

Mariola Kaszycka

(PhD student)

John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin, Poland

Acoustic Cues for Focus Marking in Polish

This study investigates the acoustic marking of focus in Polish, a language that has been largely understudied in the context of acoustic correlates of focus. In languages like English and German, focus is typically marked through changes in fundamental frequency (f0) (Cooper et al., 1985; Eady & Cooper, 1986; Fowler, 1995), duration (Fry, 1955; Lieberman, 1960; Breen et al., 2010), and intensity (Fry, 1955; Lieberman, 1960; Harrington et al., 2000). However, the phonetic realisation of focus in Polish remains largely unexplored. This study aims to address this gap by analysing the acoustic markers of focus using data from sixty native Polish speakers, recorded in two stages.

The research primarily investigates the differences between accented and non-accented words, and especially the question how phonetic cues — f0, duration, or intensity contribute to focus marking. This study examines various types of focus, including broad, narrow, corrective, as well as focus in polar and incredulity questions.

The results highlight certain patterns in how Polish speakers use acoustic cues to signal focus. These findings add to the broader cross-linguistic knowledge of focus marking and the phonetic strategies specific to Polish speakers.