intonation and rhythm in their most basic form.

8.1 Methodology

The aim is to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the Alternative method of the English Only approach in terms of teaching prosody. Therefore, the research will include especially a fact sheet in terms of the differences between the two classes in the level of rhythm and intonation which is essential to the research part. These results will provide an overview of pros and cons of this approach.

In order to compare the two classes, it is necessary to obtain information about the level of each pupil in terms of prosody. One possible method, which was also chosen for this research, is to record pupils' speech and investigate whether the rules of using English rhythm and intonation were followed.

8.2 Participants

The research involved 3 parties of respondents. Teacher, pupils and an independent native speaker. Pupils are divided into two groups in the research. Those who participated in the English only approach for one year (EOA-Pupils) and the other group who were taught in the traditional style, i.e. used both source and target language in their classes (R-Pupils). The native speaker who is essential for the research served as a control medium. The teacher has the role of an informant observer for the research who has experience in teaching EOA.

8.3 Data collection tools

The computer software "Praat" was used to collect the pupils' and native speaker's utterances, which is directly used to record and analyse phonetic features. It is a free version of a package with many features that is fully functional on most computer systems such as Windows. One

of the features that Praat has, which was the reason for using this system for the research part of the thesis, is the possibility of manipulating the recorded material and creating specific stimulus sentences. The Praat software was designed by Paul Boersma together with David Weenink of the university of Amsterdam (1991) and continues to be developed.

Audio recordings can either be inserted into the Praat platform from a Dictaphone or the audio can be recorded directly through the software. The second option was chosen in the case of this research because of its accuracy. During the test recordings, it was found that the integrated microphone of the laptop on which the recordings were recorded was not of sufficient quality to record accurate recordings. Another problem encountered was the varying results of the recordings in terms of the distance of the speaker from the microphone. Therefore, a Genius GX Gaming HS-G600V headset with a folding microphone with a minimum frequency range of 100 [Hz], a maximum range of 10 [Hz], an impedance of 2200 [Ohm] and a sensitivity of -54 [dB] was used for the recordings of all respondents. The tilting microphone ensures a constant speaking distance and therefore accurate measurement results.

8.3.1 Praat graphs

The graphic forms of the recorded sounds can be modified and edited in various ways using the Praat software. There are many possibilities of what to do with the sound. In this part of the chapter, we will show the type of graphical sound recording that was used for this research, which is sufficient. Figure 4 shows an example of a graphical recording of one sentence from the research, which can be used to explain how graphs are used in research. This is the sentence, "We'll meet at two.", which illustrates falling intonation in the research. The graph is always divided into 2 parts. The top part of the graph is the modifiable sound, or the particular waveform that is common even in an ordinary dictation machine. What we are really interested in from the graph is the bottom part of the graphic recording, where we find one blue and one green line of different shapes. The blue line shows the "derived pitch" which is necessary to determine the correctness of the intonation curve. The green line shows the "derived intensity", which shows us the use of rhythm in the pronunciation of a given phrase. The different lengths and height of the green curves indicate the stress-timed rhythm that is present in the English language.

Praat as a whole records sound waves over time and it is therefore possible to use this software for research purposes.

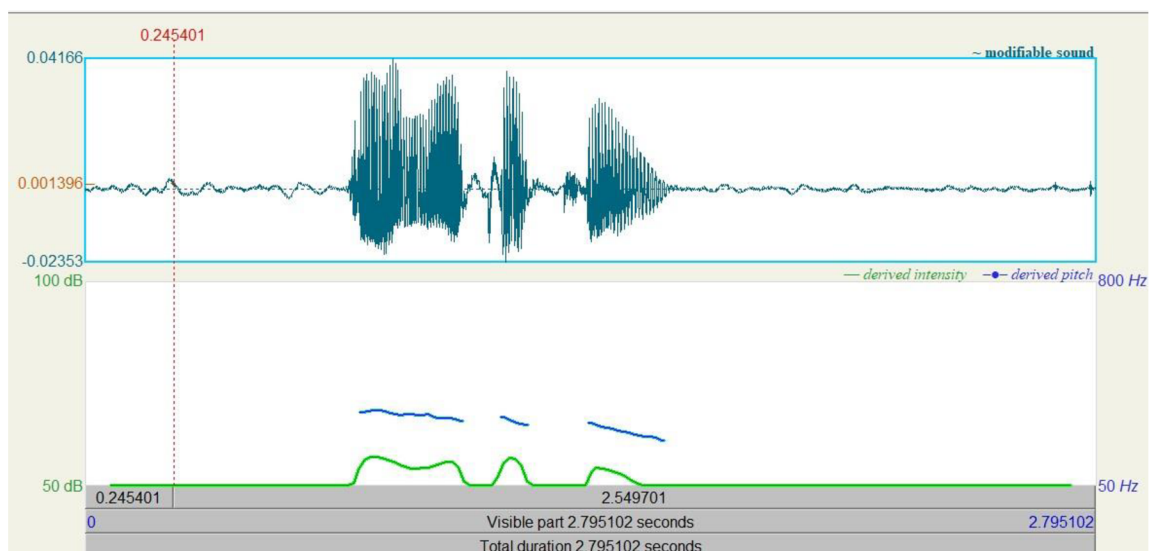


Figure 4 Waveform, pitch and intensity of a sentence „We'll meet at two.“

8.4 Observed sentences

To gain an awareness of the learners' level of prosody, a set of nine sentences was selected to demonstrate the basic features of English rhythm and intonation. All the charts presented in this subsection are the result of recording a native speaker of American English and serve as a control medium for the research. The subchapter is divided into two parts. Part one concerns sentences focusing on intonation namely falling, rising, fall-rise and rise-fall intonation. I am aware that there are more types of intonation in English, but four basic types have been selected which the learner encounters the most. The second part of the subsection is devoted to sentences focusing on rhythm control. The sentences selected for the examination of intonation were taken from the examples given in Melen (2010). The examples of sentences for which rhythm is examined were taken from Celce-Murcia (2008).

Thus, in this subsection, we will show the sentences selected for the research part of the thesis and based on the graphical recordings produced by the native speakers, we will analyse them and clarify the main points relevant for later comparison with the learners' recordings.

8.4.1 Falling intonation

This type of intonation, as discussed in Chapter 4 (English prosodic system), is mainly encountered in the expression of statements, commands, or, less frequently, in informational "Wh" questions, where the listener is asked to agree with or confirm a statement rather than a

developed response. However, in order to check the correctness of the use of falling intonation, only 2 examples were selected for the research where this type of intonation is used most frequently, and these were in the statement or command. The intensity of falling in the pitch is then reflected by the number of syllables in the final beat. The more syllables the more gradually the melody descends. In the following examples, however, we will only encounter monosyllabic expressions at the end of sentences and therefore the end of the sentence will be sharply downward in terms of melody.

Sentence 1 - Statement: **We'll meet at two.**

In the case of this sentence, it is a statement. The intonation that must be used is "falling". The sentence is made up of four syllables and can be divided into two content words (meet, two) and two grammar words (We'll, at). If we look at the graphic recording, the time between the utterance of the content words should be approximately the same length in order to maintain the rhythmic cadence of the utterance. On the grammar word (We'll) the intonation is equal. On /meet at/, the melody should be kept at the highest level, as this is the first foot of the sentence, and then gradually decrease to /two/.

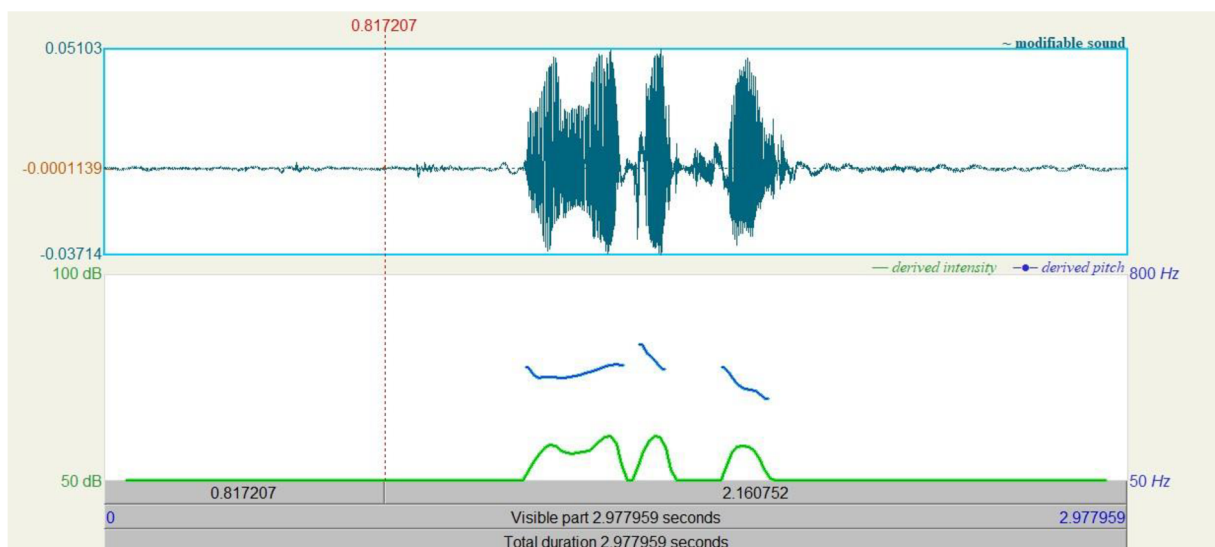


Figure 5 Sentence 1 – Native speaker

Sentence 2 – imperative: Close the door!

In the case of sentence 2 it is an imperative, so falling intonation will be used again. The sentence consists of three syllables and can be divided into content words (close, door) and grammar words (the). /Close the/ forms the first foot and will therefore be kept at the highest pitch level. After that, the intonation curve will descend to the word /door/.

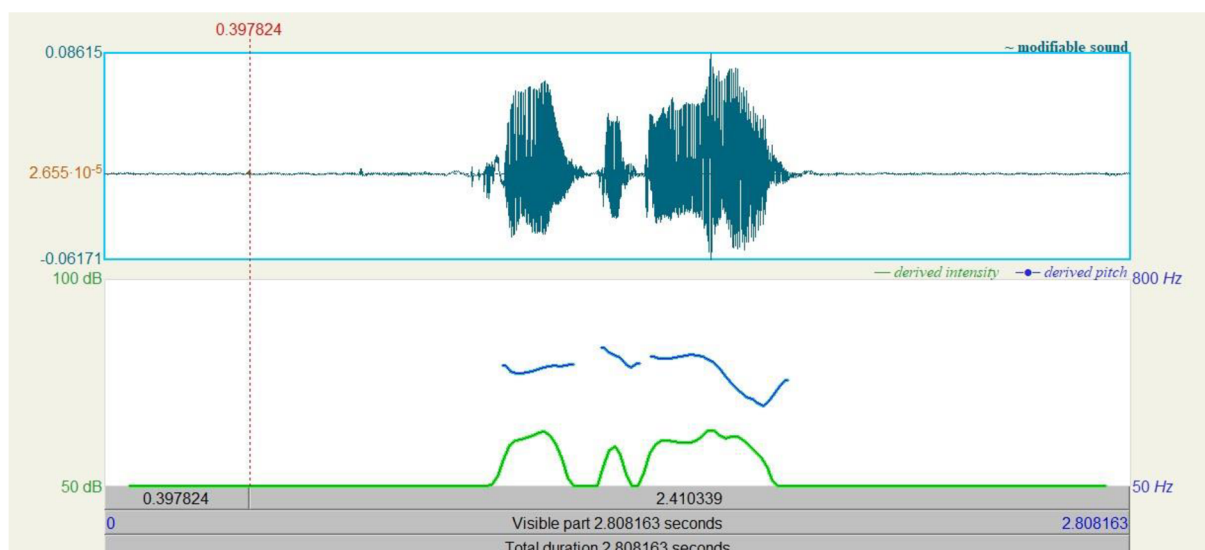


Figure 6 Sentence 2 – Native speaker

7.4.2 Rising intonation

We encounter "rising intonation" most often in questions where a Yes/No answer is expected or in less frequent request questions. It is certainly not true that there is rising intonation in all questions. An example of this statement is "falling intonation" in questions where the listener's agreement or confirmation of the statement is expected. For the research, 2 sentences containing "rising intonation" in their pronunciation were selected, namely a yes/no question and a request question. In the following examples, we will encounter sentences that contain rising intonation of two kinds. The strongly rising one is typical of yes/no questions. Slightly rising is then typical of requests.

Sentence 3 – Yes/No question: Shall we go home?

The question "Shall we go home?", which encourages the listener to answer yes/no, is an ideal example of rising intonation with a very rising tone. The sentence consists of four syllables. The content words in the sentence are (go, home) which form the base of the sentence. (Shall, we) are then the grammar words of the sentence. The first beat of the sentence /Shall we/ is kept at the highest level. The intonation then drops to the word /go/. Before the word /home/ the intonation drops to the lowest position and then rises sharply from the last accented

syllable to the high position. If there were a multi-syllabic word at the end of the sentence, the intonation would rise in steps.

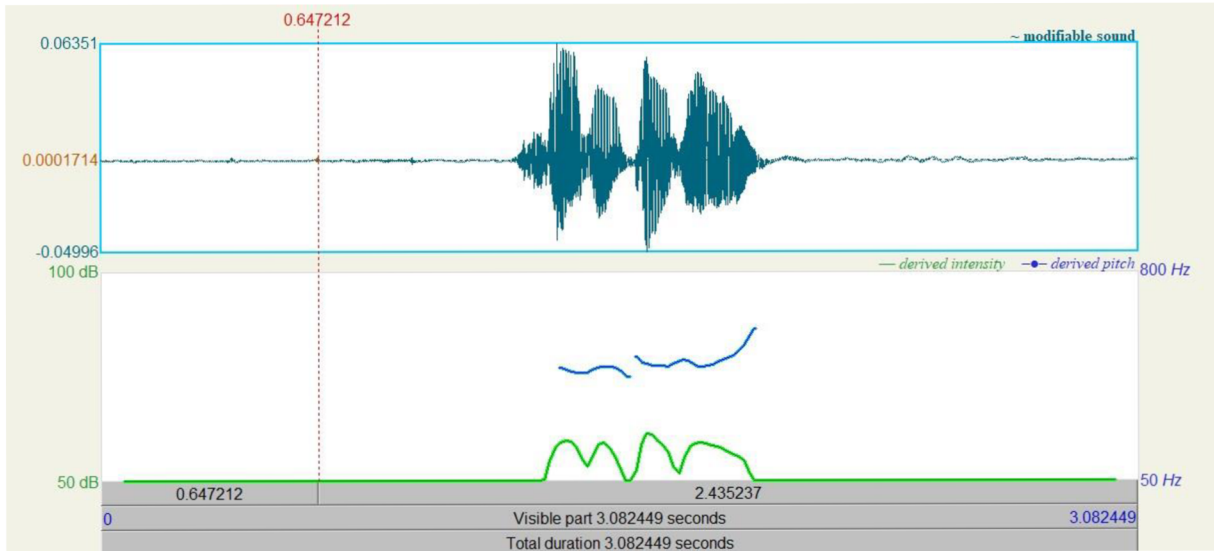


Figure 7 Sentence 3 – Native speaker

Sentence 4 – Request: **Would you pass me the salt?**

Question "Would you pass me the salt?" is a typical example of rising intonation, where the rise in tone at the end of the sentence is more gradual than in yes/no questions. The content words in the sentence are (pass, salt). The grammar words after that are (would, you, me, the). The melody drops slightly to /pass me the/. Similar to sentence 3, intonation drops before /salt/ and then rises gradually to high position. The native speaker has used a rather unusual intonation here, which gradually increases and lacks the initial high pitch point, which in this sentence should have been the first beat of /would you/. However, the slight drop to /pass me the/ is both audible in the recording and slightly indicated by the intonation curve in figure 8.

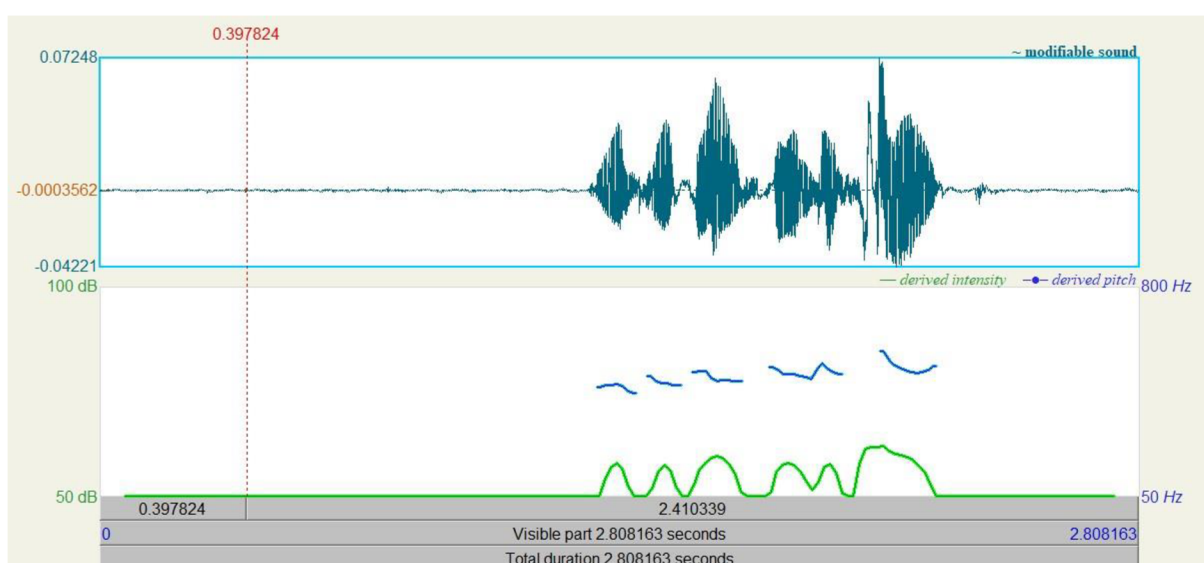


Figure 8 Sentence 4 – Native speaker

8.4.3 Rise-fall intonation

Despite the fact that Melen (2010) states that rise-fall intonation is of only marginal importance for Czech learners, this type of intonation curve has been investigated, and the reason for this is that it is possible to observe really high skills of learners. Rising and falling intonation is in fact considered to be the most common one, and students have much more experience with it. Using rise-fall intonation, the speaker expresses a feeling of strong agreement, disagreement, or surprise. However, unlike the first two types of intonation, in this case only one sentence expressing surprise will be observed. This is due to the previously mentioned marginal importance for the learner. The rise-fall intonation curve is characterized by a sharp stop and then a drop in the tone of the last beat of the sentence, or in the case of our used sentence in the research, the melody creates an arc resembling a ballistic curve from the

beginning of the sentence to the end. In order to understand the intonation correctly, it was necessary to describe the context of the situation to the students and the native speaker.

Sentence 5 – surprise by exclamatory statement: **What a fast car!**

This sentence, surprise by exclamatory statement, contains 4 syllables. The sentence contains two content words (fast, car). Grammar words are in the sentence (what, and) and should be pronounced with less intensity and length. The intonation rises gradually starting with the word "what". After the article "a", the intonation gradually decreases to the lowest point of tone at the end of the sentence. The intonation curve should, as mentioned in the introduction, resemble a ballistic curve.

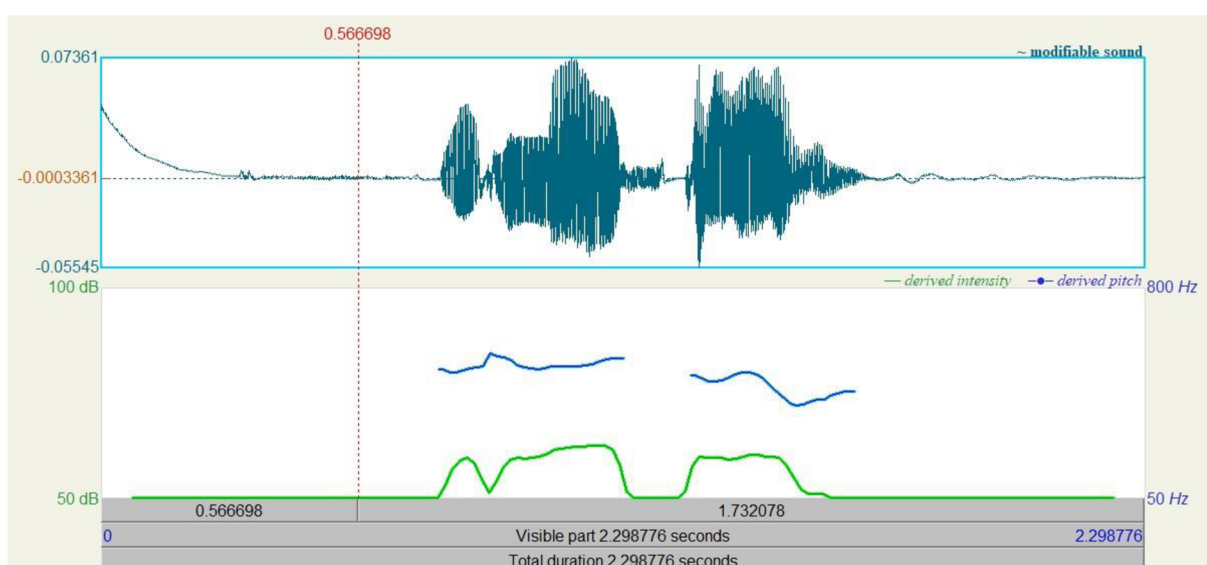


Figure 9 Sentence 5 – Native speaker

8.4.4 Fall-rise intonation

According to Melen (2010), fall-rise intonation is much more important for Czech learners than the previous rise-fall intonation. This is mainly because this type of sound wave is much more frequent in English than in Czech. In addition, compared to Czech, the ripple of the intonation curve in English takes place within a single syllable. Fall-rise intonation can be used to express uncertainty, doubt, partial agreement, and many other utterances. However, only one sentence was selected for the research to investigate the use of fall-rise intonation and that is to express uncertainty. In order to understand the intonation correctly, it was necessary to describe the context of the situation to the learners and the native speaker.

Sentence 6 – Uncertainty: I might buy it.

The sentence used for the research contains 4 syllables. The melody of the sentence is characterized by the descent to the word "might". For the word "buy" the melody is at its lowest point and then rises to "it".

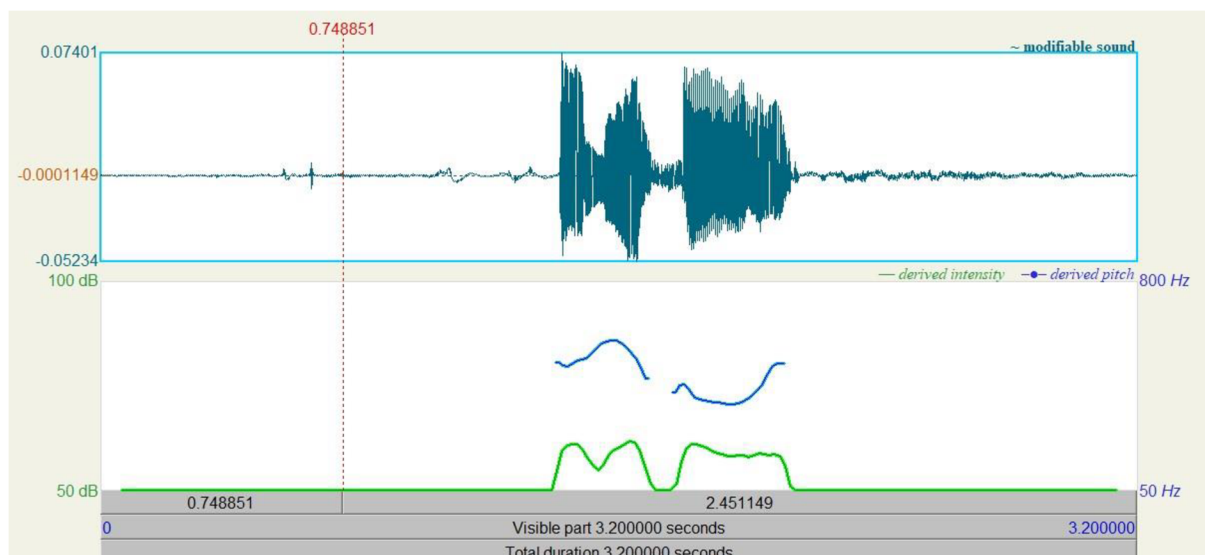


Figure 10 Sentence 6 – Native speaker

8.4.4 Rhythm sentences

In this part of the chapter, we will not deal with the intonation stream at all, even if we could. The sentences chosen to check the level of rhythm use achieved by the pupils were three. These are the statement sentence, the imperative sentence, and the question. We will focus mainly on the content and grammar words in the sentences to help us discover the rhythmicity of each sentence. The main clue that will reveal the correct use of rhythm will be the observance of similarly long-time gaps between the pronunciation of content words and hence the shortening of grammar words. Whether content words are pronounced with appropriate length and intensity will also be examined.

Sentence 7: She doesn't like to hurry.

There are 7 syllables in this sentence. You can see two two-syllable words. These are "doesn't" and "hurry". As for the content words, there are three in the sentence. These include (doesn't, like, hurry). All of these words contain an accented syllable, with the first syllable "do" in "doesn't" and the first syllable "hu" in "hurry", which will be read with slightly less intensity than in "doesn't". The word "like" must then be read with similar intensity as "doesn't", as the general rule is that content monosyllabic words carry stress. Grammar words in the sentence (she, to) are then read with less intensity. Similarly, the second syllables of

"doesn't" and "hurry" will be read with less intensity. So, if we emphasize the stress in the sentence it will look like this: She **doesn't like** to **hurry**.

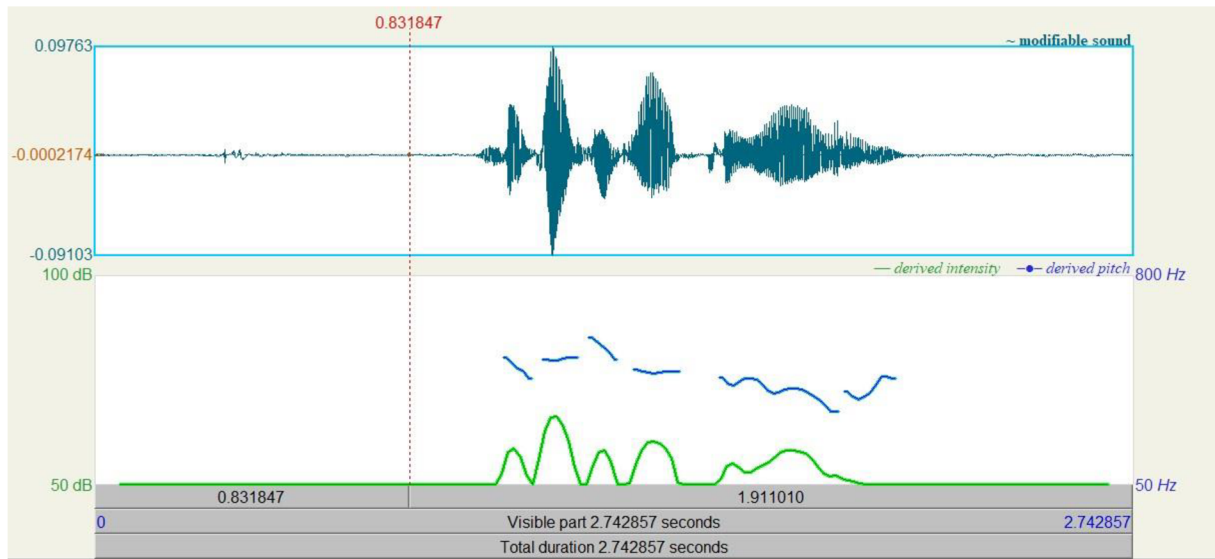


Figure 11 Sentence 7 – Native speaker

Sentence 8: Look out for that sheep!

This sentence is made up of five monosyllabic words. In this sentence we can see the phrasal verb "look out". Generally, when we pronounce a phrasal verb, the primary stress is on the second word hence in this case "out" (Uderhill, 2005). The content word "sheep" will also be stressed but slightly less than "out". The word "look" in the phrasal verb will carry a secondary stress, and grammar words (for, that) will also be pronounced with less intensity. At the same time, these words should be shortened in pronunciation to maintain the same length of intervals between stressed words. If we highlight the stress in a sentence, it will look like this: Look **out** for that **sheep**!

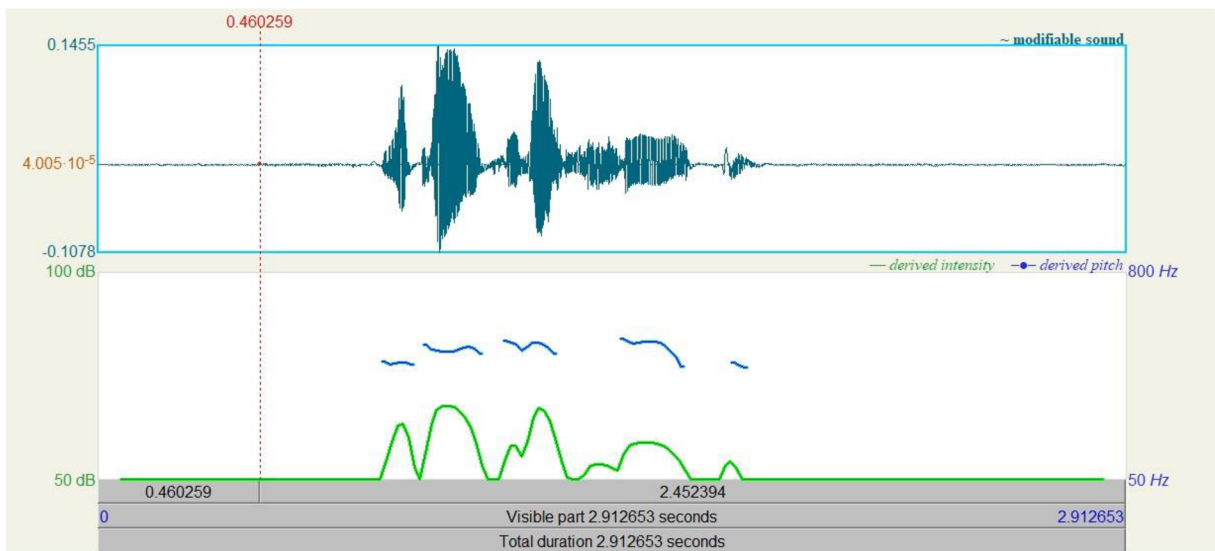


Figure 12 Sentence 8 – Native speaker

Sentence 9: Can I borrow a pen?

This question consists of six syllables and there are two content words (borrow, pen). These words will be pronounced with stress. For the word 'borrow', the first syllable of the word 'bo' will be stressed as it is a stressed syllable. The monosyllabic content word "pen" will also carry an emphasis. Grammar words (Can, I, a) will be pronounced with less stress and shortly, as will the second syllable of the word "borrow". If we emphasize the stress in a sentence, it will look like this: Can I borrow a pen?

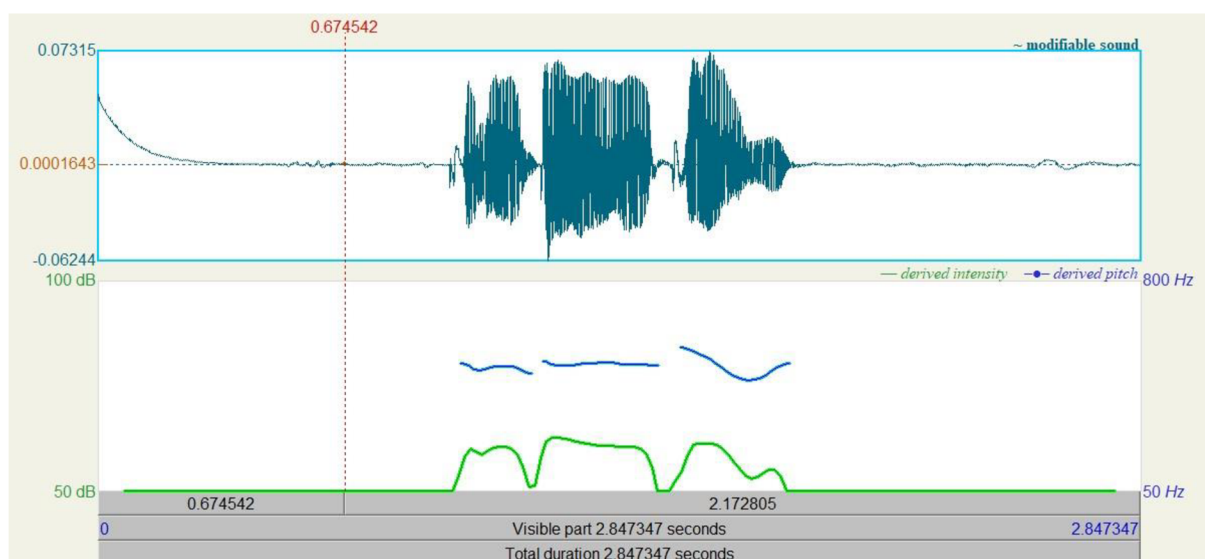


Figure 13 Sentence 9 – Native speaker

8.5 Procedure

Data collection took place in two locations. The first location was a primary school in the Chrudim region. Here, a sample of pupils for the research was taken from two different classes on the 26th and 27th of April 2024. One class contained pupils who had been in EOA throughout the previous year and not just in lessons. With the pupils in this class, the teacher spoke English only also outside of a class. The second class contained pupils who had been taught in the traditional method for the last year, where both source and target language is used in lessons. The teacher who taught both classes had spent several months in the United States where he acquired American English and for this reason a native speaker from the USA was chosen as the control medium. The native speaker samples were collected at the Department of Foreign Languages at Palacký University in Olomouc. The native speaker was a member of the local teaching staff.

The samples of the pupils were recorded in two days. The first day consisted of recordings of pupils taught by EOA. The procedure was such that in the first place a teacher who was

familiar with the whole research was asked for cooperation. After his approval, the process moved on to the classroom where the research was described to the pupils. This was followed by a request for cooperation towards the pupils. After verbal consent from the pupils, the teacher selected 7 of them to participate in the research. The decision on the number of pupils to participate in the research was made based on discussion with the teacher. The reason for creating recordings for only 60% of the class was the high differentiation of pupils at lower secondary school. Therefore, those who have a positive attitude towards English language teaching and who excel in it within the class were selected. On the second day, this first part of the procedure was carried out in the same spirit for Class R (Regular class).

The actual recordings were made in the next classroom. Thus, the teacher's lesson was barely disrupted, as the pupils came to record one by one. The main reason for this was to reduce the nervousness of speaking in front of other pupils. Another reason for making recordings in another classroom was to ensure a quiet place where the recorded sound would not be disturbed, as the headset microphone was very sensitive. I had a lot of experience with these particular pupils by this time, having taught in these classes myself for a few weeks. For that reason, the nervousness of the pupils' performance was definitely not there, and they were able to concentrate on individual sentences.

Before the actual recording, the pupils were encouraged to read all nine sentences aloud several times. As the teacher often works with intonation and rhythm in lessons, there was little need to explain anything to the pupils. The aim was to let the pupils read the sentences as best they could without any information (except for rise-fall and fall-rise intonation). After each recorded sentence, the same sentence was played aloud to the pupils. If the pupil was not satisfied with his pronunciation, it was recorded again. If there was a situation where the pupil was unsure of the pronunciation of a word, the pronunciation was explained to the pupil. The individual recordings were saved in files and later worked with to compare them with the native speaker's recordings.

The recordings with a native speaker, as already mentioned, took place at the Faculty of Education of Palacký University in Olomouc. In order to maintain the same conditions, both the pupils and the native speaker were recorded on the same equipment using the same microphone. Again, a quiet place was chosen for the recordings, which would not disturb the recordings in any way.

The results of the pupils' level of use of intonation and rhythm were evaluated by comparing them with the native speaker's recordings. Both the graphics (intensity curve, pitch of the voice, waveform shape) and the directly recorded sound were taken into account for the most accurate assessment. Both the theoretical correctness of the pronunciation of the individual sentences and the native speaker's recordings were taken into account, as these two aspects differed in small details in some cases.

The overall data collection process was very enjoyable in terms of the positive attitude of both the school and the teacher and pupils towards the research. The primary school where the research took place was supportive and allowed the data collection to be conducted in selected classes. The teacher teaching the classes in which the data collection for the research took place had very compelling suggestions for possible improvements and refinements to the research and was very pleasant to work with. At the same time, the teacher requested the results of the research after it had been processed for his personal use, in terms of possibly incorporating EOA into teaching other classes if the hypothesis was confirmed. The students who participated in the research stated in the oral feedback that they enjoyed recording the sentences followed by watching the individual curves, through the PRAAT software, that their voice produced.

9 Evaluation of the results

For the evaluation of the results, graphic recordings produced by the pupils and a native speaker were used to check the correctness of intonation and rhythm. The theoretical correctness of individual sentences was also taken into account, as described in subsection (8.4 Observed sentences). The following chapter will discuss in detail the analysis of the students' individual recordings to reveal the level of acquisition of prosodic phenomena in English for later comparison between the two classes. The chapter will be divided into three subchapters. The subchapter "9.1 EOA class" will cover pupils who have been taught using the English Only Approach in the last year. Subchapter 9.2 will then cover the analysis of the uttered sentences of pupils from the "Regular" class, which was taught using more traditional methods in both the source and target languages. The third subchapter, 9.3, will consider and assess the evaluated results for each class as a whole. At the same time, the common mistakes made by the learners in using the prosodic aspects of English will be analysed. The assessment process was done by analysing individual sentences and including the common positives and negatives of the class as a whole rather than as individuals. Each sentence analysis in this chapter will include one audio recording of a selected pupil of the class for easier understanding. The rest of the pupils' recordings are included in the appendixes of this thesis.

9.1 EOA class

9.1.1 Sentence 1

In most cases, S1 did not pose major problems for pupils taught in EOA. The intonation curve for all pupils was decreasing at the end and the 'falling' intonation was thus used correctly. For some, there was a clearly visible decline in the curve, for others the intonation had a rather gradual decline. However, in this case, the falling of the melody should only be realised in the last foot. We can say with confidence that the completely correct intonation curve was recorded by pupil EOA 2. In the case of the other pupils, the "falling" intonation is also noticeable, but with fewer problems. The first problem is the lack of emphasis on the foot /meet at/ where the intonation should be at its highest level. The /We'll meet at/ is realised with a straight melody by these pupils and only then does the intonation drop to /two/. Some pupils again used the highest point of the melody at /We'll/ and this is a typical example of a Czech pupil's mistake in intonation. This is the application of Czech intonation to an English sentence, where the first word of the sentence is uttered as a stressed syllable. The aim of this

sentence was to reveal if the pupils are able to use the "falling" intonation and thus mark the utterance as a statement. This was achieved by six of the seven pupils.

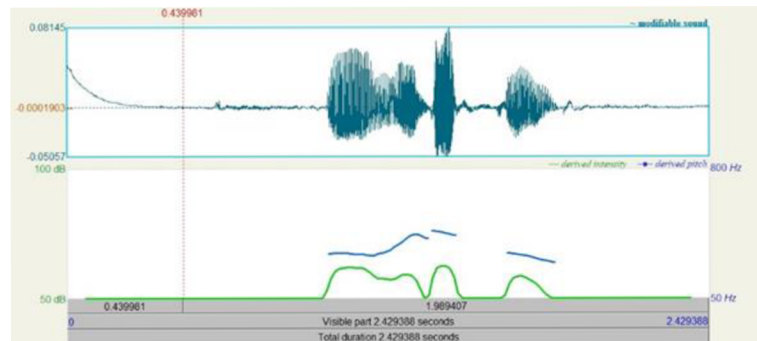


Figure 14 Pupil recording EOA 2 Sentence 1

9.1.2 Sentence 2

S2 is an imperative sentence. Melen (2010) argues that command and exclamatory sentences are by nature emphatic, and thus the melodic progression depends heavily on the speaker's attitude. In this case, all students were consistent on the type of intonation, and the differences between the graphic recordings were in the mentioned speaker's attitude. All pupils (except for EOA 6) are observed to use the correct 'falling' intonation. Pupil EOA 6 formed a curve on the last foot more question-like. The already mentioned small differences between the rest of the pupils are reflected in the type of melody falling. Two pupils used an intonation curve almost identical to the native speakers, with a fairly steep descent after the first foot /Close the/. The sentence thus conveys a slightly more restrained command, which would be used, for example, by someone who just wants to close the door without much emotion. The other five pupils used a gradual descent, which sounds more like a shout and makes the command much more intense. This intonation would be used, for example, by someone who needs to keep the room quiet and there is a lot of noise in the corridor at the moment. The overall curve of such an intonation is expressing more emotion and then creates a more "even" impression. Sentence S2, although the intonation curve varied slightly, did not cause a problem for the EOA pupils and the final descent is evident in all graphic recordings except the aforementioned graphic recording of a pupil EOA6.

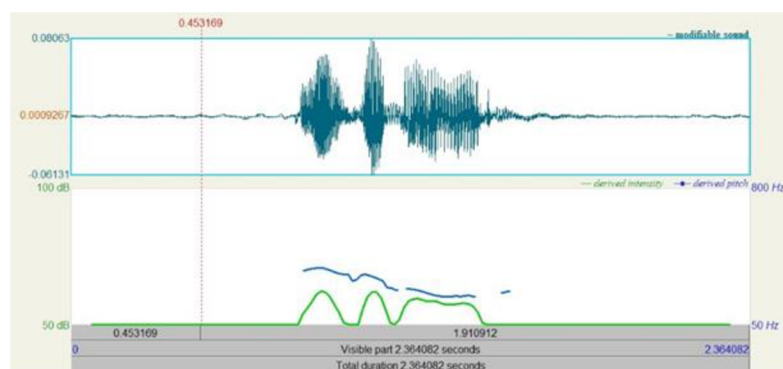


Figure 15 Pupil recording EOA 3 Sentence 2

9.1.3 Sentence 3

The sentence S3 is a yes/no question. Such a sentence, as already mentioned in subsection "8.4 Observed sentences", is characterized by a rising intonation with a considerable rising melody, which is perfectly visible in the graphic recording of the native speaker. The question sentences did not cause a problem for the EOA learners in terms of the use of rising intonation. The differences between the learners' curves in terms of final intonation for sentence S3 were precisely in the type of rising used. The final rising goes hand in hand with

the lowest point of intonation, which should be on the word "go". The students who correctly used the lowest point of intonation then always started to rise in voice sharply. This intonation curve could be seen in five pupils, with a slight "swing" on the last word of the sentence "home". The remaining two pupils also used a rising intonation but expressing a different effect on the listener. A question sentence characterized by a gradual rising intonation is typical for questions that are answered differently than yes/no. In fact, with this type of intonation, students force the listener to expand their answer more. It cannot be stated outright that the pupils who used the gently rising intonation did anything wrong, but merely chose a different context for the situation. For this reason, the overall assessment of the EOA pupils for this sentence is very positive.

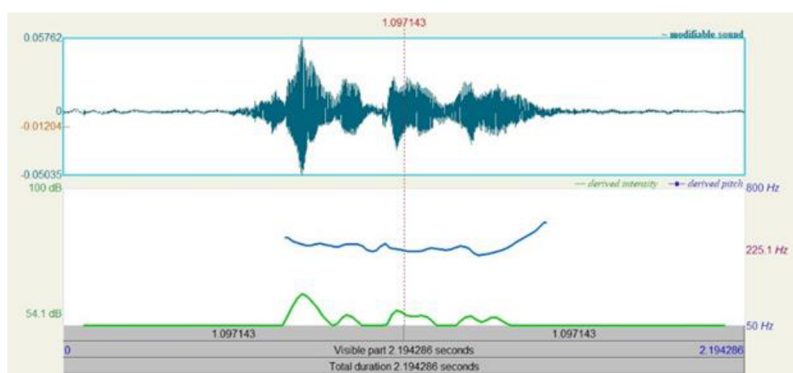


Figure 16 Pupil recording EOA 7 Sentence 3

9.1.4 Sentence 4

The request sentence S4 is characterized by a rising melody, which cadence should be realized with a smaller pitch rise than it was in the previous sentence S3. Even so, the initial high point of the first foot should be kept, i.e. in this sentence /would you/. The graphic recording of the native speaker varies slightly from this theory. In fact, the native speaker kept the first foot in a rather flat, slightly rising melody that continued until the last point of the sentence. Very similar to the native speaker's use of intonation was applied by the students EOA 5 and EOA 6. The important point here is that despite the straight intonation in the first part of the sentence, the rising after the article "the" on the word "salt" did not make the sentence sound like a statement with falling intonation. This different type of intonation can be explained by the fact that some requests in both English and Czech can be expressed with a rather flat to falling intonation. Melen (2010), however, argues that this would be a rather less polite type of request. Pupils EOA2, EOA3, EOA4 and EOA7 used intonation absolutely correctly according to the theoretical correctness, keeping the melody of the first foot at a higher voice level, then dropped with intonation on /pass me the/ and raised on the word /salt/. The steeper

rise in intonation is characteristic for yes/no questions. This steeper intonation was slightly hinted by some pupils, but it may be regarded to as a very small to negligible error. Overall, this sentence did not pose a problem for the pupils and all types of intonation curve used by the pupils were met with either theoretical correctness or a native speaker's recording. The only exception was the recording of pupil EOA 1, which intonation curve was too flat.

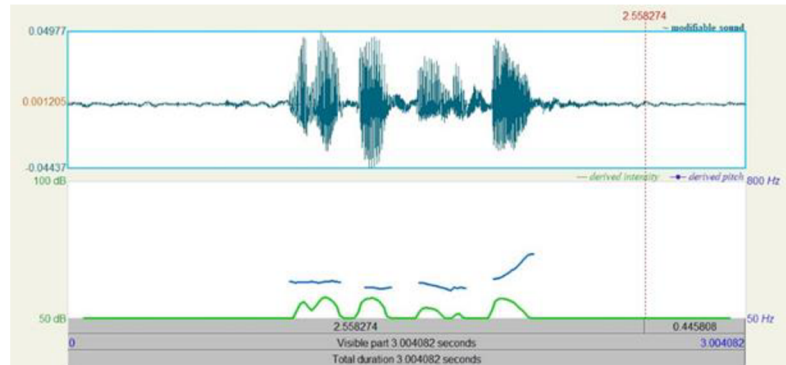


Figure 17 Pupil recording EOA 3 Sentence 4

9.1.5 Sentence 5

S5, characteristic of the rise-fall intonation, caused considerable problems for the EOA pupils and its evaluation was not entirely satisfactory. The curve formed by the "derived pitch" should form a shape reminiscent of a ballistic curve. This type of intonation is of only marginal importance to pupils, but despite this some pupils were able to get the intonation right. For sentence S5, the context of the situation was provided to the pupils before the actual recording of the sentence, so that they understood that it was an expression of surprise using an exclamatory sentence and not a statement with falling intonation. Pupils who were amongst those who answered correctly included EOA1, EOA2 and EOA 7. Pupil EOA 4 also came close to the correct intonation, but the curve his recording produced was not so convincing that his graph could be described as correct. Similarly, EOA 5 showed a slight indication of rising and falling pitch in the correct parts of the sentence. Although the indication of the correct intonation curve is very weak, the sound recording is not bad at all and we can speak of partial correctness for EOA 5 pupil. For the rest of the pupils the intonation curve produced was rather monotonous and left the impression of flat intonation.

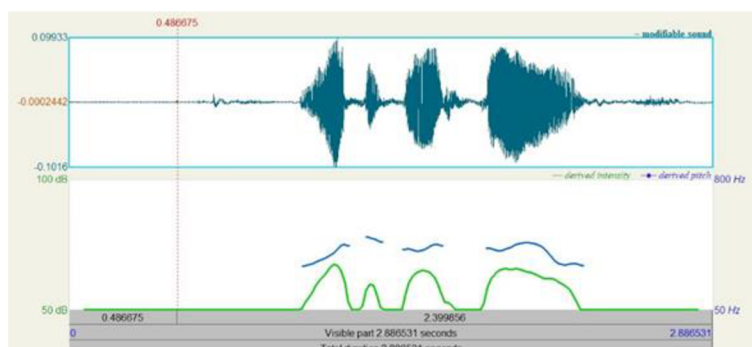


Figure 18 Pupil recording EOA 2 Sentence 5

9.1.6 Sentence 6

Sentence S6, focusing on rise-fall intonation, caused the EOA students the biggest challenge of all of the intonation types. However, this result is not at all surprising, as this type of waveform is very rarely encountered in Czech (Melen, 2010). The pupils who came closest to the correct intonation are EOA 3, EOA 5 and EOA 7. Compared to the graphical recordings of native speakers, the graphs of these pupils are slightly less clear, but the audio recordings pretty good and the intonation is correctly used. For other pupils such as EAO 1, EOA 2, EOA 4 and EOA 6, the intonation is used inappropriately. The first problem that arose is the use of the intonation of the sentence preceding "S5" i.e. fall-rise. Such an intonation in the context would imply a sense of agreement rather than the sense of uncertainty that the sentence was intended to evoke. As in the previous case of the sentence "S5", both the learners and the

native speaker were familiar with the context of the situation, and so this confusion is considered to be erroneous. The second problem of sentence 'S6' can be identified for pupil EOA 1, whose intonation curve indicates a rather descending intonation.

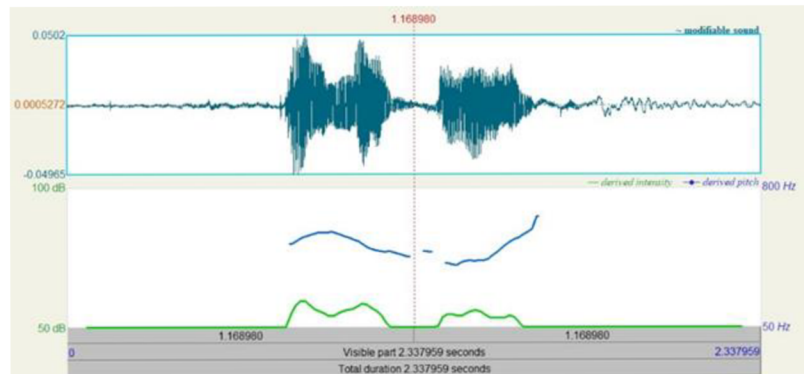


Figure 19 Pupil recording EOA 7 Sentence 6

9.1.7 Sentence 7

In this sentence, the rhythm used was observed. If we look at the graphic recording of the native speaker and focus on the waveform graph (modifiable sound) we can see that the emphasis was put especially on the first syllable of the word "doesn't" and on the word "like". Similarly, we can observe a higher intensity on the "derived pitch" curve. The students mostly had no problem with this phrase. More than with the length of the pronunciation of the content words, the given intensity of the stressed syllables especially of the word "doesn't" did not always appear. Only pupil EOA 2 had a problem with this, where the main intensity is seen to be reoriented to the word "like". For all pupils the correct intervals between content and grammar words were noted and hence the correct rhythm. In the case of sentence S7, we cannot speak of an outright error in rhythm committed by the pupils with any regularity. The big surprise was to see pupils stressing the first syllable of the word "doesn't", with the transition to the second syllable being much less intense. This fact shows that the pupils have some experience of listening to the English language and some experience of speaking, since the reduction of the quantity of unstressed syllables in multisyllabic words is one of the main mistakes made by Czech pupils.

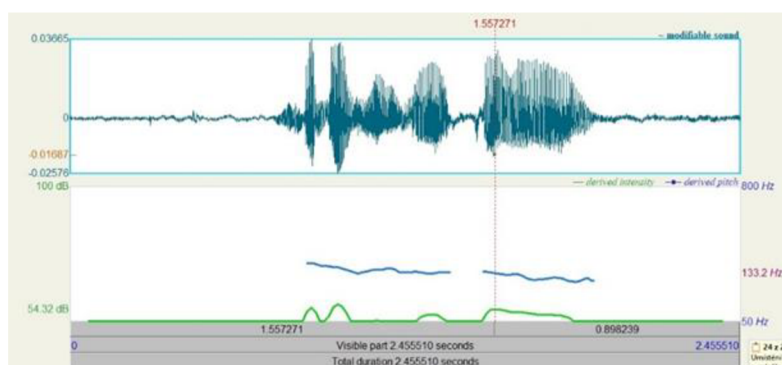


Figure 20 Pupil recording EOA 4 Sentence 7

9.1.8 Sentence 8

The second sentence aimed at rhythm control is S8. This sentence contains the phrasal verb "Look out". Phrasal verbs are characterized by the fact that the main accent is on their adverbial preposition i.e. in this case on the word "out". It must therefore be pronounced with greater intensity and length. This was successful for EOA 2, EOA 3, EOA 4, EOA 5 and EOA 7. The problem with shortening grammar words in a sentence, in this case "for that" was experienced by EOA 5 pupils who pronounced the words with the same length as the content words. The graphic recording of this pupil even shows a higher intensity of pronunciation of grammar words compared to content words. A typical error in sentence S8, which is to be

expected, was the use of the Czech syllable-timed rhythm. The sentence then sounds very monotonous and "choppy". Grammar and content words are pronounced with the same intensity and length in this case. This is a typical mistake Czech learners make when pronouncing English sentences where there is no reduction in the pronunciation of unstressed words. An example of the use of Czech rhythm can be seen in EOA 1 and EOA 6 recording.

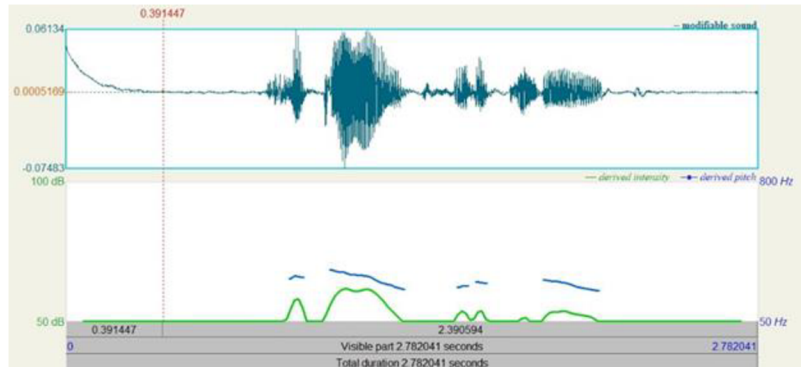


Figure 21 Pupil recording EOA 7 Sentence 8

9.1.9 Sentence 9

For the evaluation of sentence S9, where we again focus on the rhythm used by the learners, we will be interested in several aspects. The first aspect is if the lower intensity and length of the grammar words used in the sentence (Can, I, and a) were maintained. For pupils EOA 1, EOA 3 and EOA 4, it is the higher intensity of the voice on these first words that is noticeable, and the word "borrow", on which the intensity should be higher, is thus slightly lost. The second aspect we will be interested in is the reduction of the quantity of the unstressed syllable in the two-syllable word "borrow". Here, the intensity and length is supposed to be higher on the accented syllable "bo" and "rrow" is then pronounced with lower intensity. An example of a poorly reduced unstressed syllable can be seen mainly in EOA 1. EOA 6 and EOA 7 pupils have pronunciation of the stressed syllable quite "on the edge". In the native speaker's recording, the stress on both the word 'borrow' and the word 'pen' is very clear. The vast majority of pupils did not stress the word 'pen' at all and rather indicated it in the exhalation when raising the intonation. A demonstration of good rhythm is evident in pupil EOA 2 recording, who captured all the aspects of rhythm that were targeted by this sentence.

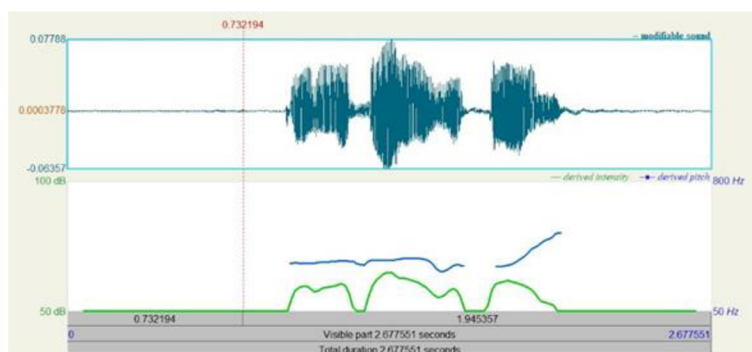


Figure 22 Pupil recording EOA 2 Sentence 9

9.2 R class

9.2.1 Sentence 1

For sentence S1, the learners' falling intonation was examined. The first error that can be noticed in the R class recordings is the observance of the intervals between the lowest and the highest syllable of the sentence. According to Skaličková (1982, p.190), this is a typical error committed by Czech pupils. The speech thus appears rather monotonous to the listener. The correct use of the final intonation can be seen in recording of the pupil R3. However, even in this graph an error can be found, and it is exactly the same as in the other graphs of the rest of the class. This is the second very common problem of Czech pupils, which concerns the unstressed syllable at the beginning of the sentence. The intonation here should be at a lower

point and then rise up to the first foot with the stressed syllable, in our case "meet at", where the intonation will be at the highest point. This problem is very common, as it is common in Czech intonation to have the highest point right at the beginning of the sentence. Some students in the EOA class also struggled with this error. Here, however, it is much more common. As for the final intonation, which should be "falling" in this case, except for student R3, it is not really noticeable in the rest of the class and the speech sounds more like it should continue than a completed statement.

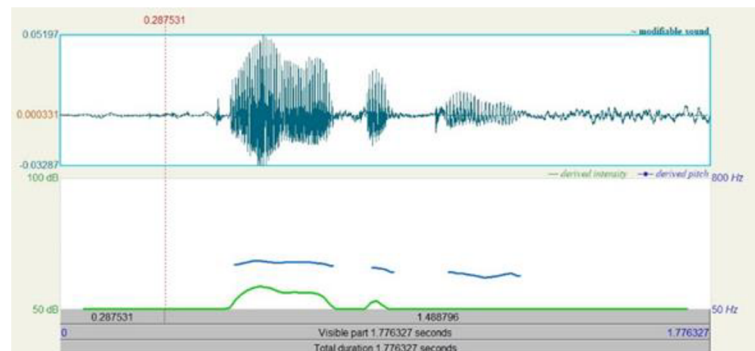


Figure 23 Pupil recording R3 Sentence 1

9.2.2 Sentence 2

For S2, which is an imperative sentence, we will be interested in whether the two main aspects of correct intonation have been observed. The first aspect is the observance of the highest point of intonation, which is here on the first foot /close the/. This was followed by the majority of pupils, with this being most evident in recording of the pupil R5. The second aspect of the correctly used intonation of this phrase is whether there is a drop in tone after the first foot. Pupils R1, R2, R4 and R6 are more likely to have a rising intonation in their graphic record, which is specific to the questions. This intonation used in an imperative sentence is considered incorrect. As was the case with some of the students in the EOA class, a rather flat intonation or only a slightly indicated descending tone is evident in some of the graphic recordings. This type of intonation in the imperative phrase is indicative of a rather more intense command that was carried out in a raised voice. The intonation curve with a sharp descent on the word /door/ used by the native speaker in the case of class R was not used by any learner.

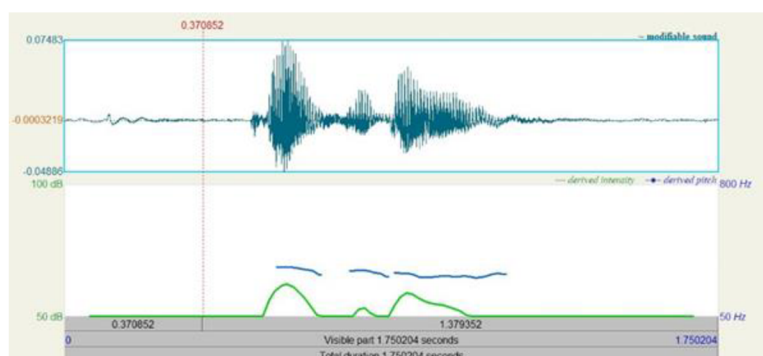


Figure 24 Pupil recording R4 Sentence 2

9.2.3 Sentence 3

In the question S3 we will be interested again in more aspects of intonation. Since this is a yes/no question, the rising intonation should be realized in a rather sharper way. Confusion with a gradual pitch is not entirely wrong, but the intonation curve cannot then be considered absolutely correct. In this sentence, the intonation was best used by pupil R7, whose curve closely resembles the one of a native speaker. The word "go" should be at the lowest point of the intonation, with a hint of a "swing" to the word "home" thereafter. This is quite visible just in recording of pupil R7. Furthermore, this curve is also visible in recording of pupil R1 with the fact that there is no steep rise into the question but rather a gradual rise. An intonation curve that could still be classified as correct was noted by pupil R6, although the rise was also rather gradual. For the rest of the pupils, we can see an imperfect intonation curve, which is rather flat and thus does not express the question sentence correctly. In the intonation curve of

pupil R5, we can also notice a rather strange error, where the aforementioned 'pitch' on the word /home/ was reversed.

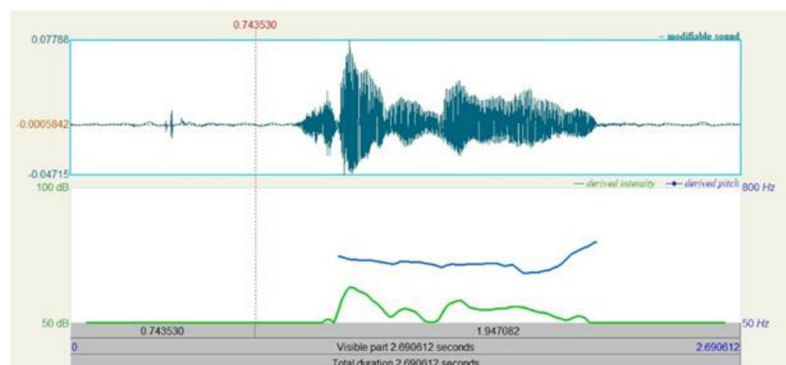


Figure 25 Pupil recording R7 Sentence 3

9.2.4 Sentence 4

The request sentence S4 is characterized by a rising melody, which cadence should be realized with a smaller pitch rise than it was in the previous sentence S3. Even so, the initial high point of the first foot should be maintained, i.e. in this sentence on /would you/. The graphic recording of the native speaker slightly deviates from this theory. In fact, the native speaker kept the first foot in a rather flat, slightly rising melody that continued until the last point of the sentence. None of the students in class R used intonation in the way that the native speaker used intonation. In all the graphs recorded by the pupils, we can see 'colourless' intonation curve, which gives a very flat impression. For pupils R2, R4 and R5 such monotonous intonation continues until the final point of the sentence and the overall impression of the sentence suggests a rather impolite request. Pupils R1, R3, R6 and R7 emphasised the final intonation by rising to the word 'salt' and the question was thus preserved. As with the previous sentence, the aforementioned "pitch" on the final one-syllable word should be evident here. This curve is best seen in recording of pupil R1 and R7. The highest point of intonation on the phrase /would you/ is very weakly indicated by the only pupil R3. The rest of the pupils kept the first part of the phrase flat in intonation.

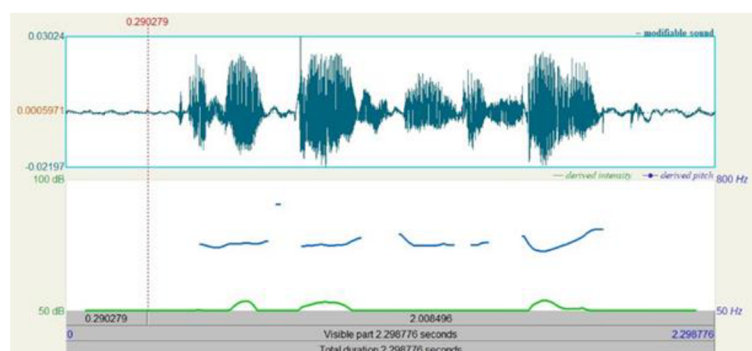


Figure 26 Pupil recording R6 Sentence 4

9.2.5 Sentence 5

For sentence S5, the context of the situation was provided to the students before the actual recording of the sentence so that they understood that it was an expression of surprise using an exclamatory sentence and not a statement with falling intonation. The type of intonation for sentence S5 is rise-fall, an intonation with marginal meaning to the learners. The highest point of the intonation should be the article "a" and then the tone of voice should gradually drop, with the lowest point of the voice being on the word "car". Pupil R6 was the only one who came closest to the correct intonation. His intonation also increased on the word "fast", which cannot be taken entirely as a mistake, as he only emphasised the word "fast". The other pupils could not be said to have used the correct intonation. Some of the pupils used the intonation curve in reverse, i.e. they indicated the first word with the initial point of intonation, then the intonation decreased on "a fast" and increased on the word "car". Basically, in this case it was a fall-rise intonation which is typical for expressing uncertainty, partial agreement, etc... As in the previous sentences, in this case it can be seen that the pupils tend to use a very flat intonation and the 'colour' of the voice is either not at all or only very weakly indicated.

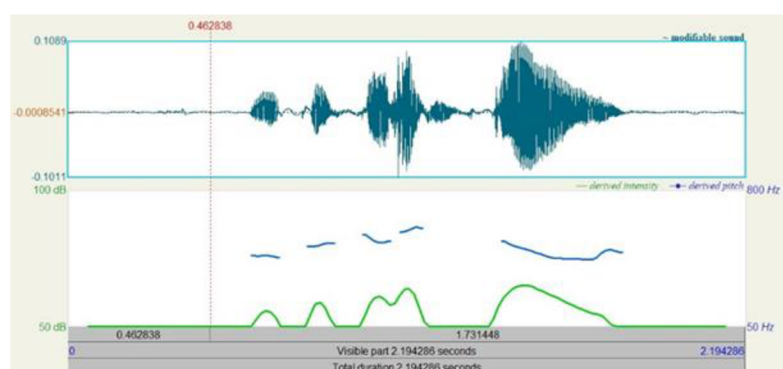


Figure 27 Pupil recording R6 Sentence 5

9.2.6 Sentence 6

As with the EOA class, sentence S6 caused R pupils considerable problems in terms of intonation. As already mentioned, it is a fall-rise intonation, which is much more common in English than in Czech, so it is clear that it is problematic for students to use. As with the previous sentence, pupils were familiar with the context of the situation. They were told that they like the product in the shop, but it is too expensive and they are not sure if they will buy it. None of the pupils used intonation as the native speaker did. The native speaker's curve shows perfectly how varied the sentence should be in terms of intonation. In particular, the phrase /buy it/ on which the vocal drop and final pitch are to be recorded. The closest to

correct intonation is student R1, whose graphic recording does not show the initial rise in intonation, but the sentence does express uncertainty. The other pupils used the intonation inappropriately. Again, most of them had a very flat intonation that conveys more of a statement, which in this context would imply that the pupil is rather confident about buying the product.

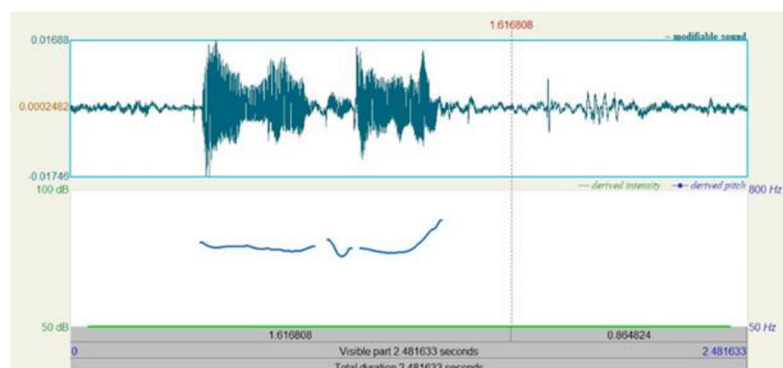


Figure 28 Pupil recording R1 Sentence 6

9.2.7 Sentence 7

The rhythm used in this sentence was observed. If we look at the graphic recording of the native speaker and focus on the waveform graph (modifiable sound) we can see that the emphasis was put especially on the first syllable of the word "doesn't" and on the word "like". Similarly, we can see a higher intensity on the "derived pitch" curve. The correct quantity of the word "doesn't" was used correctly by several students, which is the same surprise as in the EOA class, as this is a common mistake made by Czech students. The word was pronounced correctly by R1, R2, R4, R5, R6 and R7. This typical error is highly visible in the graphic recording of pupil R3. The word "like" was pronounced with relatively low intensity by pupils R4 and R6. As Skaličková (1982) indicates, in English it is necessary to imagine and pay attention to the fact that there is a space of unstressed syllables between the stressed syllables and such a group of words is pronounced as one word. This gives the English language the right rhythmicity and thus differs from the rhythm of the Czech language. The failure to observe this rule can be most clearly seen in the graphic record of pupil R6 whose rhythm is purely Czech. This is characterised by equally long intervals and pauses between words, regardless of whether it is a content or a grammar word.

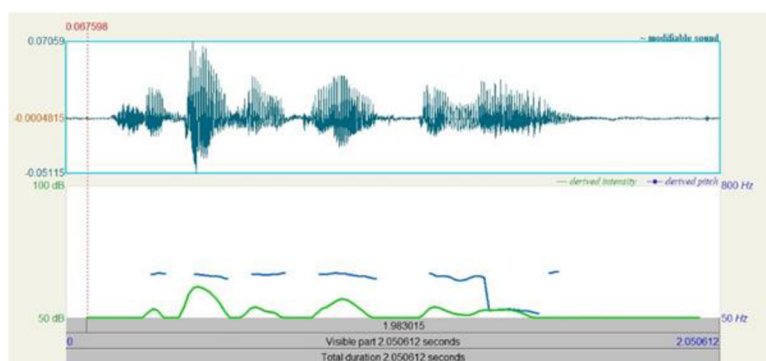


Figure 29 Pupil recording R4 Sentence 7

9.2.8 Sentence 8

Sentence S8 aimed at rhythm control contains the phrasal verb "look out". As already mentioned for the EOA class, in phrasal verbs the primary stress passes to the adverbial preposition and thus to the word "out", which should be pronounced more intensely with a higher quantity. The correct pronunciation of the phrasal verb can be seen in recordings of students R2, R3, R6 and R7. For the other pupils there was either the use of the same quantity for both words of the phrasal verb or the use of primary stress on the first word "Look". Overall, this phrase gave the pupils the most difficulty in terms of using rhythm. The top-rated graphical recording is that of pupil R2, who used rhythm very well. The only problem with this recording was the lack of quantity of pronunciation on the word 'sheep'. The rest of the

pupils used the typical Czech rhythm in the sentence, which is characterised by the separation of the pronounced units within the sentence. The recordings are then very choppy with pauses between each word. We can observe this error very well in a recording of pupil R4 and R1, where equally long pauses between words are evident both in the intensity curve and in the waveform recorded at the top of the recording graph in the modifiable sound section. The use of the Czech rhythm was carried out by pupils R1, R3, R4, R5, R6 and partially by pupil R7.

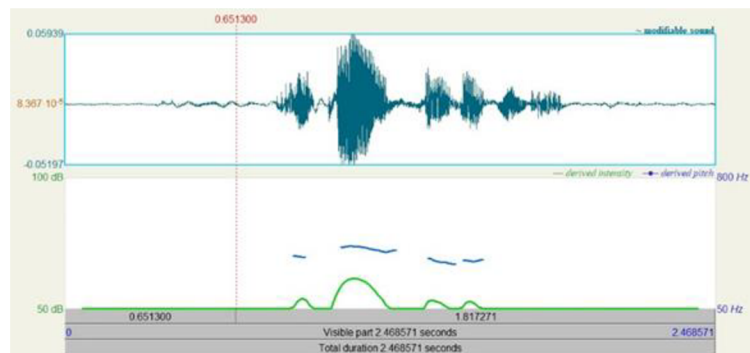


Figure 30 Pupil recording R2 Sentence 8

9.2.9 Sentence 9

In sentence S9, we again encounter a two-syllable word, which shows a higher quantity and intensity on the first syllable. This is the word "borrow", with the "bo" to be pronounced more strongly and with greater length. This is very visible in recording of pupil R3 and R4. A fairly good pronunciation of this two-syllable word is recorded by pupils R5 and R7, although the stress on the first syllable is only slightly indicated. The other pupils pronounced both syllables with the same intensity and length. In pupil R2 we can notice that he put the stress rather on the second syllable of the word. Some pupils did not follow the reduction of grammar words, which in this case are /Can, I/ and they pronounced them with the same or even stronger stress as the content words of the sentence. This error is very evident in recording of pupil R7. Then also in recording of pupil R1, R3 and R4. In the recording chart of the native speaker, the stress on the word "pen" is also very well visible. Similar stress was used by several pupils which were R2, R4, R5 and R6. There was only one pupil whose recording can be described as completely correct in terms of rhythm. This is the audio and graphic recording of pupil R5.

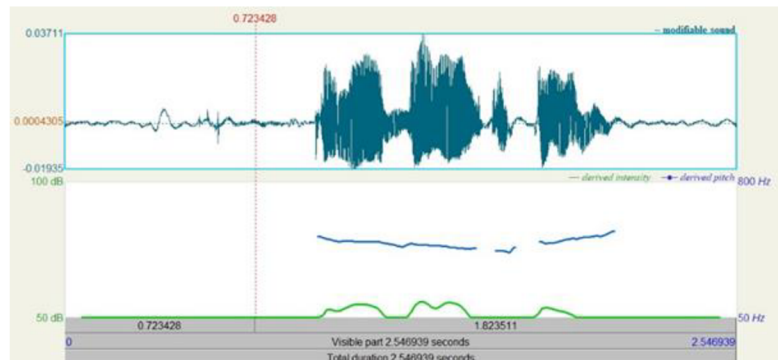


Figure 31 Pupil recording R5 Sentence 9

9.3 EAO class x R class - General overview

Figure 32 Success rate chart will help us to state the observed conclusion. We will evaluate the class as a whole here, not the students as individuals. Each class produced 63 recorded sentences, which were chosen as a means of examining the level of prosody of the EOA (English Only Approach) class and the R (regular) class. The level of each recording was assessed using the same procedure, which involved comparing the pupils' recordings with those of a native speaker. Along with this, compliance with the various aspects of intonation and rhythm under examination was observed viz. Chapter 9 Evaluation of the results. Those recordings that met either theoretical correctness or similarity with the native speaker recordings were considered to be correct prosody. The EOA class recorded 42 correctly recorded sentences (66.6%) in terms of the use of prosodic features of the language out of a total of 63 recordings. Class R recorded 19 correct recordings (30.1%) out of a total of 63. Thus, the EOA class shows a more than 100% higher level in the use of rhythm and intonation in English sentences of various kinds than the R-class.

As we can see in Figure 32, the easiest sentence types for the students were S1, S2, S3 and S4, i.e. sentences with rising and falling intonation. This is not a surprising result since these intonation types are the most commonly used in the English language. Slightly worse results can be seen for sentences S5 and S6, where the correct use of rise-fall and fall-rise intonation was examined. Czech learners encounter these types of intonation only marginally, and this is a possible reason for the poorer results. In sentences focusing on rhythm, the errors were also quite varied. The best results were recorded by both classes in the recording of sentence S7. In particular, class R achieved weaker outcomes for sentences S8 and S9.

Comparing the two aspects of prosody examined, i.e. intonation and rhythm. We can notice that there are significant differences between the two groups in a matter of success. Intonation did not cause the pupils nearly as many problems as the rhythm of the individual sentences. This confirms the claim according to Skaličková (1982, p.175-182), who argues that English and Czech melody are very close and not different in their complexity. The two languages differ in terms of intonation only in the structure and therefore in the different ordering of the feet, in which the pupils also mostly made mistakes. In contrast, English rhythm is quite different from Czech, and we would hardly find anything in English and Czech that has more differences than the rhythm just mentioned.

From the presented data it can be concluded that the English Only Approach has a very positive effect on the development of English prosody, especially rhythm and intonation. Despite its downsides, which are discussed in Chapter 7, the English Only Approach is a very beneficial teaching technique that can be pretty profitable in terms of pupils' pronunciation.

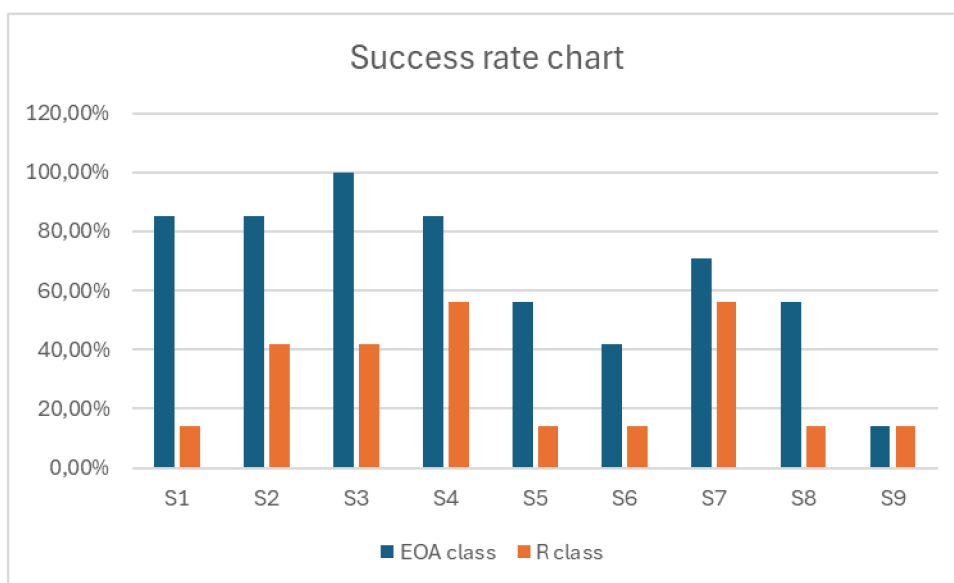


Figure 32 success rate chart

10 Conclusion

The main idea of the thesis was to focus on the prosody of the English language, and to clarify possible methods and approaches that could be used to develop this aspect of pronunciation at lower secondary school.

The thesis was divided into two main parts. The first, the theoretical part of the thesis, focused on clarifying the concepts necessary to understand the context of the practical part of the thesis. This theory was divided into several chapters. The terminology clarified terms central to understanding the chapters that follow. The English prosodic system was also analysed, narrowed down to two main components, namely intonation and rhythm. In order to explain the frequent problems in the pronunciation of pupils' recordings, it was necessary to describe the most common mistakes pupils make in the use of prosody. The possibilities of teaching prosodic phenomena of pronunciation at lower secondary school were presented and last but not least, the English Only Approach, which was the main component of the research part of the thesis, was discussed. This theoretical introduction, created for us an ideal starting point for the research that was carried out in the practical part.

The practical part of the thesis was concerned with research to determine whether the English Only Approach is a quality and effective tool for teaching English prosody at lower secondary school compared to traditional techniques that use both source and target language in their lessons. Nine sentences covering selected aspects of prosody were used to obtain the results. These sentences were then recorded by the pupils onto an audio recording, and this was then converted into a graphical recording by using PRAAT software. After this method of data collection, the results of each class could be compared with each other to produce a graph showing the differences in the level of prosody acquired. From the results presented in Chapter 9 Evaluation of the results, we can conclude that the English Only method shows a much higher efficiency in terms of acquired prosody than S and T language teaching, in the area of tens of percent. Our hypothesis, developed before the research itself, concerning the higher level of acquisition of prosodic features of pronunciation by EOA learners can be considered verified on the basis of these results.

This thesis is addressed to a wide range of people, from university students majoring in English to secondary and primary school teachers. The findings obtained in the research of this thesis, can help teachers to make the teaching of English pronunciation, which is currently considered to be relatively neglected, more effective.

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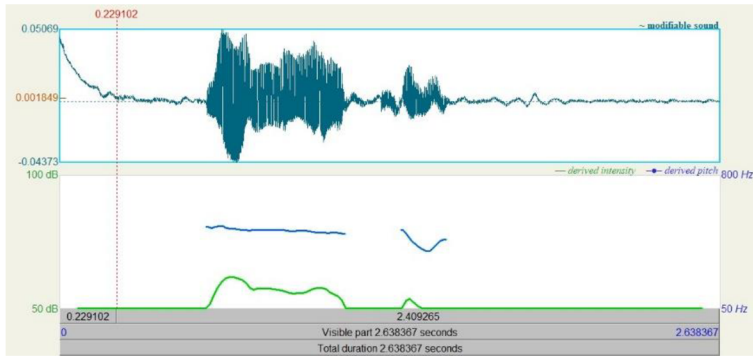
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13 Appendix

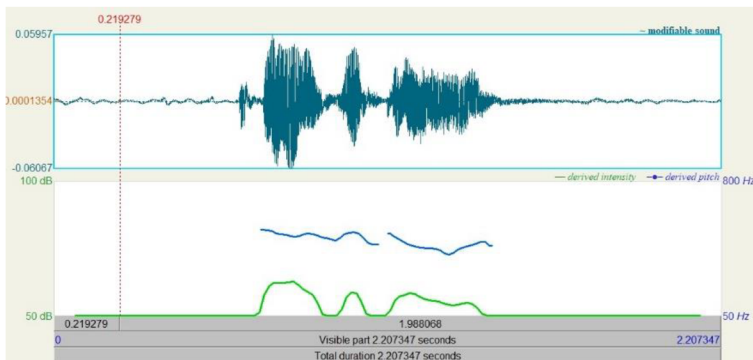
Audio recordings – EOA class

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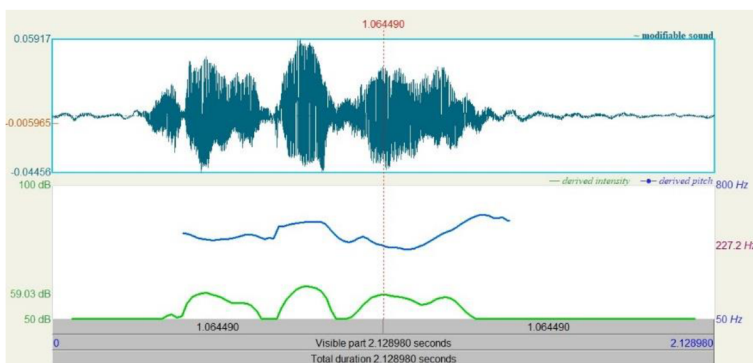
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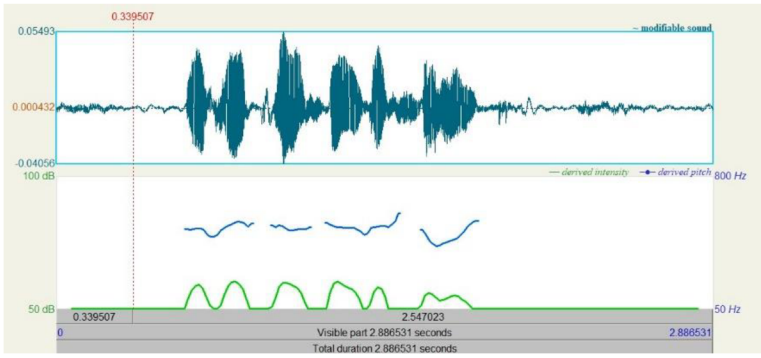
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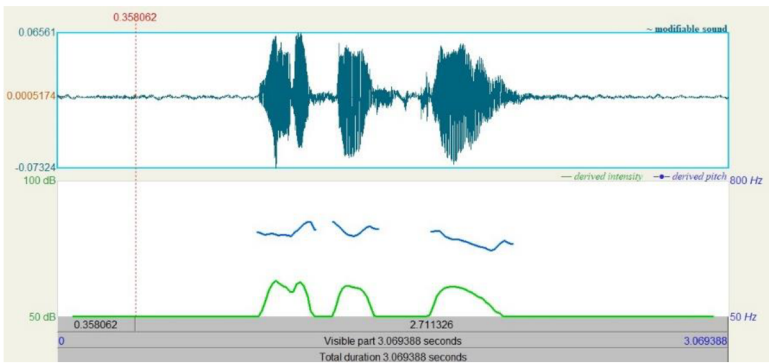
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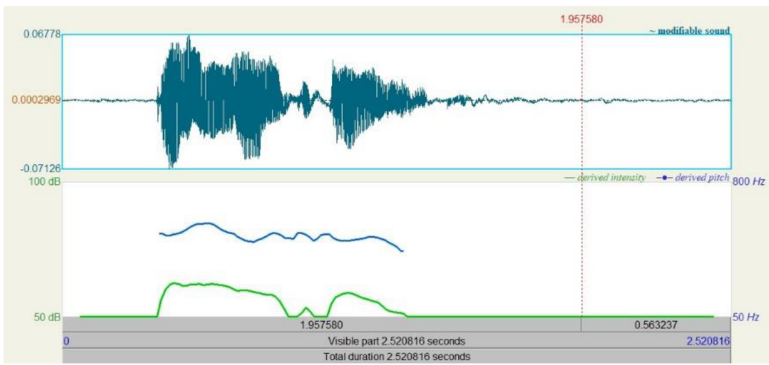
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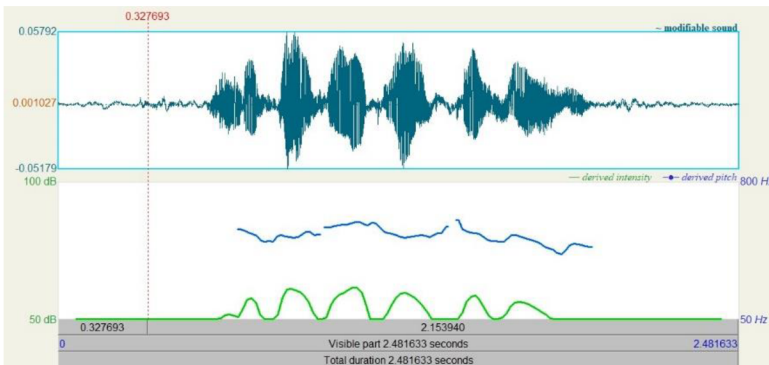
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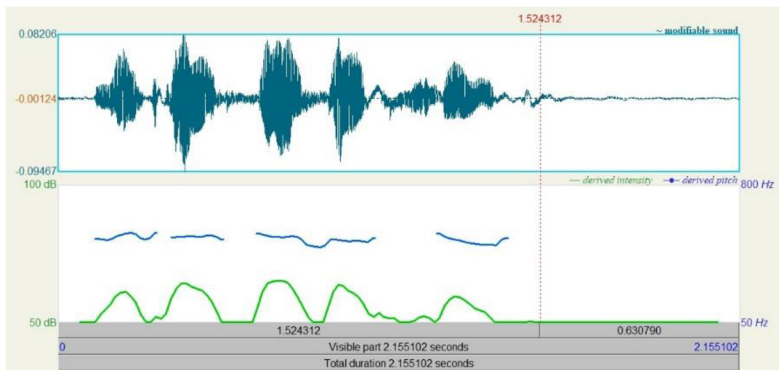
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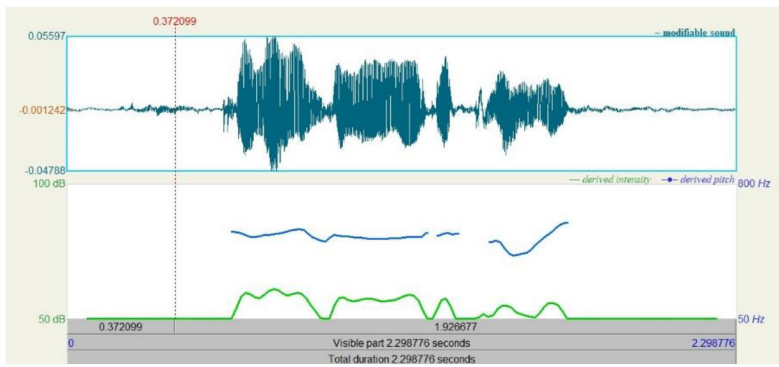
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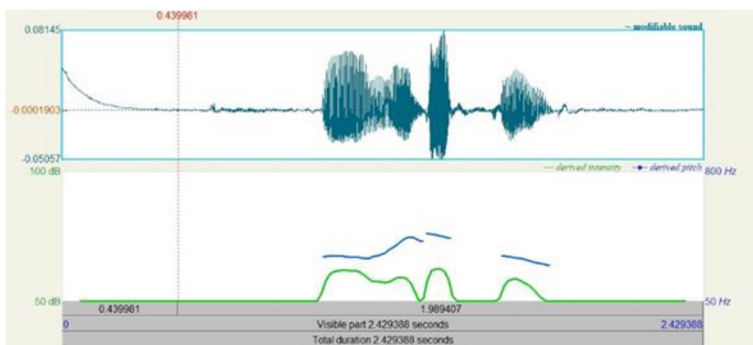


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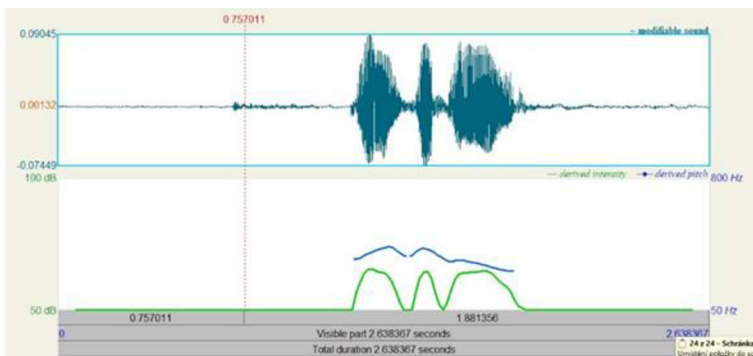


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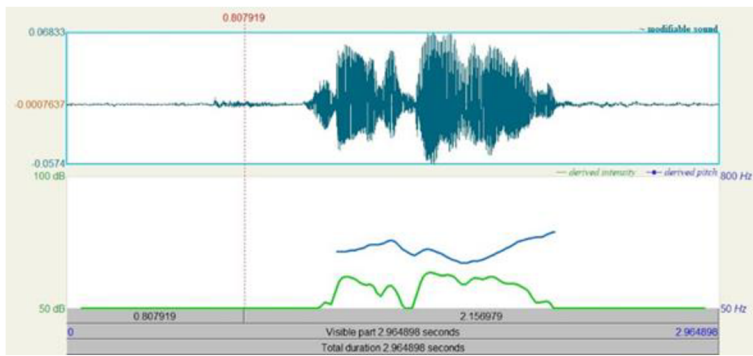
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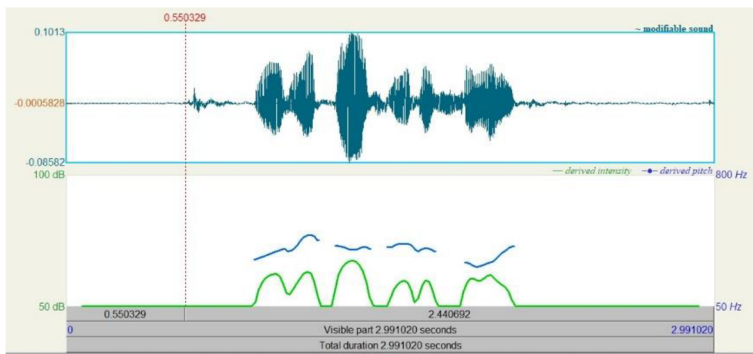
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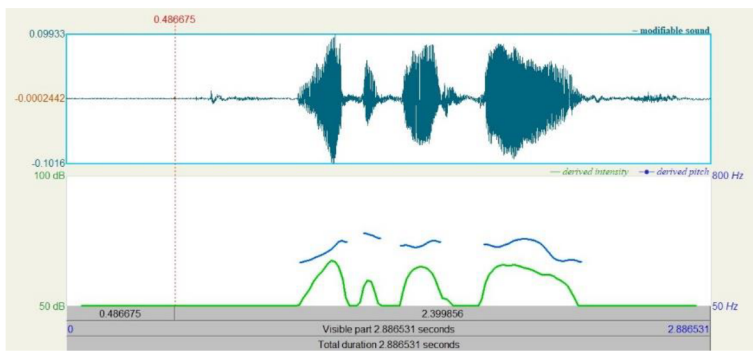
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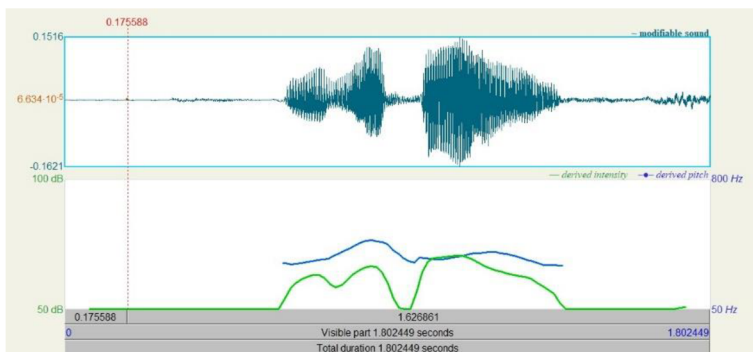
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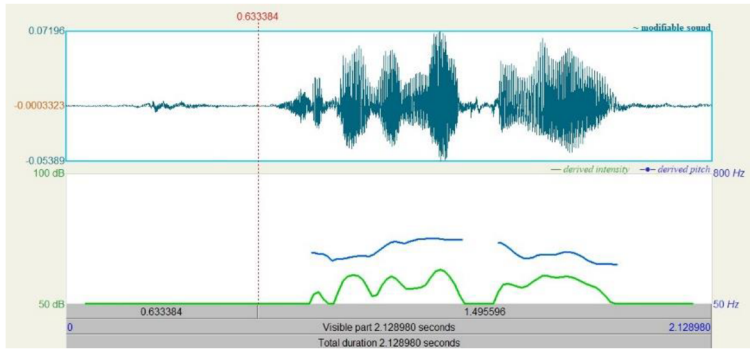
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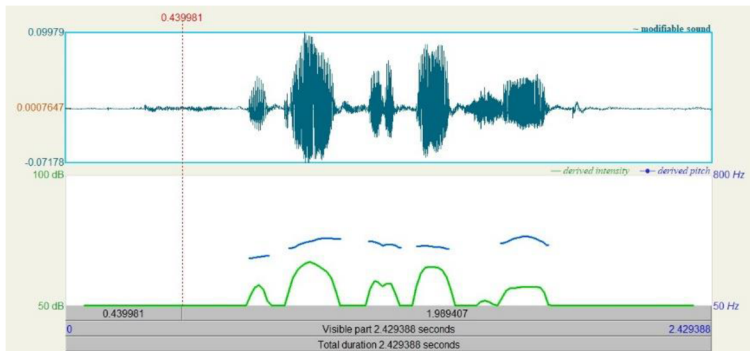
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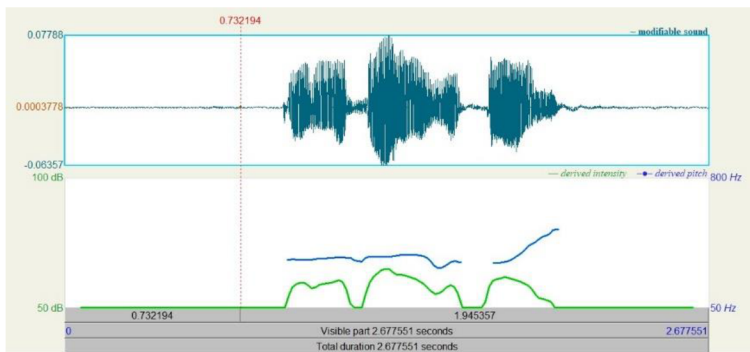
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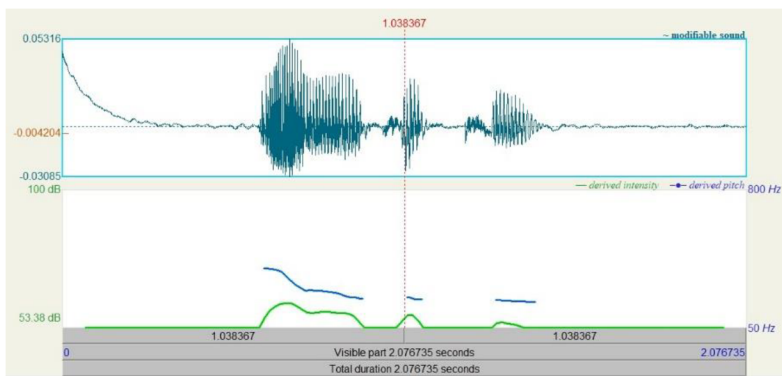


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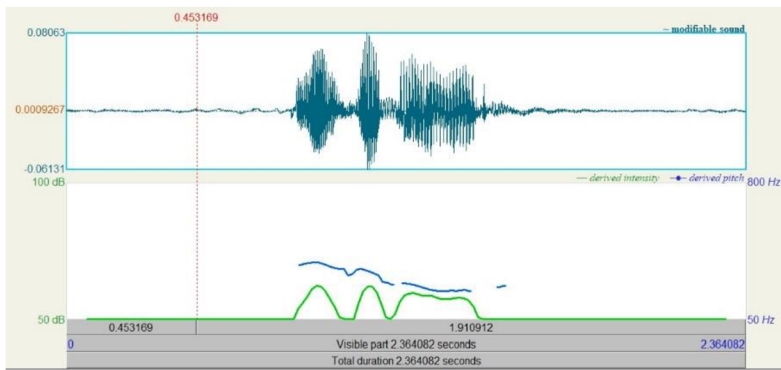


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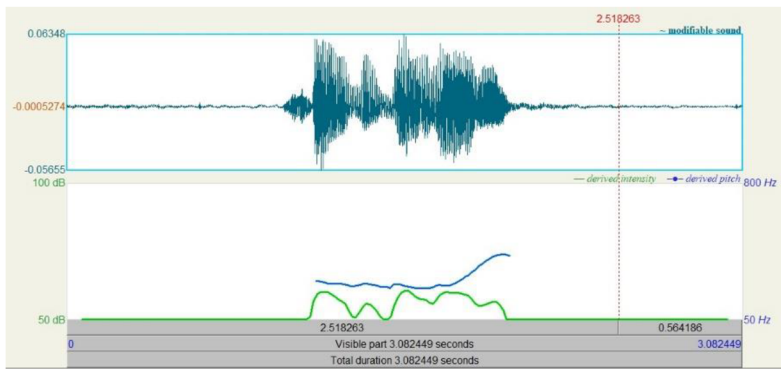
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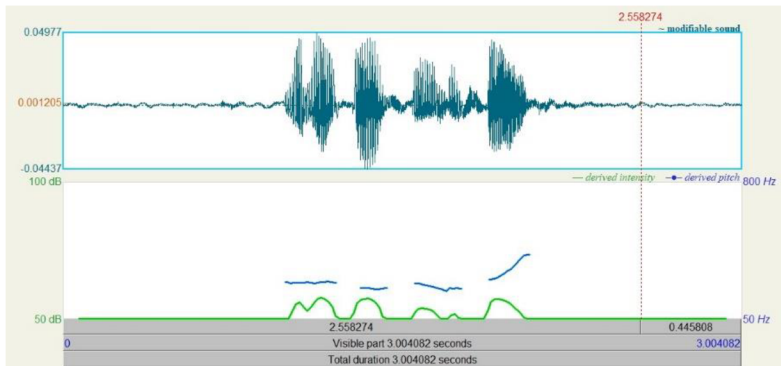
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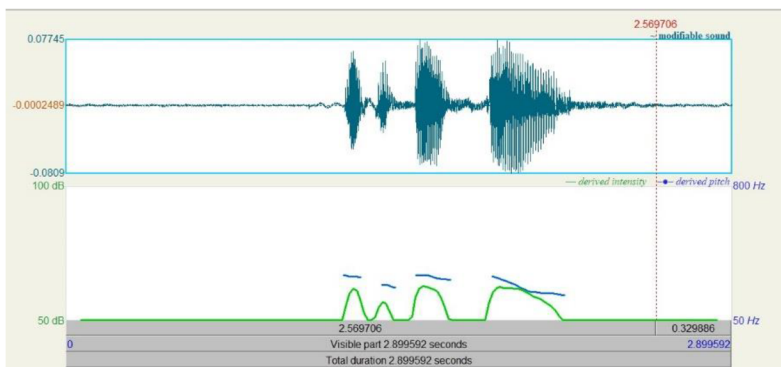
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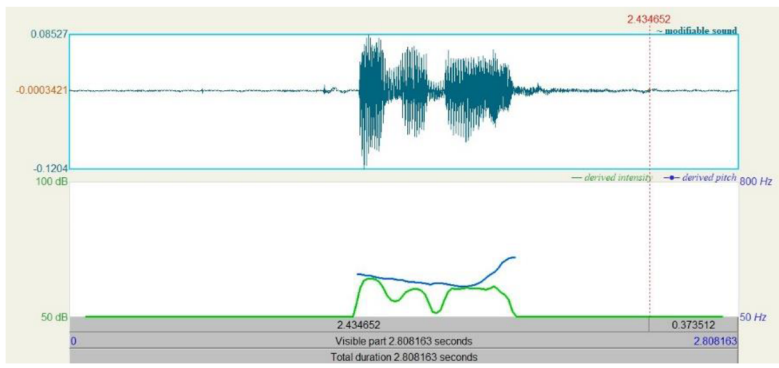
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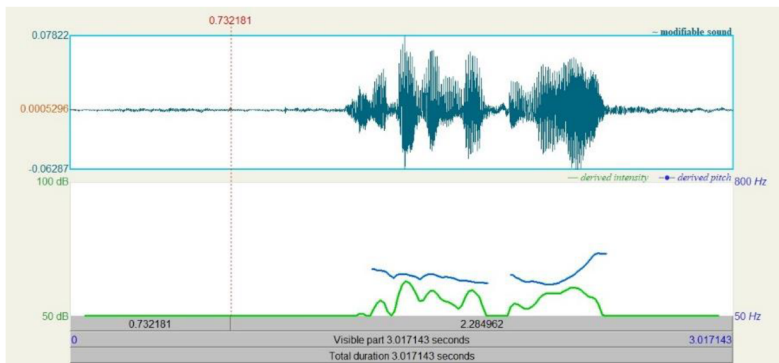
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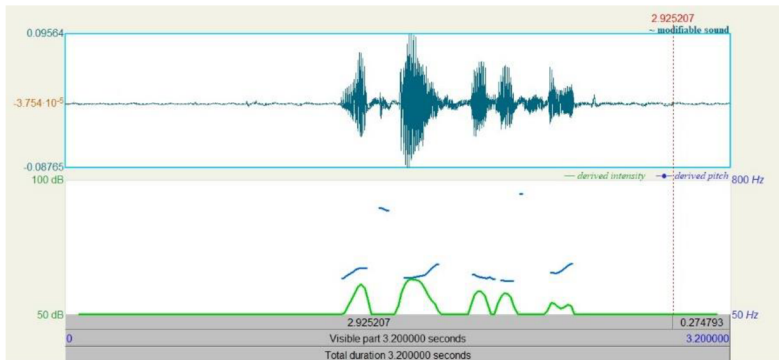
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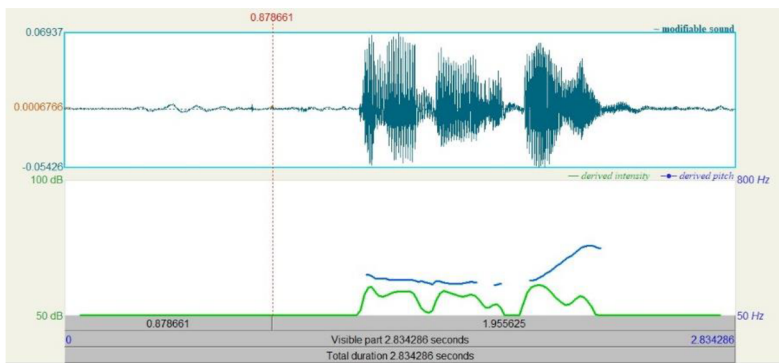
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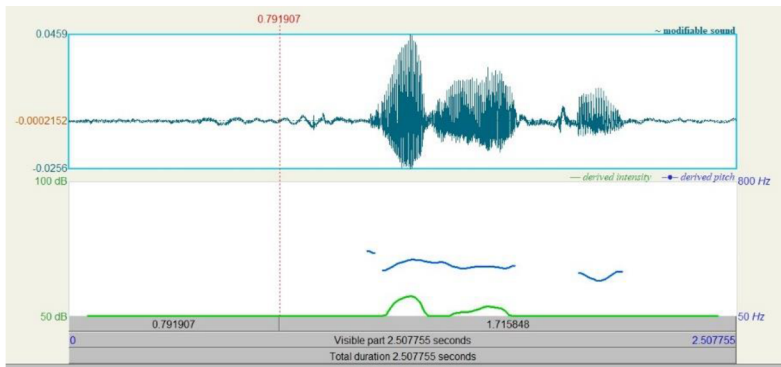


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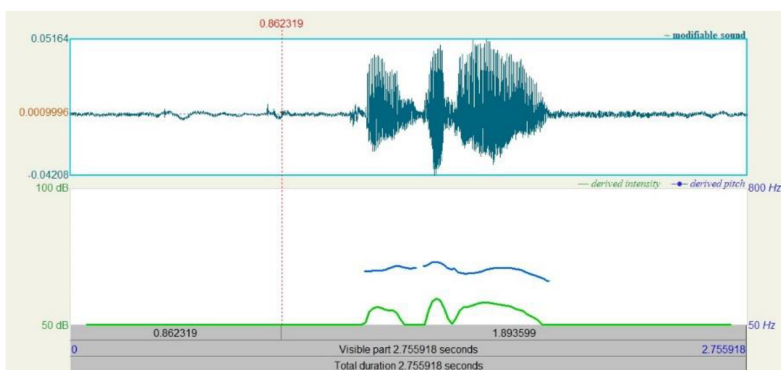


EOA4

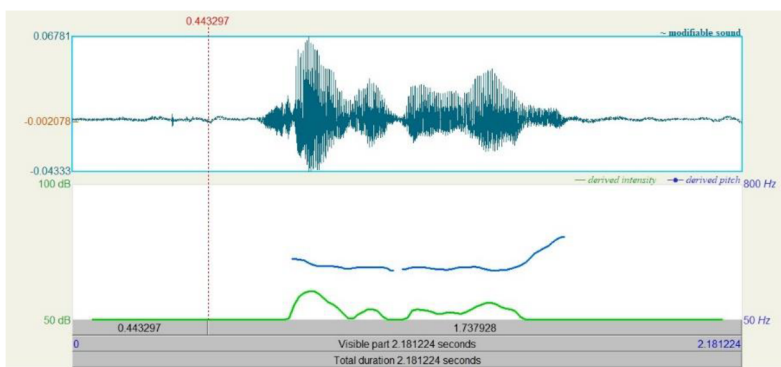
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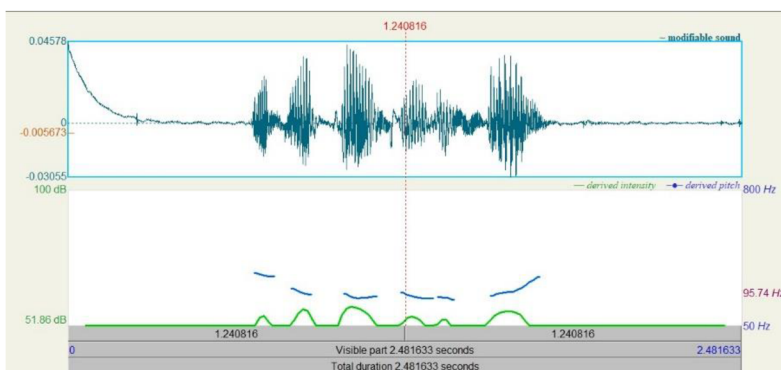
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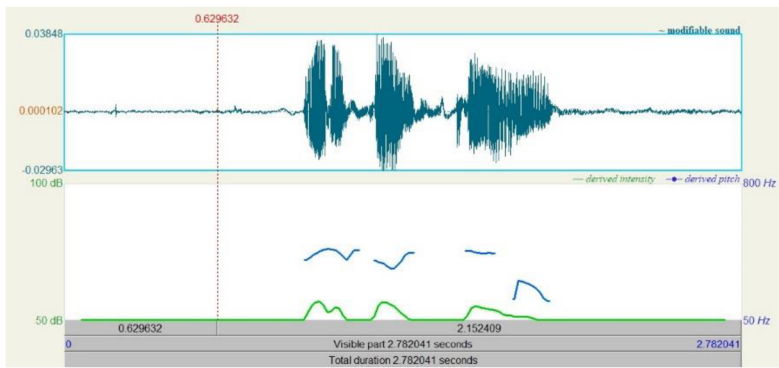
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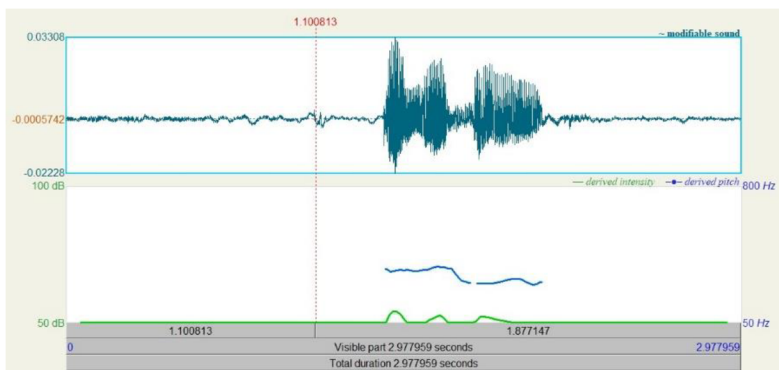
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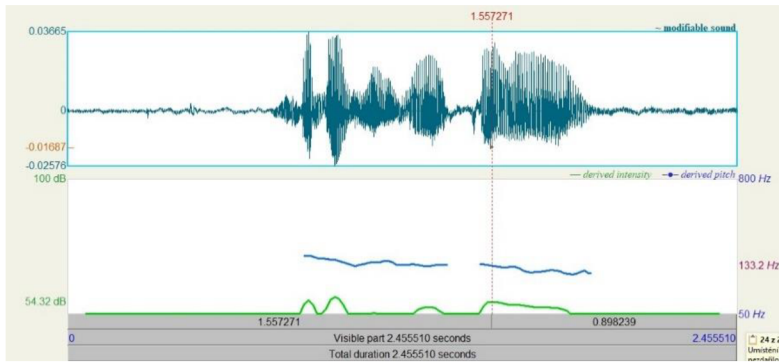
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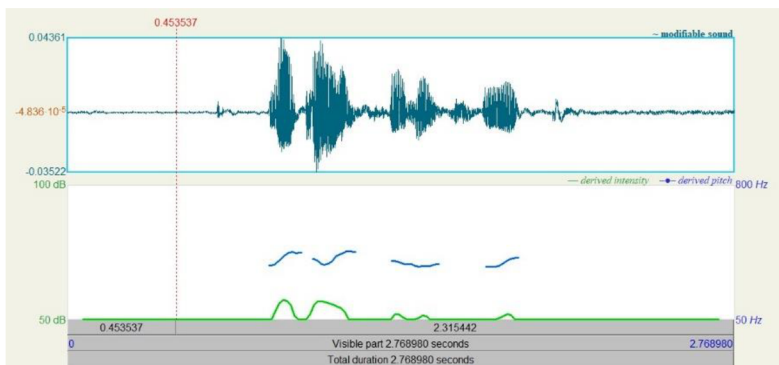
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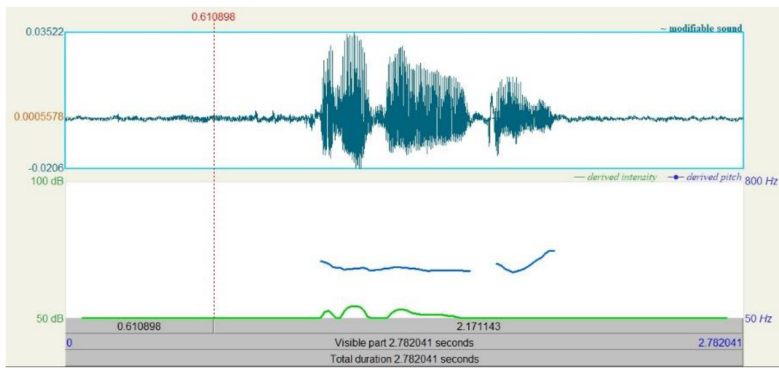
S7



S8

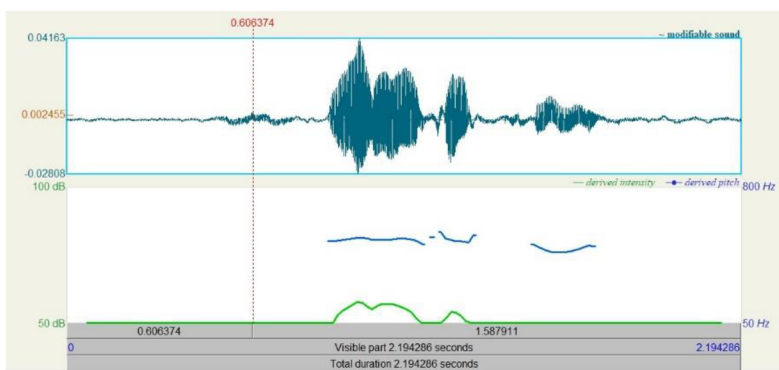


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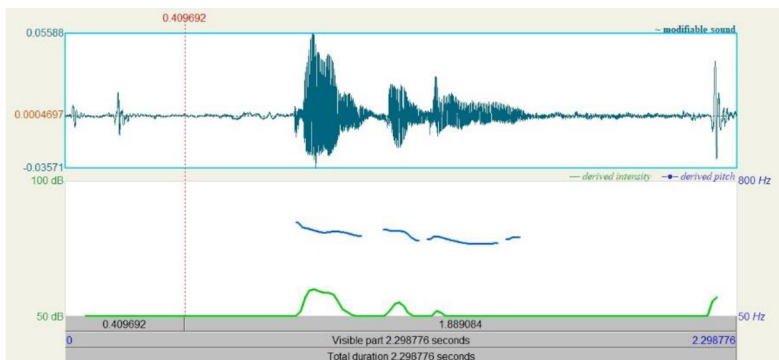


EOA5

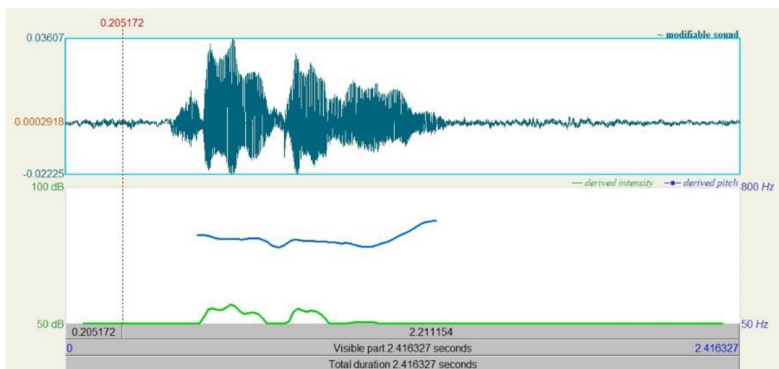
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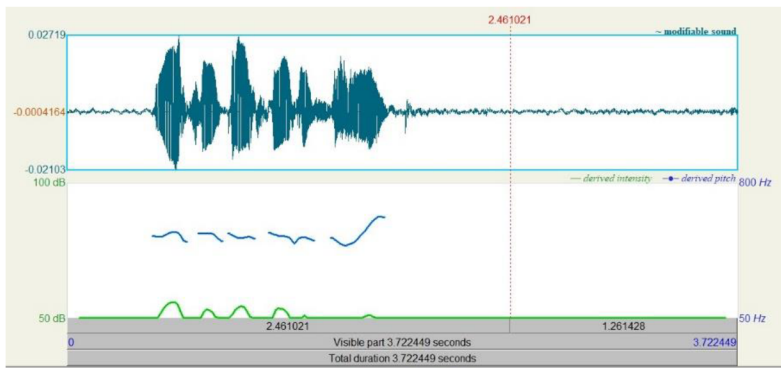
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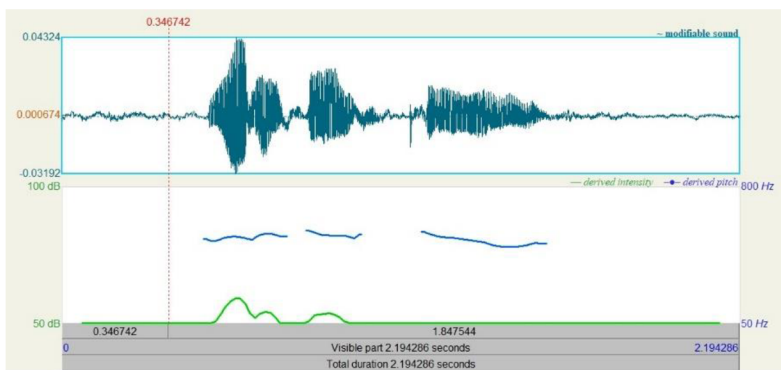
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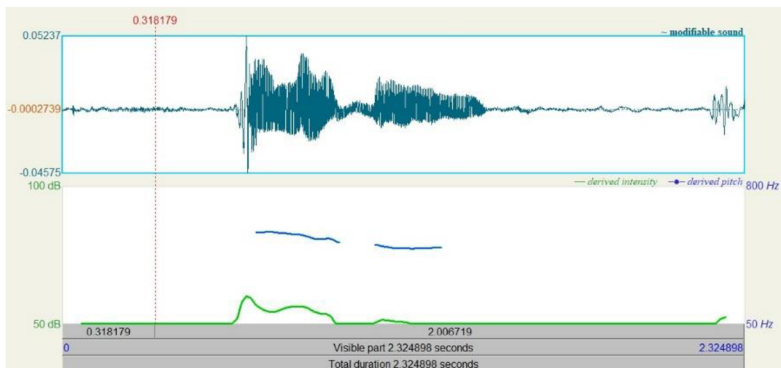
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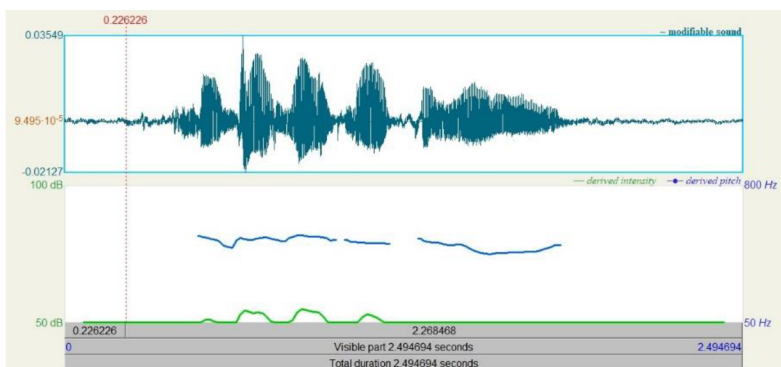
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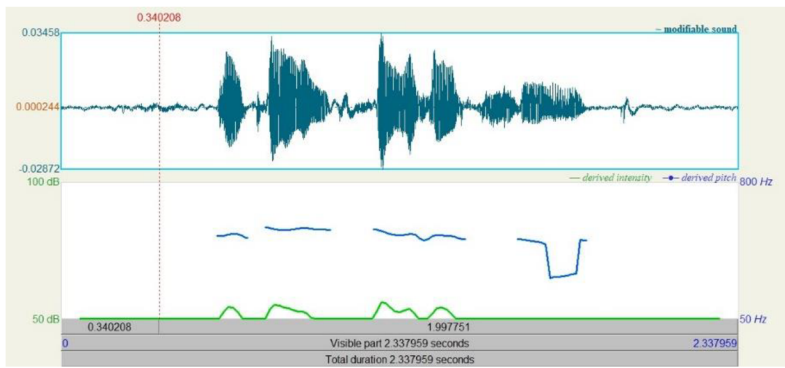
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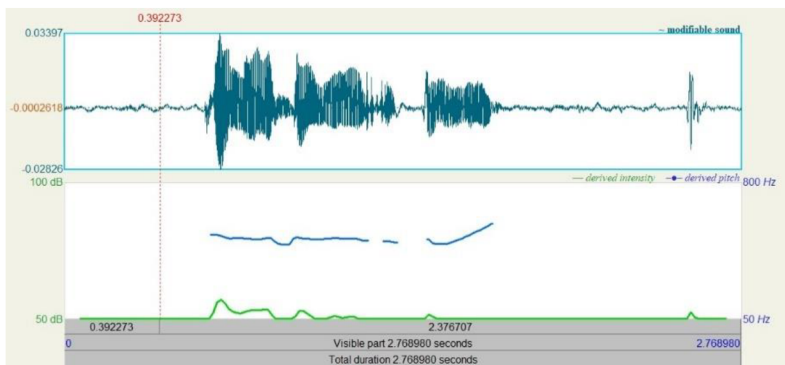
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S8

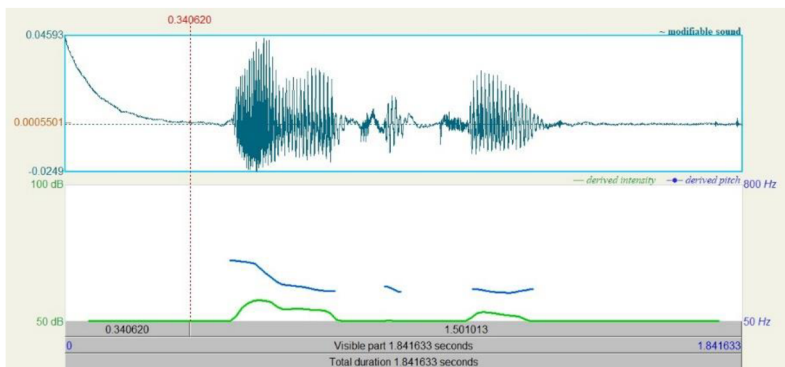


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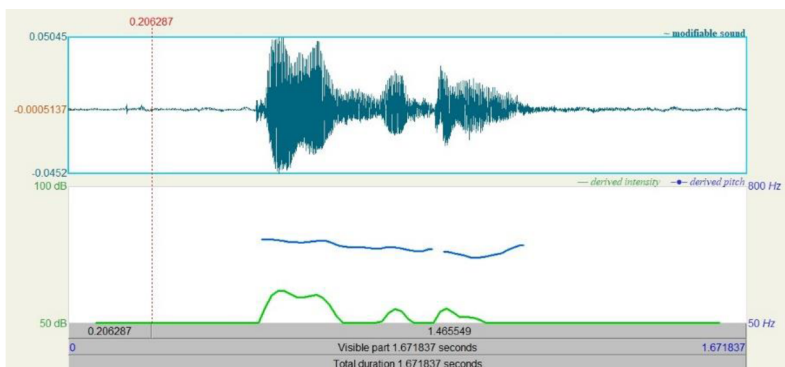


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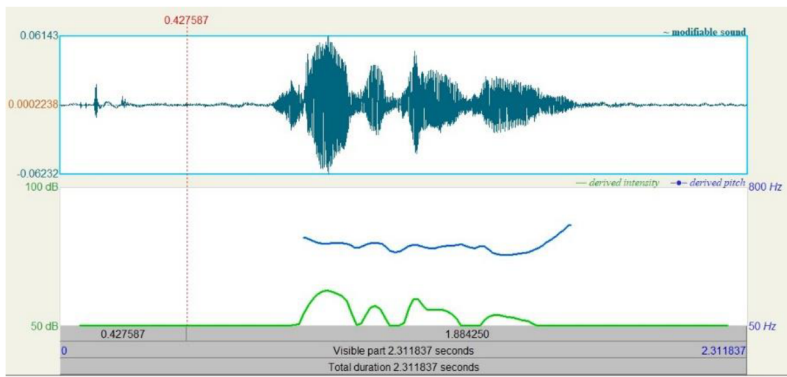
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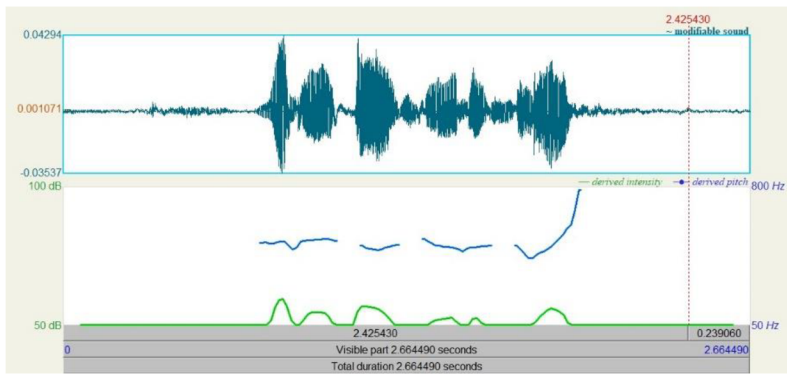
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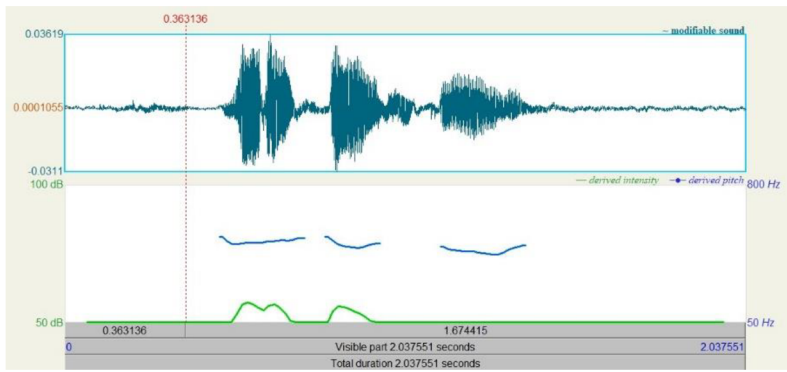
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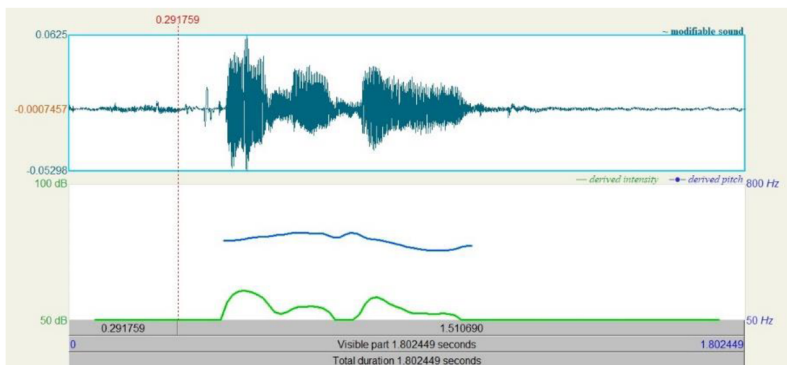
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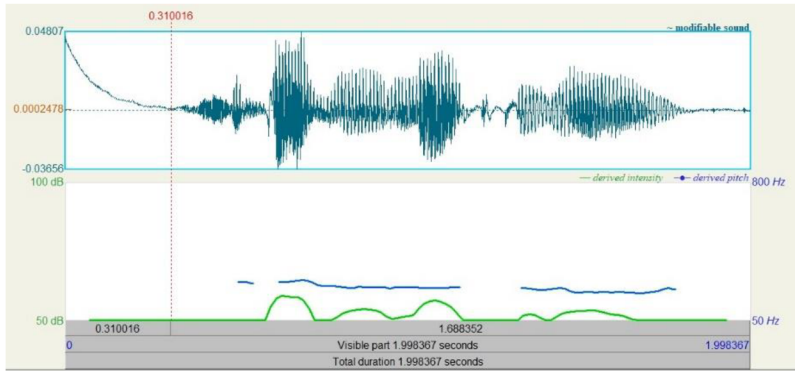
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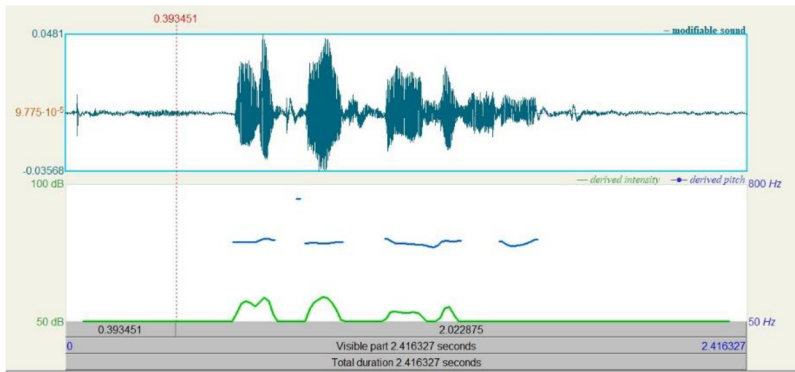
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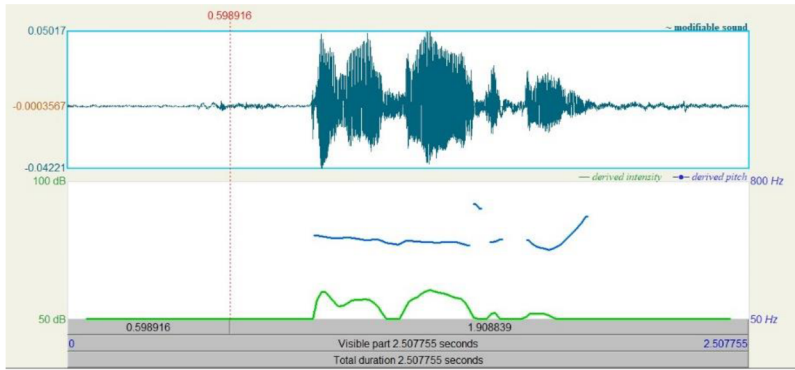
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S8

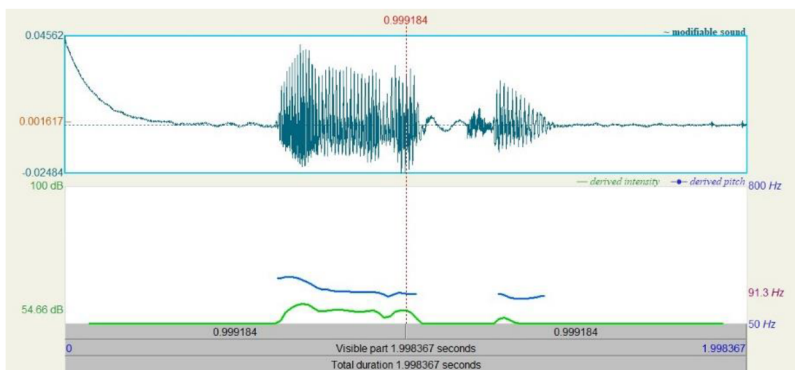


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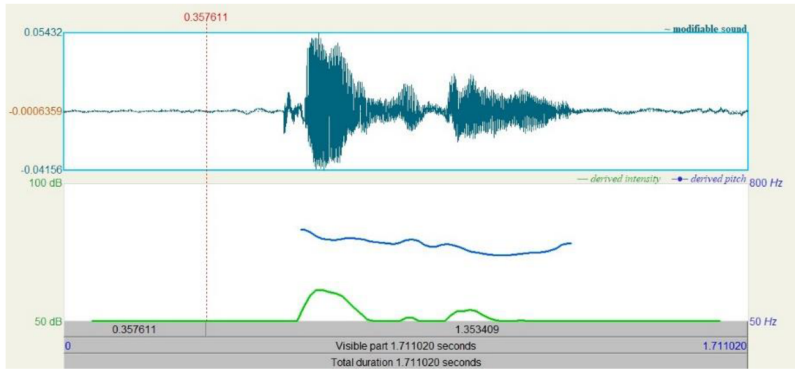


EOA7

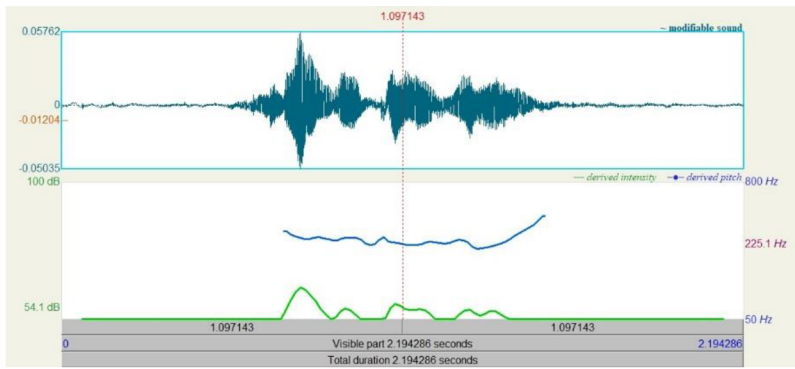
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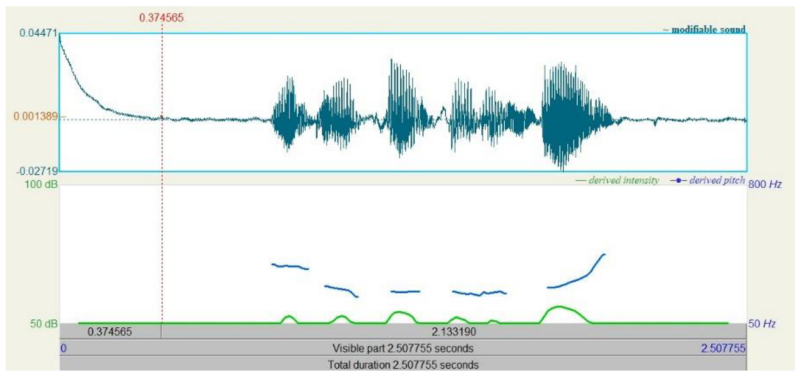
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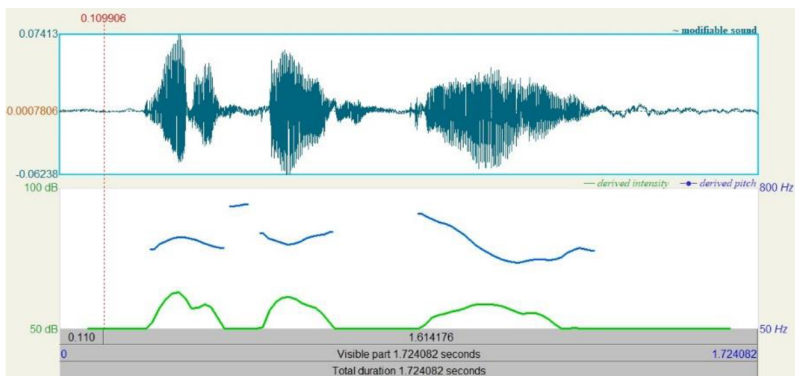
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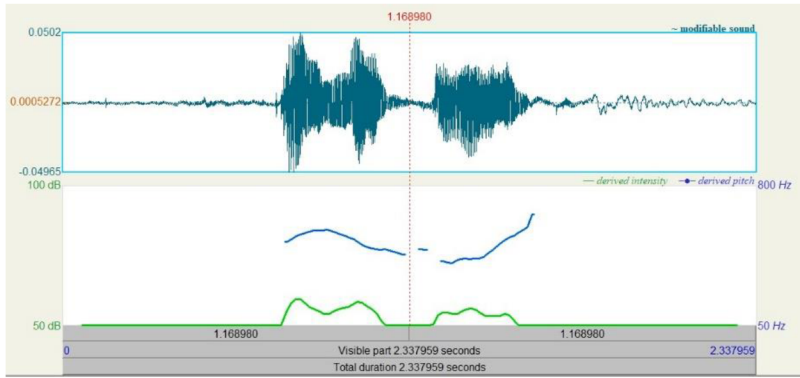
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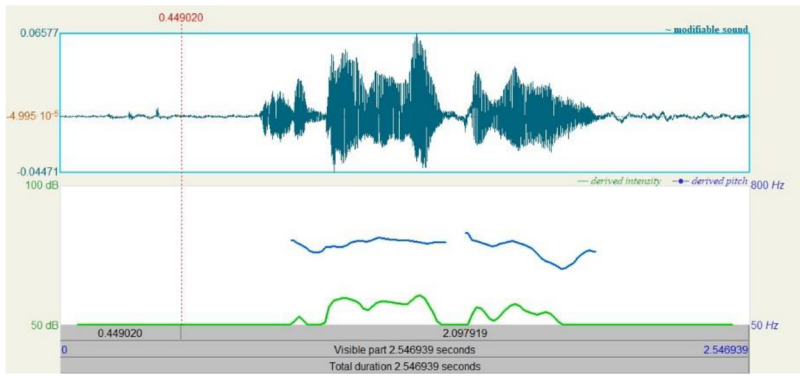
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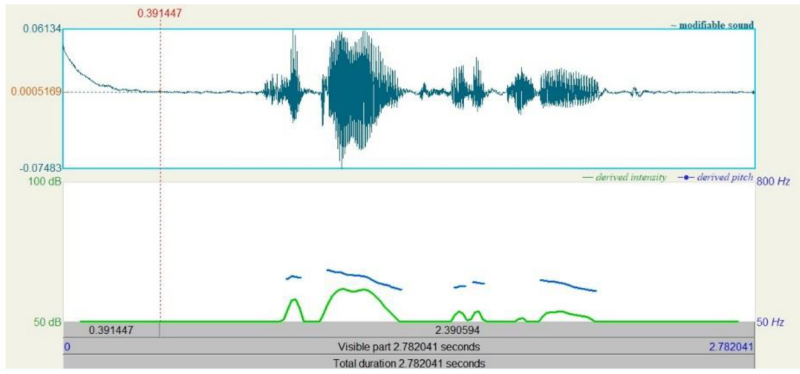
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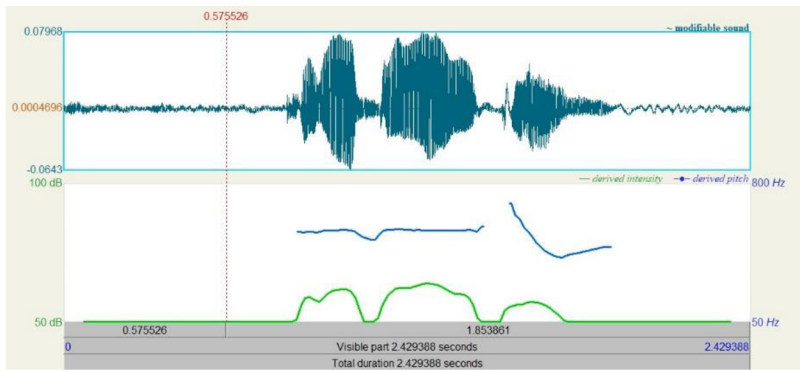
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S8



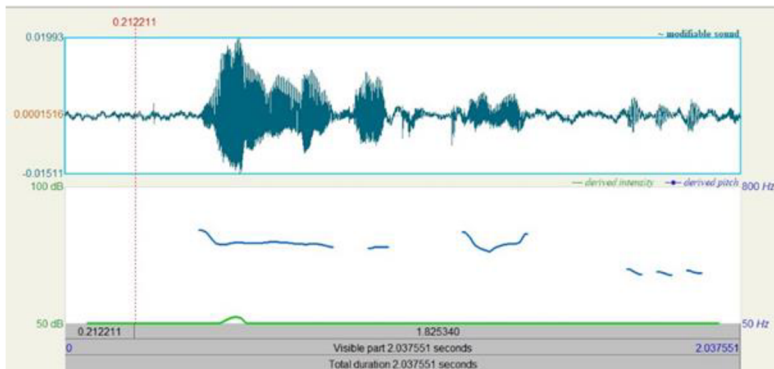
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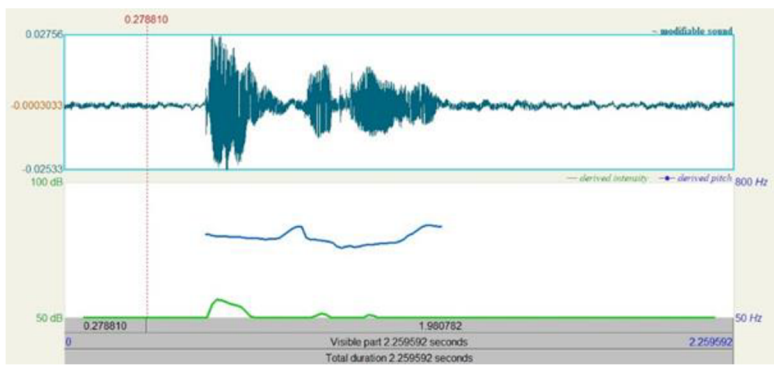
Audio recordings – R class

R1

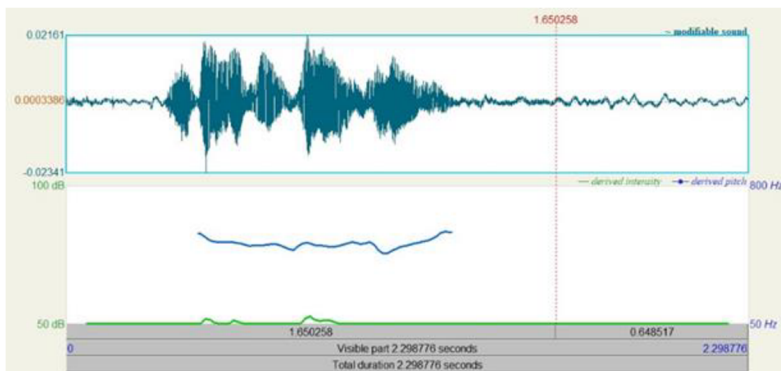
S1



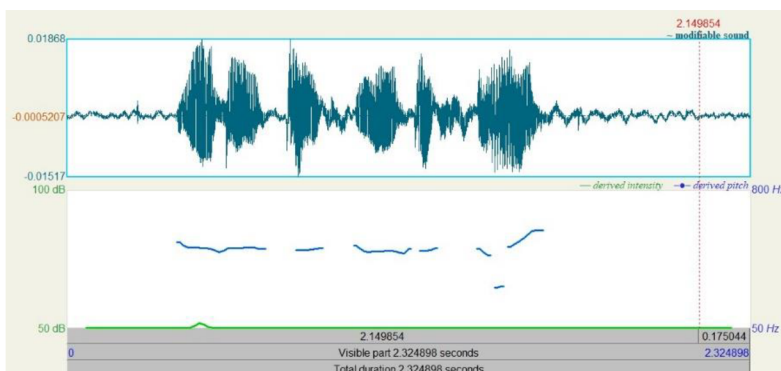
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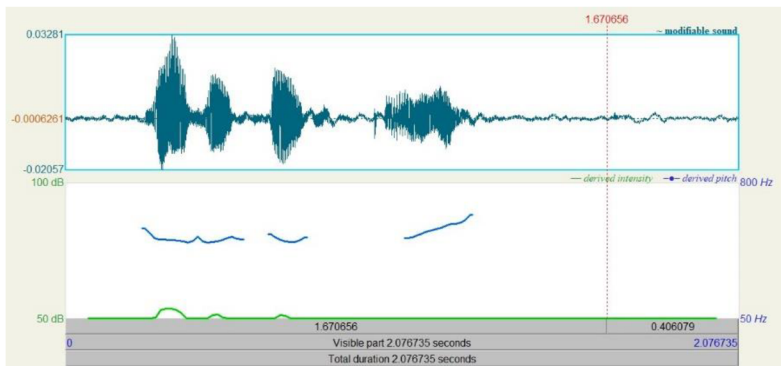
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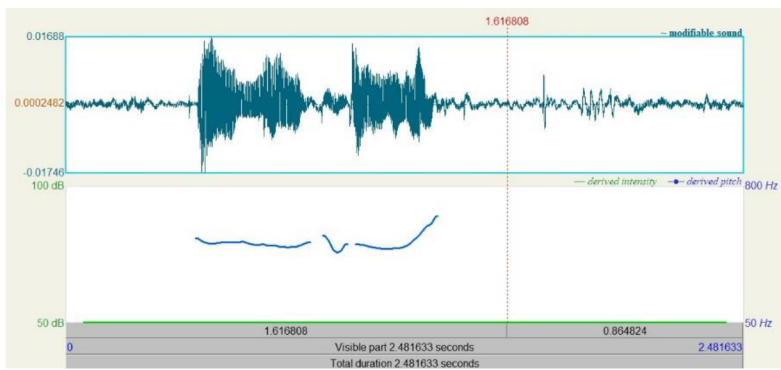
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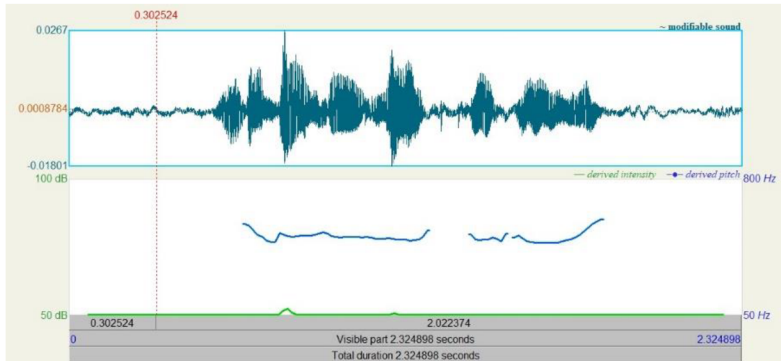
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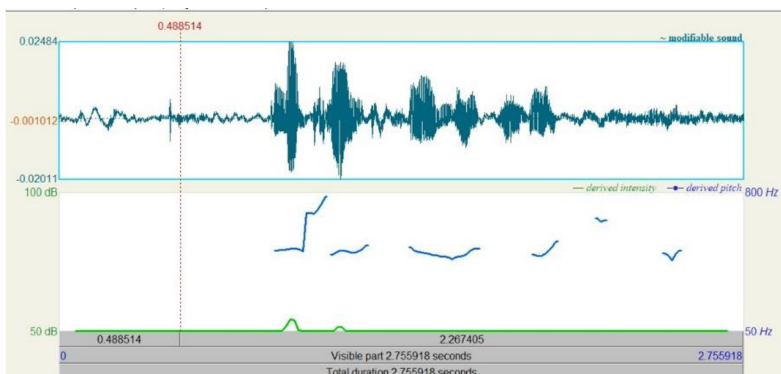
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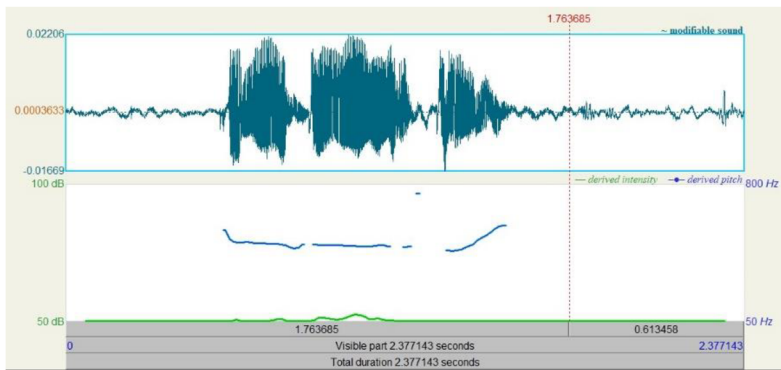
S7



S8

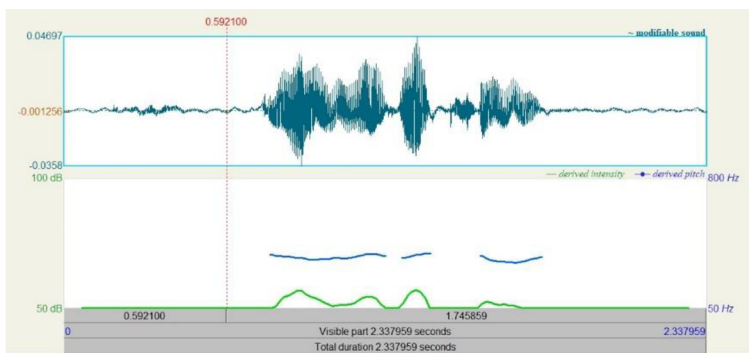


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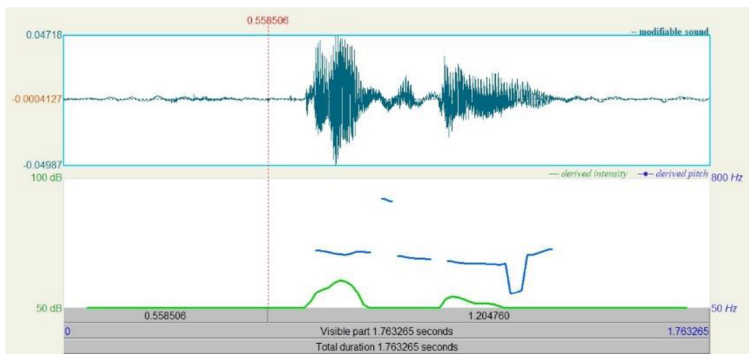


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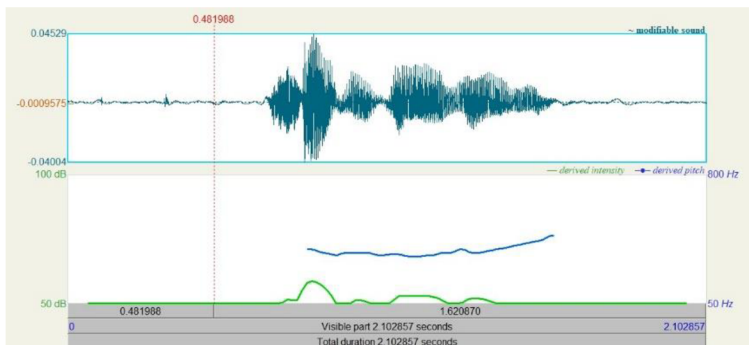
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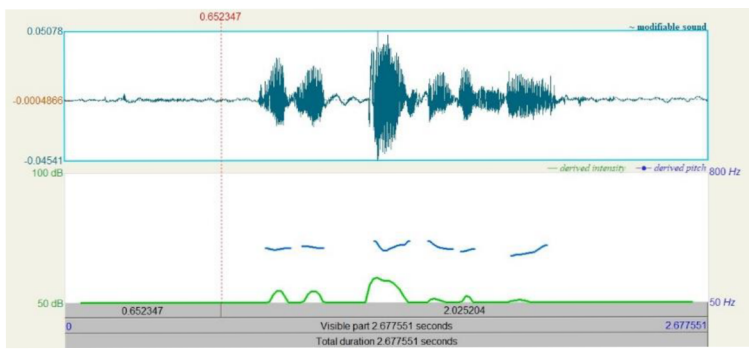
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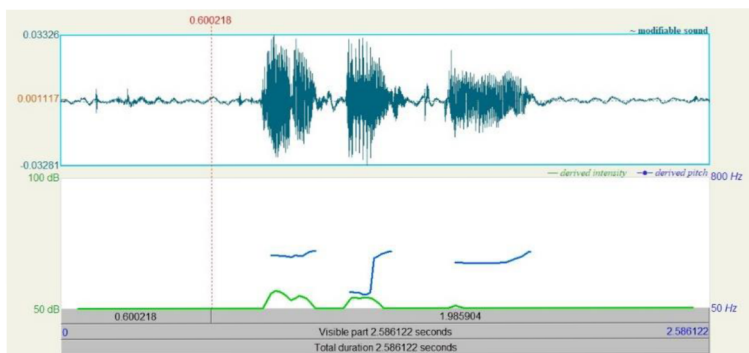
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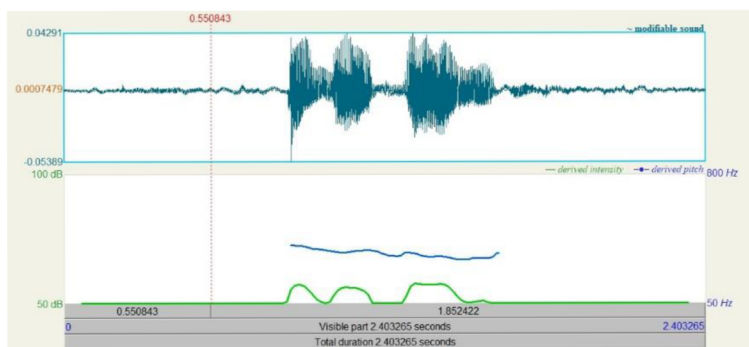
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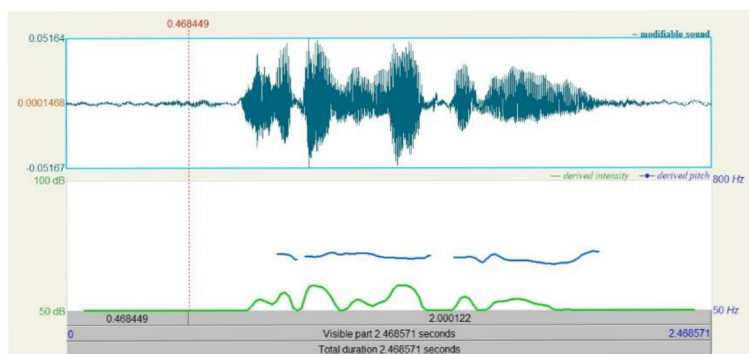
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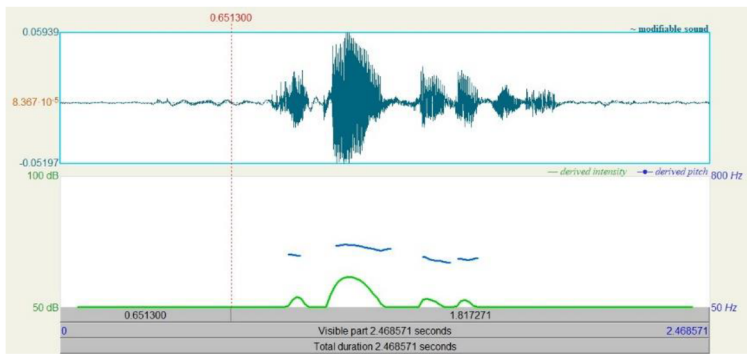
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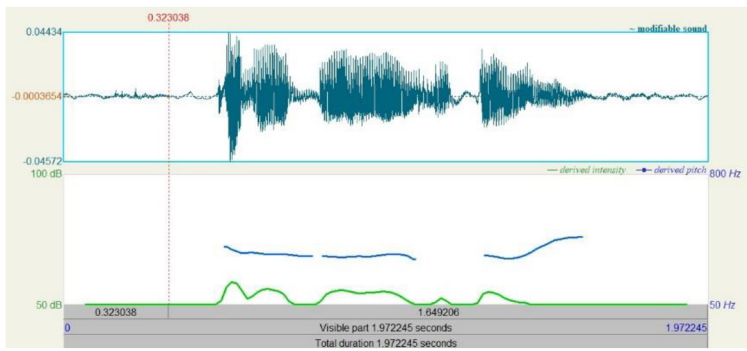
S7



S8

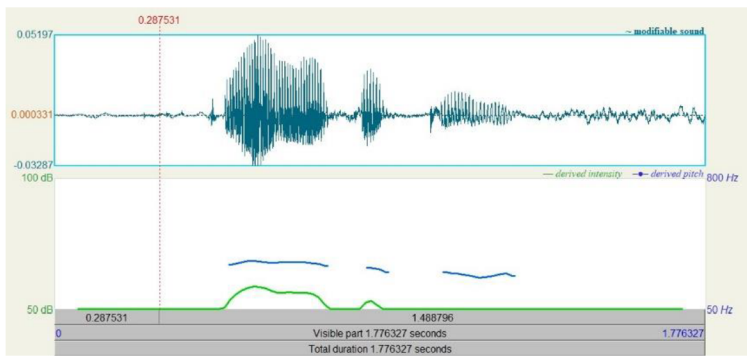


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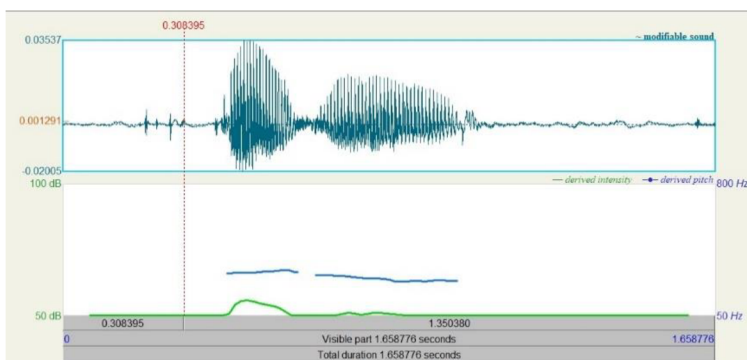


R3

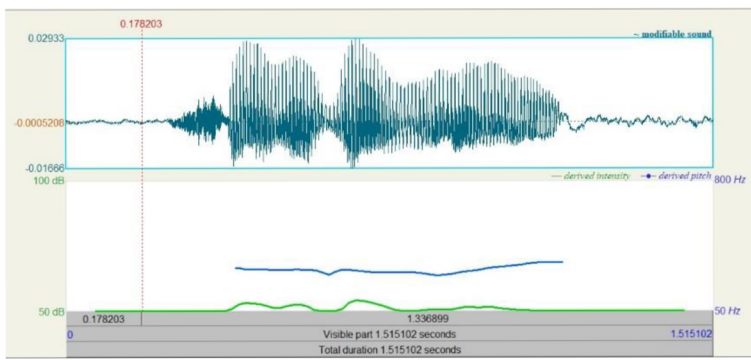
S1



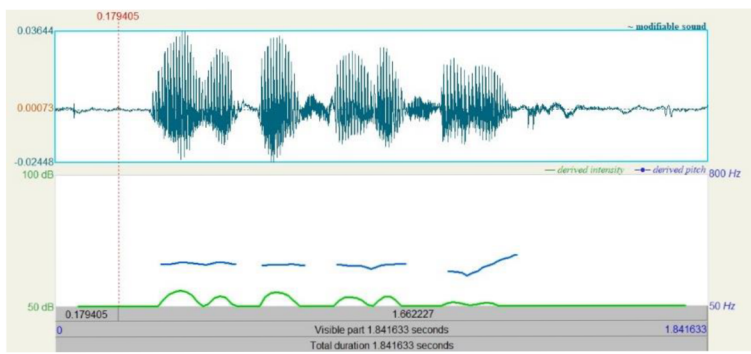
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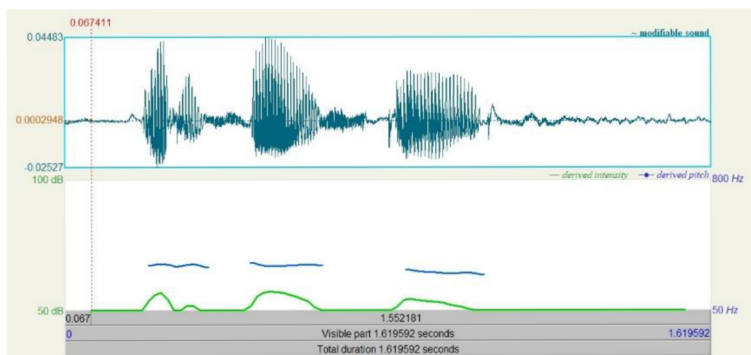
S3



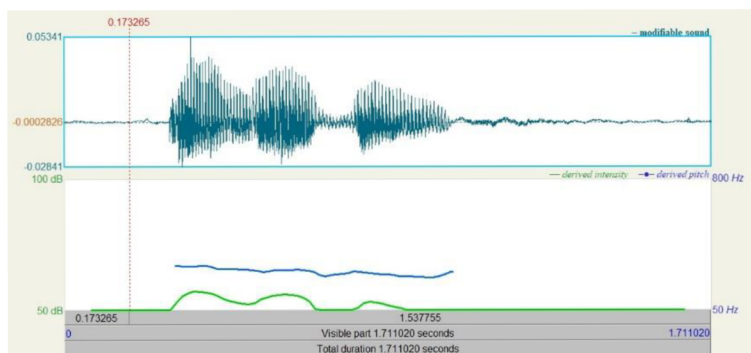
S4



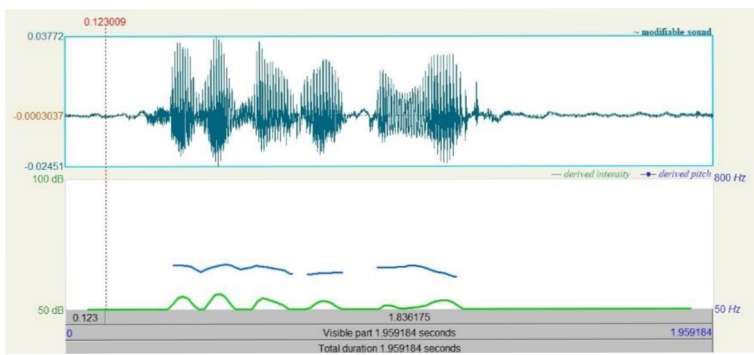
S5



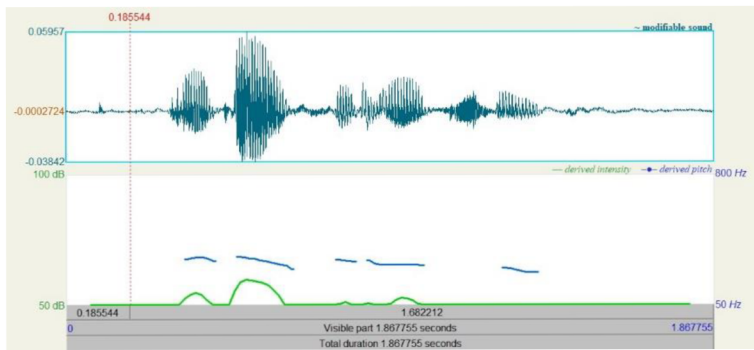
S6



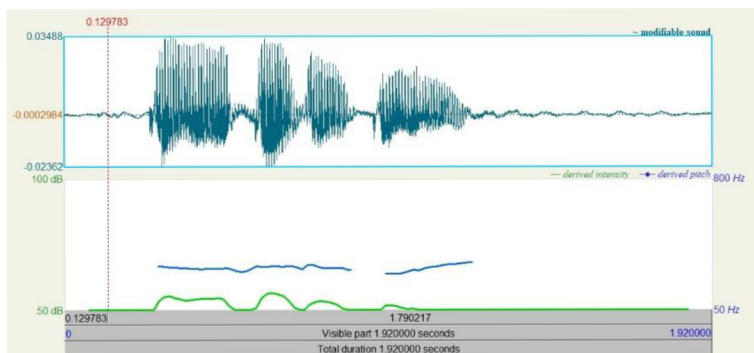
S7



S8

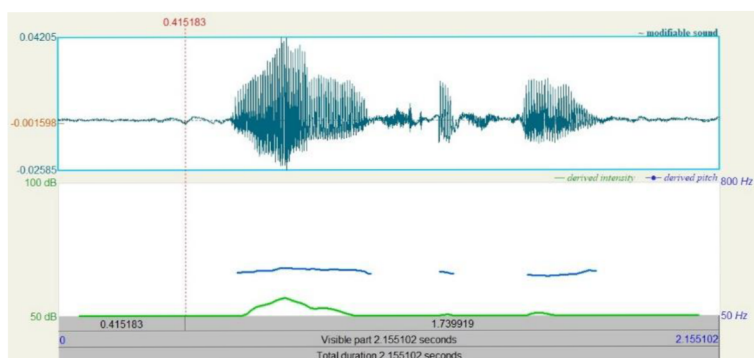


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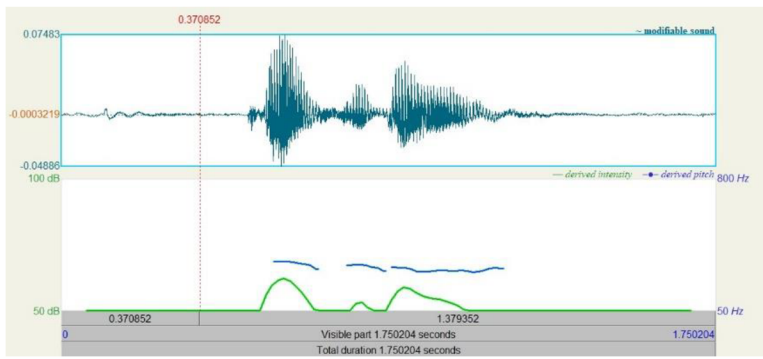


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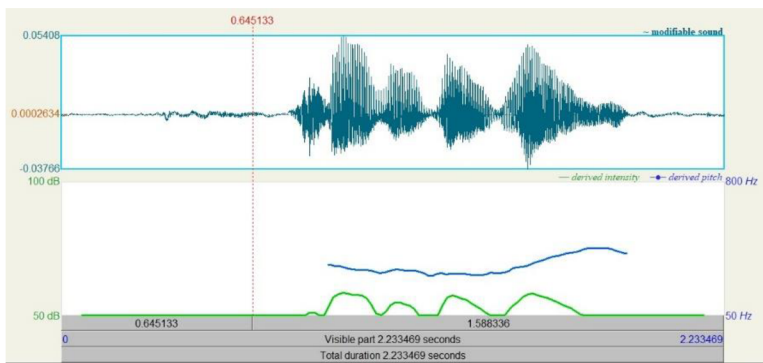
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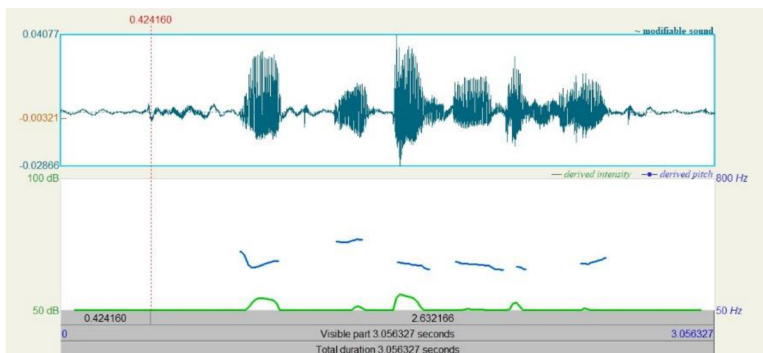
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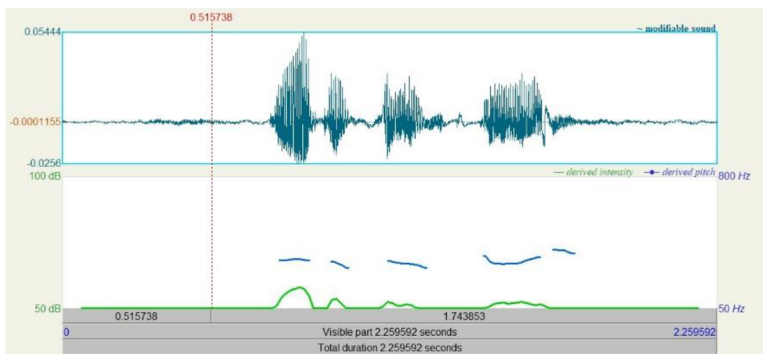
S3



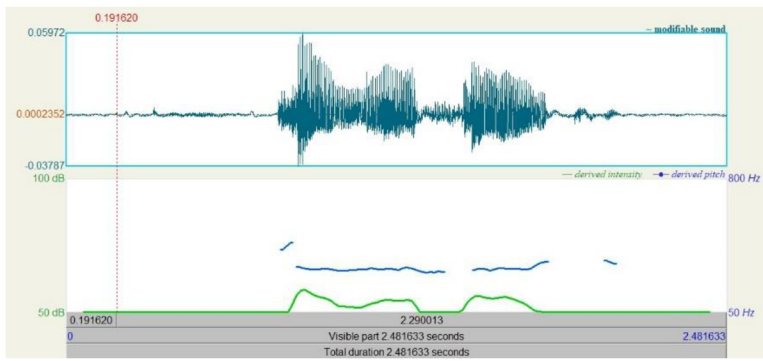
S4



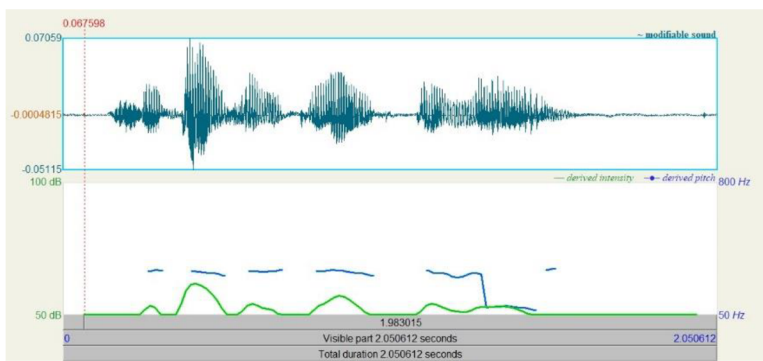
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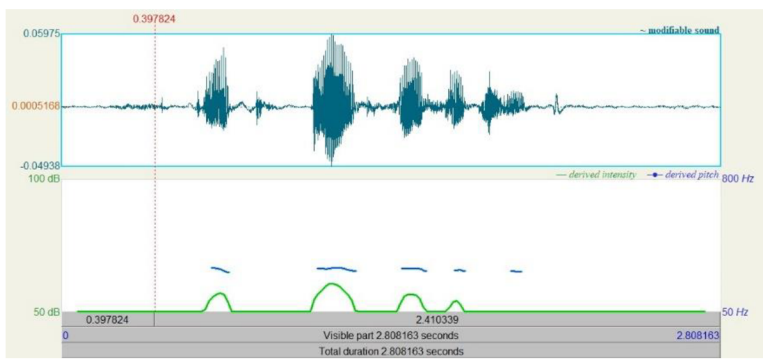
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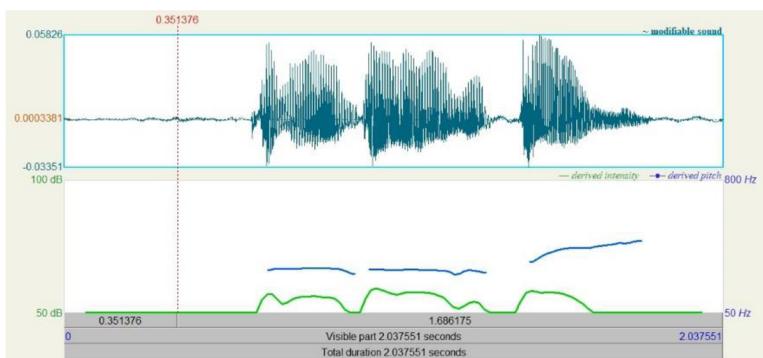
S7



S8

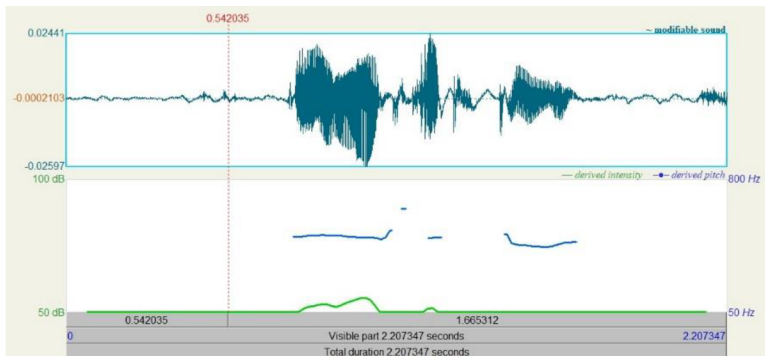


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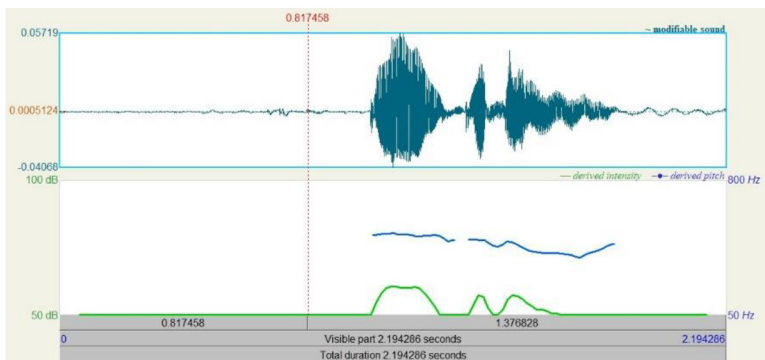


R5

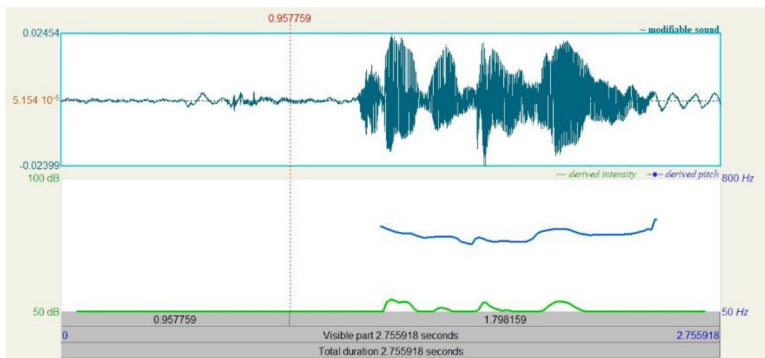
S1



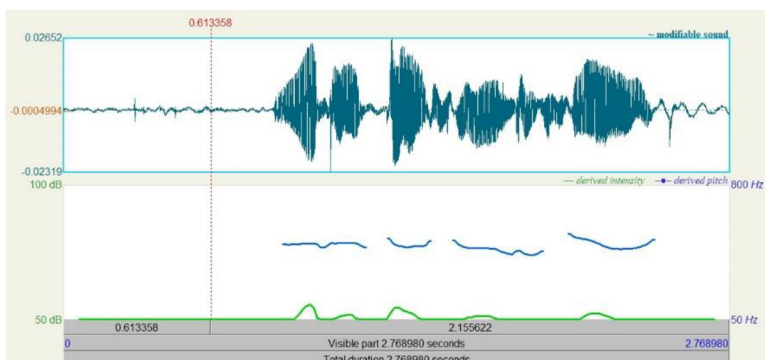
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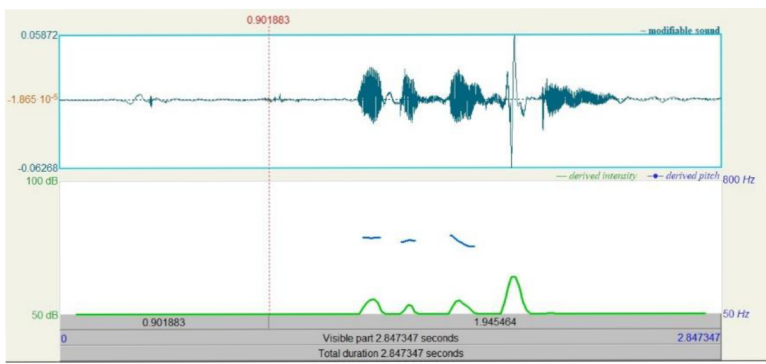
S3



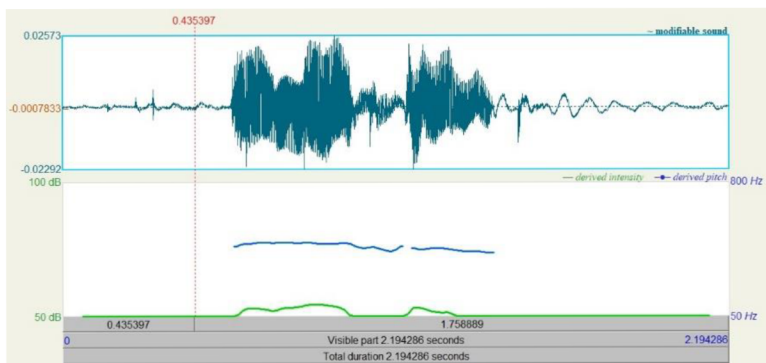
S4



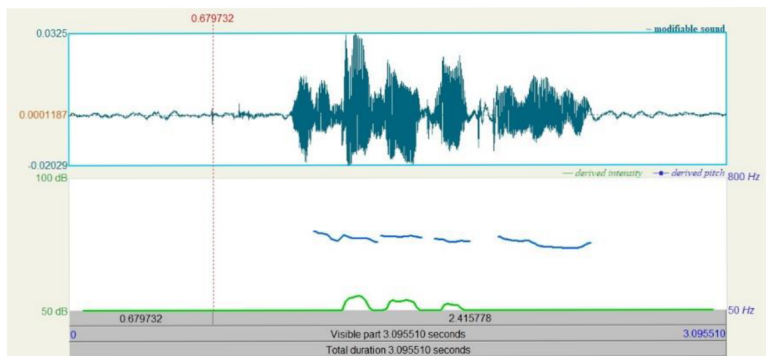
S5



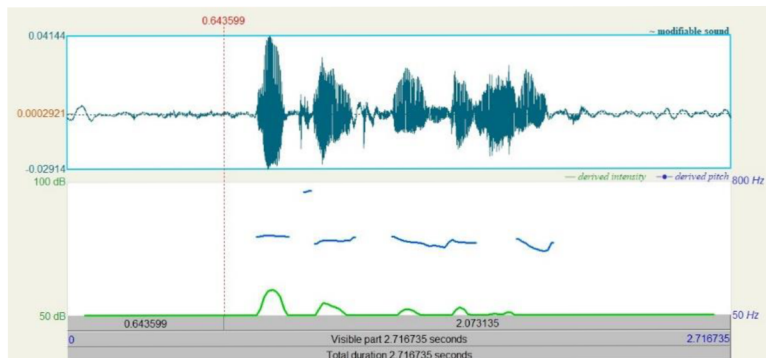
S6



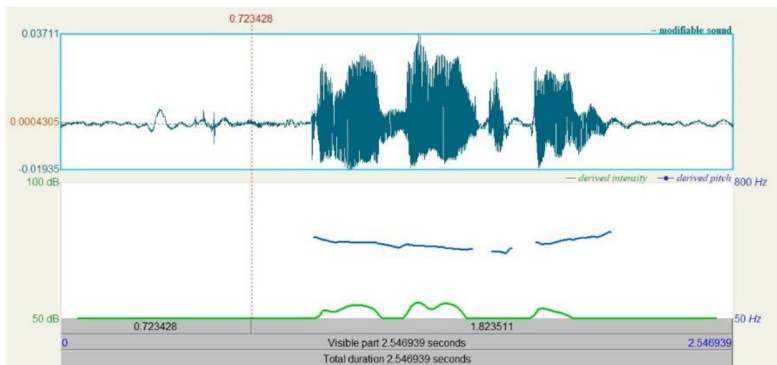
S7



S8

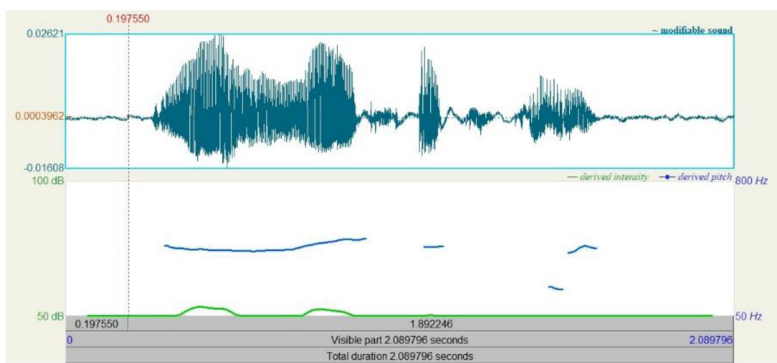


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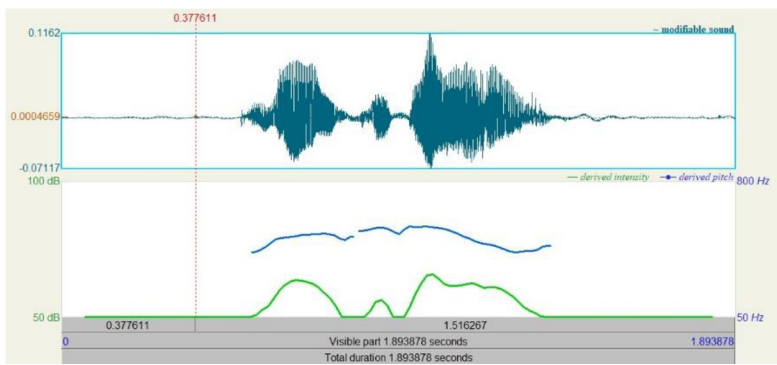


R6

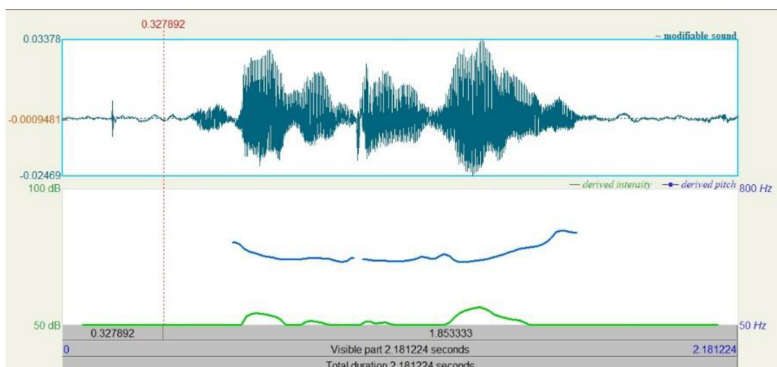
S1



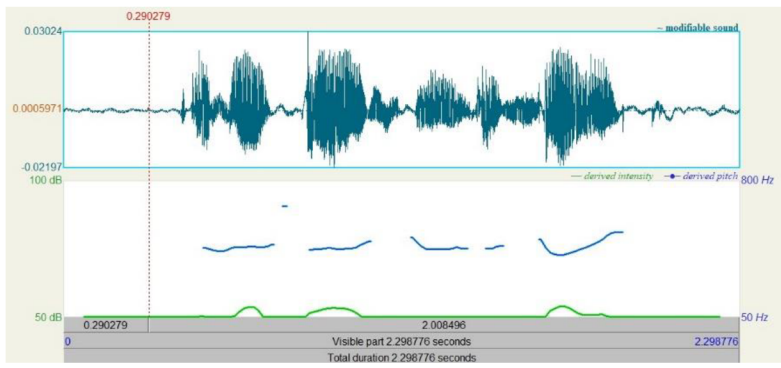
S2



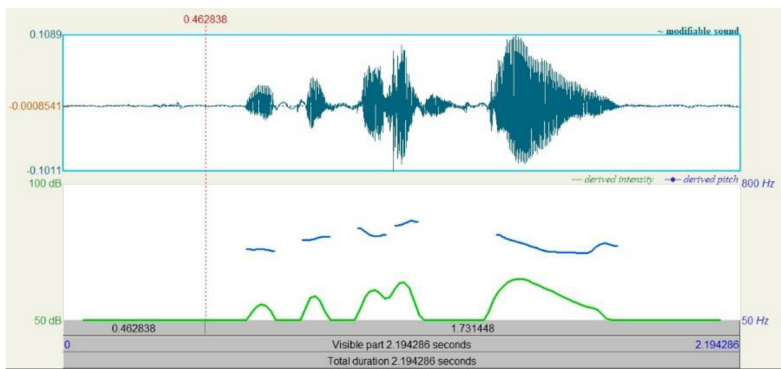
S3



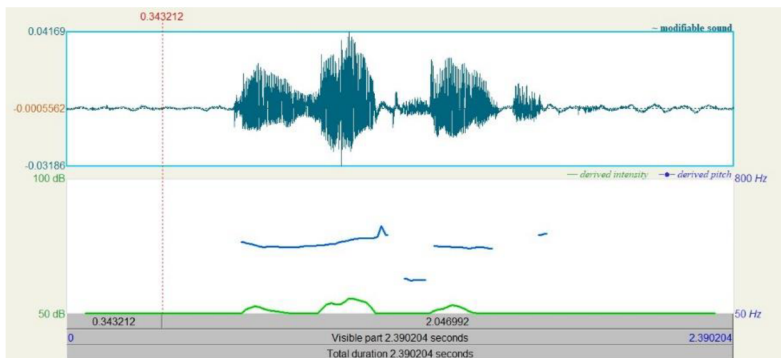
S4



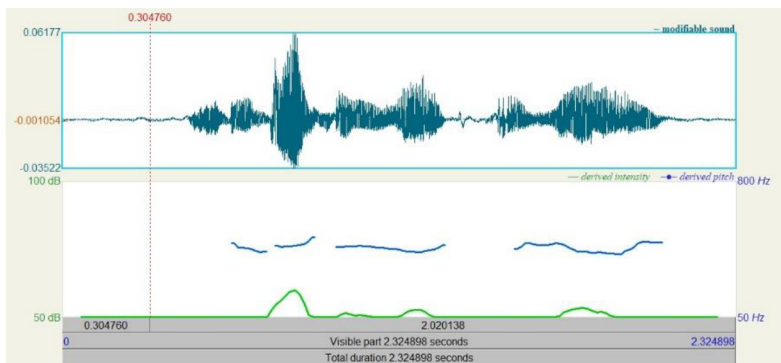
S5



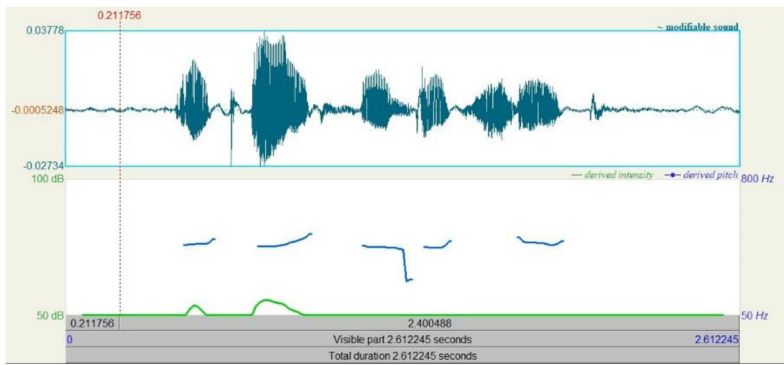
S6



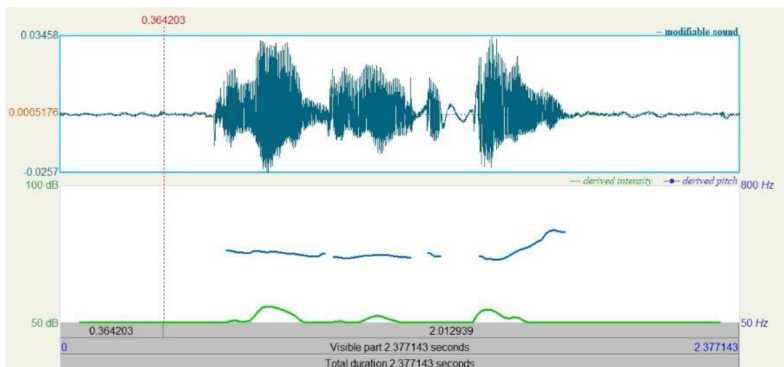
S7



S8

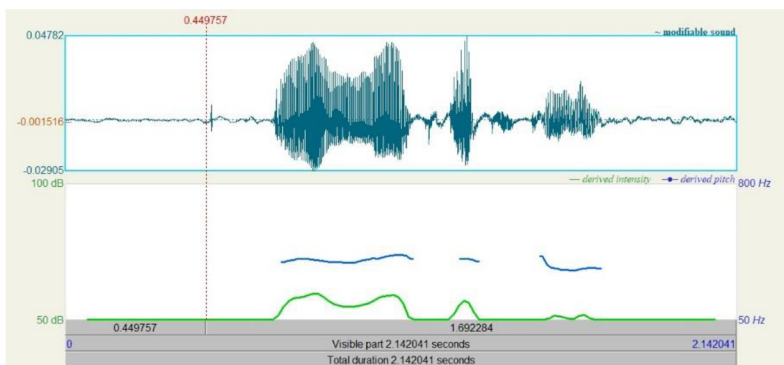


S9

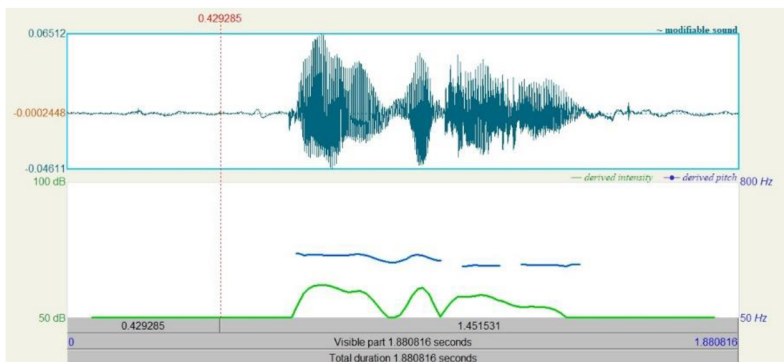


R7

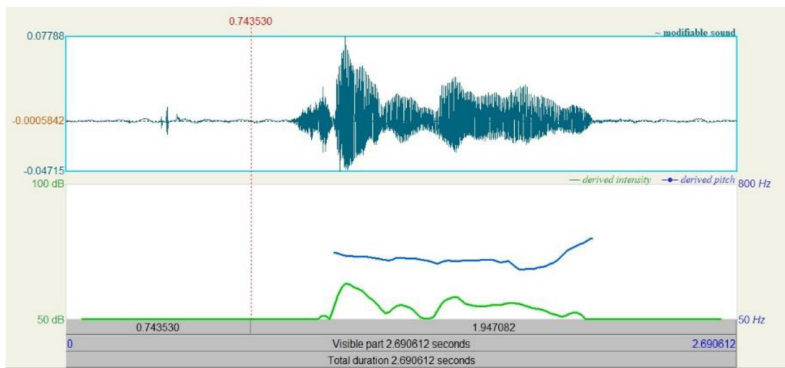
S1



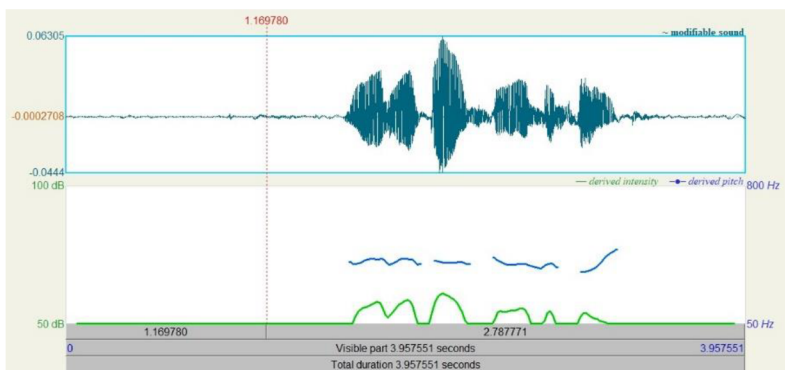
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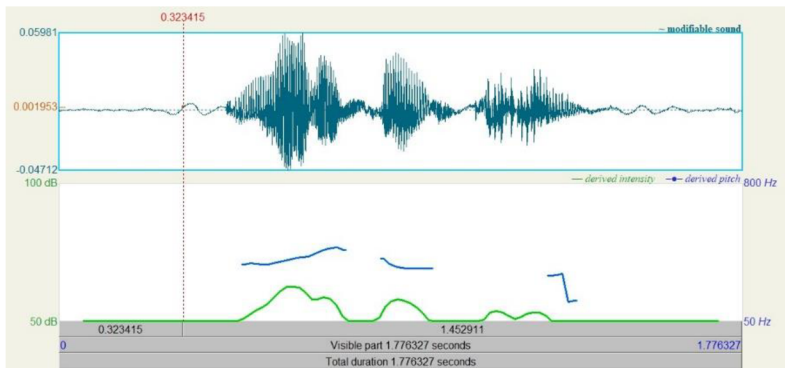
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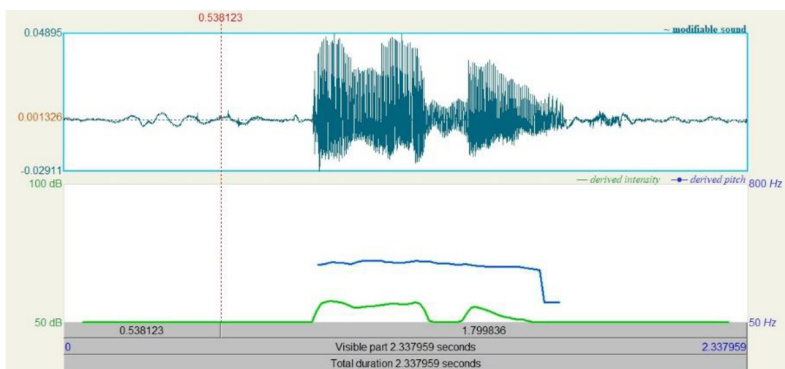
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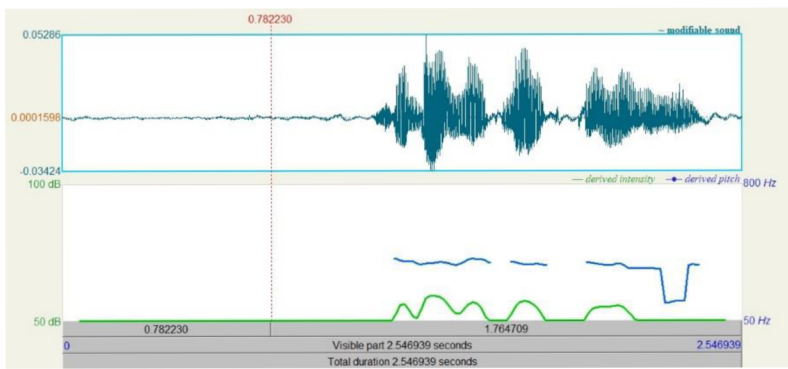
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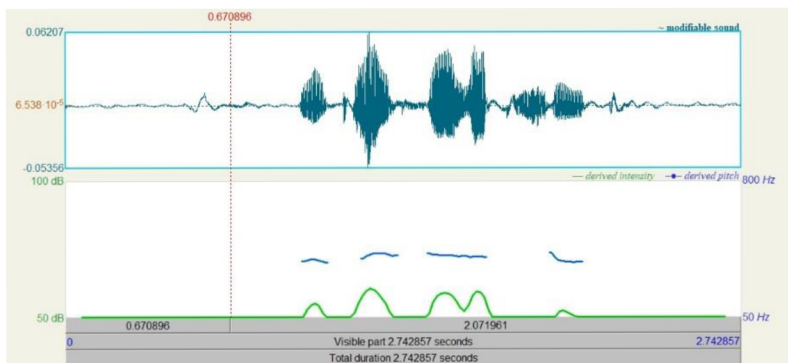
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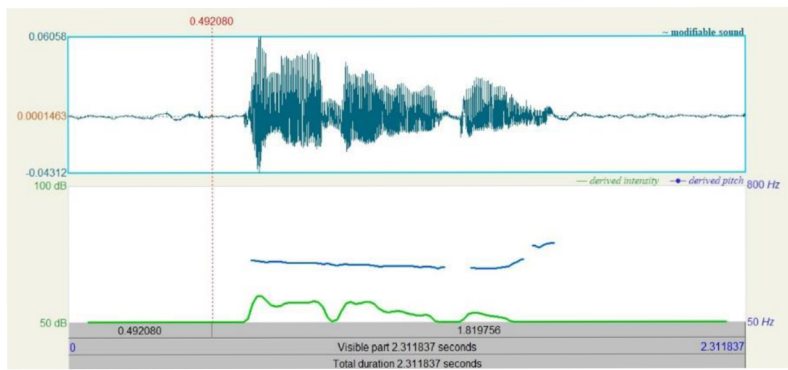
S7



S8



S9



14 Annotation

Jméno a příjmení:	Bc. Adam Brázda
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Vedoucí práce:	Doc. PhDr. Václav Řeřicha, CSc.
Rok obhajoby:	2024

Název práce v češtině:	Alternativní metody výuky výslovnosti angličtiny (a jejich efektivita na druhém stupni základních škol)
Název v angličtině:	Alternative Methods of Teaching English Pronunciation (and their Effectiveness at Lower Secondary School)
Anotace práce:	Teoretická část diplomové práce se zabývá výslovností angličtiny, a to zejména prozodií. V této části je popsána terminologie týkající se intonace a rytmu, nejčastější chyby žáků z hlediska prozodie a možnosti výuky intonace a rytmu na základní škole. Praktická část práce je zaměřena na rozdílnou úroveň osvojené prozodie u žáků tříd vyučovaných rozdílnými metodami, a to metodou English-only a metodou s použitím mateřského jazyka.
Klíčová slova:	alternativní metody, výslovnost, intonace, rytmus, prozodie, English only, jazz-chants
Anotace v angličtině:	The theoretical part of the thesis deals with English pronunciation, especially prosody. This part describes the terminology related to intonation and rhythm, the most frequent mistakes made by pupils in terms of prosody and the possibilities of teaching intonation and rhythm at lower secondary school. The practical part of the thesis focuses on the different levels of acquired prosody among pupils in classes taught by different methods, namely the English-only method and the traditional method using the mother tongue.
Klíčová slova v angličtině:	alternative methods, pronunciation, intonation, rhythm, prosody, English only, jazz-chants
Přílohy vázané v práci:	Audio recordings – EOA class Audio recordings – R class
Rozsah práce:	19 694 slov, 104 stran
Jazyk práce:	Angličtina