Abstract
SUMMERLIN, MARTHA LYNN. Voice Onset Timing in L1 and L2 Speakers in North Carolina and Texas. (Under the direction of Dr. Erik Thomas.)

This project compares the Voice Onset Timing (VOT) of native Spanish speakers to those of native English speakers. Voiceless stops are aspirated at the beginning of syllables in English but not in Spanish; VOT is the primary metric for assessing aspiration. In acquisition of a second language, aspiration is reported to be a feature that is gradually acquired rather than acquired all at once (Nathan et al 1987). Jia, Aaronson, and Wu (2002) also observe the degree to which learners use their L1 and L2 is important in the development of their L2. About 90 tokens were taken from each speaker, 10 tokens per environment per stop consonant. I look at three communities: 1) an Anglo community in Raleigh, North Carolina and a Hispanic community in Durham, North Carolina; 2) an Anglo community and a Hispanic community in North Town, Texas; and 3) a group of speakers from Mexico and currently residing in the Raleigh/Durham area of North Carolina. The tokens were measured in milliseconds from the stop burst to the onset of voicing using mean VOT values statistically analyzed. VOT appears to be easily acquirable and I have not found much difference between the VOT of several native English and native Spanish speakers. Age of acquisition and amount of use of English appear to influence voiceless stop aspiration in English. Although L1 Spanish speakers appear to accommodate to voiceless stop aspiration in English, they maintain Spanish norms in their aspiration of Spanish voiceless stops.