

Chapter 1 : Foreign accent and speech intelligibility | Murray J. Munro

Foreign accent and speech intelligibility. The assessment of foreign accent and its communicative effects by native judges vs. experienced non-native judges.

Thus, this language lacks word stress, at least in the sense that English has it. Consequently, many examples of stress misplacement were seen in the data: Teaching American English pronunciation. The interlanguage speech intelligibility benefit. The Journal of the Acoustical Society of America, 3 , " Reconciling theory and practice. Dictation as a measure of mutual intelligibility: Language Learning, 22, " Rapid adaptation to foreign-accented English. Journal of the Acoustical Society of America, 6 , " Linguistic dimensions of second language accent and comprehensibility. Journal of Second Language Pronunciation, 2 2 , " Evidence-based perspectives for L2 teaching and research. John Benjamins Publishing Company. The phonology of Standard Chinese 2nd ed. Common pronunciation problems of Vietnamese learners of English. VNU Journal of Science: Foreign Languages, 21 1 , 35" Linguistic constraints on the acquisition of English syllable codas by native speakers of Mandarin Chinese. Applied Linguistics, 22 3 , " The interlanguage speech intelligibility benefit for native speakers of Mandarin: Production and perception of English word-final voicing contrasts. Journal of Phonetics, 36 4 , " Characteristics of Vietnamese phonology. American Journal of Speech-Language Pathology, 11, " Lexical frequency and neighborhood density effects on the recognition of native and Spanish-accented words by native English and Spanish listeners. Journal of the Acoustical Society of America, 2 , " Intelligibility of Vietnamese-accented English. University of Michigan Press. Foreign accent and speech intelligibility. Evaluating individual variability in foreign accent comprehension. Reduplication and word stress in Vietnamese. Chinese phonotactic patterns and the pronunciation difficulties of Mandarin-speaking EFL learners. Evidence against the mismatched interlanguage intelligibility benefit hypothesis. Journal of the Acoustical Society of America, 1 , " Cross-linguistic analysis of Vietnamese and English with implications for Vietnamese language acquisition and maintenance in the United States. A Vietnamese reference grammar. University of Hawaii Press. The structure of the Mandarin syllable: Why, when and how to teach it. Communicative efficiency across conversational dyads with varying language alignment profiles. Language and speech, 53 4 , " Quantifying the intelligibility of speech in noise for non-native listeners. Journal of the Acoustical Society of America, 4 , " Listening with a foreign-accent: The interlanguage speech intelligibility benefit in Mandarin speakers of English. Journal of Phonetics, 41 5 , " Acoustic characteristics of English lexical stress produced by native Mandarin speakers. The Journal of the Acoustical Society of America, 6 , " The pronunciation used as a frame of reference is based on Canadian English e. Also note that in such examples, the final consonant deletion strategy was not employed as in case a above, e. Acknowledgements The author wishes to thank the following: Biography Nima Sadat-Tehrani holds a Ph. He is a faculty at Centennial College in Toronto and can be reached at nsadatte my.

Chapter 2 : The effect of first language on intelligibility | Contact

Foreign Accent, Comprehensibility, and Intelligibility in the Speech of Second Language Learners. concerning this article should be addressed to Murray J. Munro.

Processing time, accent and comprehensibility in the perception of native and foreign-accented speech by Murray J. Speech , " The Mandarin listeners assessed the truth value of the statements, and assigned accent and comprehensibility ratings. Response latency data indicated that the second language Mandarin-accented utterances required more time to evaluate than the acquisition utterances of the native English speakers. Furthermore, utterances that were assigned low comprehensibility ratings tended to take longer to speech processing process than moderately or highly comprehensible utterances. This study investigates the contribution of the temporal patterning of speech to the reduced intelligibility of foreign-accented utterances. Short English phrases spoken by a native Chinese speaker were instrumentally modified, using LPC resynthesis and dynamic time warping, so as to align the durat Short English phrases spoken by a native Chinese speaker were instrumentally modified, using LPC resynthesis and dynamic time warping, so as to align the duration of acoustic segments with tokens of the same phrases spoken by a native English speaker, while retaining the spectral and source characteristics of the Chinese speaker. Show Context Citation Context The way they speak: A social psychological perspective on the stigma of nonnative accents in communication by Agata Gluszek, John F. Dovidio - In , " The present review seeks to bridge research on accents, stigma, and communication by examining the empirical literature on nonnative accents, considering the perspectives of both speakers and listeners. They consider the role of communicative processes in the manner in which accents influence people and identify social and contextual factors related to accents that affect the speaker, the listener, and the interaction between them. The authors propose a framework of stigma of accents and possible future avenues of research to examine the social psychological and communicative effects of accents. They also discuss implications for stigma of other types of accents e. Understanding how stigma of accents and communication affect each other provides a new theoretical approach to studying this type of stigma and can eventually lead to interventions. However, to our knowledge nosstudies have examined the extent to which the effects ofsfamiliarity are driven by cognitive adjustment e. Communicating information in conversations: The purpose of this study was to compare the amount of infor-mation sent by the speaker, received and retrieved by the listener in inter- and intra-cultural conversations. Three hypotheses were tested: Participants were 40 Canadian and 40 Chinese university students, and they were randomly assigned to one of the four experimental con-ditions. Each dyad engaged in two medical conversations, which were videotaped upon the consent of the participants. The nature of the conversations resembled physician-patient face-to-face interactions. Results from written tests immediately following the conversations provided strong support for Hypothesis 1 and 2, and results from viewing the videotapes provided partial support for Hypothesis 3. Based on the findings, one may argue that inter-cultural communication dif-fers significantly from intra-cultural communication in the amount of information Intelligibility, comprehensibility, and accentedness of L2 speech: This study investigated how listener experience extent of previous exposure to non-native speech and semantic context degree and type of semantic information available influence measures of intelligibility, comprehensibility, and accentedness of non-native L2 speech. Participants were 24 native English-speaking listeners, half experienced and half inexperienced with L2 speech, who transcribed and rated 90 English utterances spoken by six English and six Mandarin speakers. The utterances varied along two dimensions: Listeners with more experience understood more speech from the L1 and L2 speakers than listeners with less experience but did not rate it differently in comprehensibility and accentedness. All listeners understood and rated the utterances from L2 speakers based on the semantic context available: These findings have implications for evaluating learner pronunciation and for training learners in successful L2 communication strategies. A primer on accent discrimination in the Canadian context by Murray J. Negative attitudes toward

foreign-accented speech have led to discrimination against second-language users in Canada. This article reviews aspects of the Canadian human rights process as they pertain to language and accent, and identifies three types of accent discrimination arising in human rights cases: Les attitudes negatives face ala prononciation avec accent etranger sont sources de discrimination contre les locuteurs de langue seconde au Canada. Cet article etudie des aspects des droits de la personne au Canada dans le contexte de la langue et des accents. Do Language Attitudes Determine Accent? Correlation analyses confirm the significance of age of onset and length of immersion. Correlation analyses confirm the significance of age of onset and length of immersion, as well as learner attitudes, including: A close examination of the data points to three main conclusions: Munro and Derwing have shown that poor accent ratings are associated with phonetic, phonemic and grammatical errors, as well as problems with intonation. To be sure, judgements Measuring the effect of listener expectations on speech evaluation by Okim Kang, Donald L. Rubin - Journal of Language and Social Psychology , " The linguistic stereotyping hypothesis holds that even brief samples of speech varieties associated with low-prestige groups can cue negative attributions regarding individual speakers. The converse phenomenon is reverse linguistic stereotyping RLS. The present study established a procedure for ascertaining a proclivity to RLS for individual listeners. In addition to RLS, variables reflecting degree of multicultural involvement e. Although the RLS measurement procedure outlined here requires more demanding administration than mere paper-and-pencil self-reports, it has the advantage of reflecting authentic RLS processes. Effects of training on the acousticâ€”phonetic representation of synthetic speech by Alexander L. Nusbaum, Kimberly Fenn , " Investigate training-related changes in acousticâ€”phonetic representation of consonants produced by a text-to-speech TTS computer speech synthesizer. Forty-eight adult listeners were trained to better recognize words produced by a TTS system. Nine additional untrained participants Nine additional untrained participants served as controls. Before and after training, participants were tested on consonant recognition and made pairwise judgments of consonant dissimilarity for subsequent multidimensional scaling MDS analysis. Word recognition training significantly improved performance on consonant identification, although listeners never received specific training on phoneme recognition. Some changes were consistent with current models of perceptual learning, but others were not. This paper reviews a series of studies on the effects of accent on second language listening comprehension L2 LC. It is shown that some of the studies have been misinterpreted as indicating the existence of an own, or local, accent advantage in L2 listening. From the review, it is clear that there From the review, it is clear that there is insufficient evidence to support such conclusions. Given previous research findings and current state of knowledge concerning the LC process, it is hypothesised that different but familiar accents should cause no problems for L2 listeners. This hypothesis is tested in an experiment featuring 63 Hong Kong school students. The results support the hypothesis. From the findings, it is argued that degree of familiarity is the crucial issue with regard to whether a particular accent causes LC problems for L2 listeners to English.

Chapter 3 : Foreign accent, comprehensibility, and intelligibility in the speech of second language learners

Foreign Accent, Comprehensibility, and Intelligibility in the Speech of Second Language Learners. Authors. Murray J. Munro, Simon Fraser University.

Rethinking obstacles to communication Tracey M. Derwing University of Alberta, Canada tracey. Munro Simon Fraser University, Canada mjmunro sfu. Our primary concern is with the latter, because of the strong social, psychological, and communicative consequences of speaking with an L2 accent. The decline of audiolingualism led to a concomitant marginalization of pronunciation research and teaching. It was believed that pronunciation instruction could not be effective, in part because of the unrealistic goal of native-like speech in L2 learners, and also because of research findings that suggested that instruction had a negligible impact on oral production. The recent revival of interest in pronunciation research has brought a change of focus away from native-like models toward easy intelligibility. The effects of this change have yet to be fully realized in L2 classrooms. Our presentation will relate the core issues of intelligibility, identity, social evaluation, and discrimination to appropriate pronunciation pedagogy for L2 learners. Of course, everyone has an accent, and no accent, native or non-native, is inherently better than any other. Because our research involves immigrant L2 speakers in western Canada, when we use the word ACCENT here, we refer to the ways in which their speech differs from that local variety of English and the impact of that difference on speakers and listeners. These learners share many characteristics with learners in other contexts, but each context entails its own idiosyncrasies. As a result, some, but not all, of our research findings are generalizable to other contexts. Accent has been blamed for all sorts of things. It has been seen as the cause of miscommunication, and it has been used as a cover-up for racism and other kinds of Revised version of a plenary paper presented on 31 March at the American Association of Applied Linguistics Conference, Washington, DC. It has even been viewed as a kind of disorder that requires remediation. We would like to sort through some of the misconceptions about accent and put it in its place. Then we discuss the teaching and learning of pronunciation and how research can inform pedagogy. We will also address social aspects of accent, especially identity. Sometimes they are extremely accurate and other times they are not. On body characteristics, the results are mixed. Collins asked women to judge whether men had hairy chests, muscular bodies and wide shoulders, based on voices alone. The women agreed with one another on who had the hairiest chests and most muscular bodies, but their guesses bore no relationship to the actual body characteristics of the speakers. One dimension that listeners are amazingly sensitive to is the presence or absence of a foreign accent. For example, Flege played increasingly shorter speech samples to phonetically untrained listeners and found that they could reliably distinguish native English from French-accented speakers on the basis of only 30 ms of speech. You can see in Figure 1 that people performed well above chance. This was true whether they heard passages of 36 words or even a single word played backwards. We have done backwards speech identification experiments using different accents, different sample lengths and neutralized rate differences. What are they reacting to? Clearly, no segmental, lexical or grammatical information is available, and even suprasegmental factors cannot fully explain the results. One aspect of speech that does remain available in backwards speech is voice quality. Transferring these configurations from an L1 into an L2 may be an important source of accentedness. This aspect of L2 speech has not received much attention and deserves more focus in future research. Having an accent is not a sign of overall low proficiency. People who are indistinguishable in other ways from native speakers e. And, like other researchers, we assess it by having listeners rate speech on a Likert scale. This dimension is a judgment of difficulty and not a measure of how much actually gets understood. Our research shows that comprehensibility ratings correspond to the amount of time, or the effort it takes to process utterances, even if they are perfectly understood in the end. This is true whether they are native or non-native listeners. Reliability is almost always high, with intraclass correlations of above 0. For this reason, judgment data are the gold standard; what listeners perceive

is ultimately what matters most. In the numerous studies we have done involving judgments of this sort, over a wide range of speech sample types, L1s, and listeners, we obtain the same findings. This is a very reliable approach to assessing accentedness and comprehensibility. Intelligibility is extremely important but somewhat difficult to assess. How do you measure how much someone has understood? While there are many ways of assessing intelligibility, no one way is fully adequate. None of these methods tells the whole story, but they all show that intelligibility differs from accentedness and comprehensibility. The accentedness ratings for these utterances fell across the range, so that even perfectly intelligible utterances were judged to be heavily accented, obtaining ratings of 7, 8 or 9 on the scale. This is one of the most robust findings that has emerged from every study we have done on intelligibility: In other words, it is possible to be completely intelligible and yet be perceived as having a heavy accent. That is, speakers who are unintelligible will always be rated as having a heavy accent. In general, comprehensibility ratings are more closely related to intelligibility than accentedness ratings. As one would expect, then, comprehensibility and accentedness are also quite distinct. The accentedness ratings tend to be harsher and clustered around the heavily accented end of the scale, while the comprehensibility ratings tend to be clustered at the low, easy-to-understand end. Clearly these are distinct constructs. In addition, these dimensions are not static properties; they can change over time, on their own, and as a result of instruction. However, pronunciation is learnable. These were low oral proficiency learners enrolled in general ESL classes. Even in the absence of specific pronunciation training over one year, both groups made significant improvement in their production of the vowel in pit. As Pica noted, the generally-accepted goal of pronunciation teaching was native-like speech, but that goal was clearly unrealistic. Few studies showed that pronunciation instruction could improve intelligibility, because that was not the goal. Also, communicative language teaching de-emphasized pronunciation; it was assumed that sufficient input would help learners improve oral production. However, a serious misinterpretation of this situation was the notion that pronunciation teaching is ineffective. That is not to say that no one was working in the area of pronunciation in the 80s and 90s. Nonetheless, as Brown noted, very little research on issues of L2 pronunciation was carried out in this period. Even that venerable source of misinformation, the Wikipedia, had an entry as late as claiming that pronunciation does not show any significant response to explicit teaching. Though these findings are important, merely knowing that pronunciation training can be effective is insufficient. We have to know where to put the focus. If not, there is a risk of teaching things that are salient, but which will not result in actual improvement in communication for the speaker. In other words, we might modify accent without improving intelligibility or comprehensibility. Here we have to look to research to explore the contributions of specific aspects of prosody and segmentals. Recent work by Zielinski demonstrates the relevance of syllable stress and segments in strong syllables. Another proposal for investigation is functional load. Catford and Brown independently predicted that certain segmental contrasts are more important to intelligibility than others. We tested the role of functional load in comprehensibility judgments and found what we see in Figure 5. Indeed, high functional load FL errors caused a greater reduction in comprehensibility ratings than did low functional load errors. This is preliminary work; we need much more research on what matters most to intelligibility and comprehensibility. Both groups learned what they were taught, but the global group received better comprehensibility ratings on extemporaneous speech at the end of the study. Any instructor can devote only limited time to pronunciation in a general L2 class. How we view pronunciation determines how we approach it and how we decide who is qualified to teach it. If we take the medical view that an accent is a disorder or abnormality, then it falls under the purview of medical professionals. Unfortunately some people think this way: The medical view overlaps somewhat with the business view. One speech pathologist from an accent and stuttering improvement institute has urged others to reinvent themselves by looking for new market niches, particularly accent reduction. Incorporating this niche into existing businesses leads to some very peculiar combinations of services. For example, one company is a cancer rehabilitation centre, where patients can get their tumours sized. They can also get support for feeding and swallowing difficulties AND they can get accent modification. Some of the programs in the accent reduction industry show all the hallmarks of

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MURRAY J. MUNRO

charlatanism and quackery. Fear-mongering is common, and we frequently see exaggerated or false claims. For instance, some businesses produce books and web courses claiming to eliminate a foreign accent within specific periods of time; 28 days is a popular number. There is no empirical evidence that this ever actually happens. Often these companies use pseudo- medical jargon and mysterious techniques with no known empirical basis. Preposterous advice is also dispensed on the Internet. One website “ and there are scores of these “ makes some ludicrous suggestions, such as avoiding nasal sounds, speaking slowly, and speaking all the letters in a word. This advice is not helpful. As for the last point, it is certainly true that speaking all the letters in a word will make a big difference “ especially for words like through, phlegm, knee, debris and aligned. Clearly, we do not favour the medical or business views see Derwing Others, who struggle with intelligibility, need nothing more than basic pronunciation instruction that could be incorporated into a general L2 curriculum. There is nothing special, mysterious, or medical about their pronunciation needs.

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Chapter 4 : Phonology and Second Language Acquisition | Edited by Jette G. Hansen Edwards and Mary L

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The bilingual advantage in phonetic learning. *Language and Cognition* Effects of orthographic forms on pronunciation in experienced instructed second language learners. Investigating the acquisition of phonology in a third language – a state of the science and an outlook for the future. *International Journal of Multilingualism* Bilingual perceptual benefits of experience with a heritage language. Putting accent in its place: Rethinking obstacles to communication. Towards a perceptually assessed corpus of non-native French. *International Journal of Learner Corpus Research* 3: Study Abroad in Central Spain: The Development of Regional Phonological Features. *Foreign Language Annals* ERP indices of vowel processing in Spanish-English bilinguals. Recent publications on research methods in second language acquisition. *Second Language Research* Transfer, similarity or lack of awareness? *Research in Language* Can corrective feedback on second language speech perception errors affect production accuracy?. In *The Encyclopedia of Applied Linguistics*, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1539300912000000> Journal of Cognitive Neuroscience Tests of a dual-system model of speech category learning. Inter-generational transmission in a minority language setting: Stop consonant production by Bangladeshi heritage children and adults. *International Journal of Bilingualism* Studies in Second Language Acquisition Communicative focus on second language phonetic form: Explicit and implicit aptitude effects on second language speech learning: Scrutinizing segmental and suprasegmental sensitivity and performance via behavioural and neurophysiological measures. Phonological processing in late second language learners: The effects of proficiency and task. The role of orthographic input in second language German: Please note that it may not be complete. Sources presented here have been supplied by the respective publishers. Any errors therein should be reported to them.

Chapter 5 : CiteSeerX " Citation Query The effect of familiarity on the comprehensibility of nonnative spe

The findings suggest that although strength of foreign accent is correlated with perceived comprehensibility and intelligibility, a strong foreign accent does not necessarily reduce the comprehensibility or intelligibility of L2 speech.

Processing time, accent and comprehensibility in the perception of native and foreign-accented speech by Murray J. Speech , " The Mandarin listeners assessed the truth value of the statements, and assigned accent and comprehensibility ratings. Response latency data indicated that the second language Mandarin-accented utterances required more time to evaluate than the acquisition utterances of the native English speakers. Furthermore, utterances that were assigned low comprehensibility ratings tended to take longer to speech processing process than moderately or highly comprehensible utterances. The way they speak: A social psychological perspective on the stigma of nonnative accents in communication by Agata Gluszek, John F. Dovidio - In , " The present review seeks to bridge research on accents, stigma, and communication by examining the empirical literature on nonnative accents, considering the perspectives of both speakers and listeners. They consider the role of communicative processes in the manner in which accents influence people and identify social and contextual factors related to accents that affect the speaker, the listener, and the interaction between them. The authors propose a framework of stigma of accents and possible future avenues of research to examine the social psychological and communicative effects of accents. They also discuss implications for stigma of other types of accents e. Understanding how stigma of accents and communication affect each other provides a new theoretical approach to studying this type of stigma and can eventually lead to interventions. Show Context Citation Context This paper reports on an investigation of podcasting as a tool for honing pronunciation skills in intermediate language learning. A total of 22 students in intermediate German and French courses made five scripted pronunciation recordings throughout the semester. After the pronunciation recordings, students produced three extemporaneous podcasts. The podcast project, however, was perceived positively by students, and they appreciated the feedback given for each scripted recording and enjoyed opportunities for creativity during extemporaneous podcasts. Future studies might seek to delineate more specific guidelines or examine how teacher involvement might be adapted to the use of podcasts as a companion to classroom instruction. A primer on accent discrimination in the Canadian context by Murray J. Negative attitudes toward foreign-accented speech have led to discrimination against second-language users in Canada. This article reviews aspects of the Canadian human rights process as they pertain to language and accent, and identifies three types of accent discrimination arising in human rights This article reviews aspects of the Canadian human rights process as they pertain to language and accent, and identifies three types of accent discrimination arising in human rights cases: Les attitudes negatives face ala prononciation avec accent etranger sont sources de discrimination contre les locuteurs de langue seconde au Canada. Cet article etudie des aspects des droits de la personne au Canada dans le contexte de la langue et des accents. Rather, familiarity with particular accents and particular speakers probabl Measuring the effect of listener expectations on speech evaluation by Okim Kang, Donald L. Rubin - Journal of Language and Social Psychology , " The linguistic stereotyping hypothesis holds that even brief samples of speech varieties associated with low-prestige groups can cue negative attributions regarding individual speakers. The converse phenomenon is reverse linguistic stereotyping RLS. The present study established a procedure for ascertaining a proclivity to RLS for individual listeners. In addition to RLS, variables reflecting degree of multicultural involvement e. Although the RLS measurement procedure outlined here requires more demanding administration than mere paper-and-pencil self-reports, it has the advantage of reflecting authentic RLS processes. Selecting segmental errors in non-native Dutch for optimal pronunciation training by Ambra Neri, Catia Cucchiari, Helmer Strik , " The current emphasis in second language teaching lies in the achievement of communicative effectiveness. In line with this approach, pronunciation training is nowadays geared towards helping learners avoid serious pronunciation errors, rather than eradicating the finest traces of foreign accent. However, to devise optimal

pronunciation training programmes, systematic information on these pronunciation problems is needed, especially in the case of the development of Computer Assisted Pronunciation Training systems. The research reported on in this paper is aimed at obtaining systematic information on segmental pronunciation errors made by learners of Dutch with different mother tongues. In particular, we aimed at identifying errors that are frequent, perceptually salient, persistent, and potentially hampering to communication. To achieve this goal we conducted analyses on different corpora of speech produced by L2 learners under different conditions. This resulted in a robust inventory of pronunciation errors that can be used for designing efficient pronunciation training programs.

Phonological Awareness and Speech Comprehensibility: An Exploratory Study by H. This study examined whether differences in phonological awareness were related to differences in speech comprehensibility. Seventeen adults who learned English as a foreign language EFL in academic settings completed 14 tests of phonological awareness that measured their explicit knowledge of English phonological structures, and three tests of phonological short term memory. The same participants also read aloud a passage and narrated picture stories. There was a strong positive correlation between composite phonological awareness scores and rated comprehensibility and between composite phonological awareness scores and phonological short term memory. The correlation between rated comprehensibility and phonological short term memory was not significant. The study offers support to the view that phonological awareness is related to differences in speech comprehensibility and the results suggest that form-focused instruction in phonology may contribute to the comprehensibility of EFL speakers. In the context of a project developing software for pronunciation practice and feedback for Mandarin-speaking learners of English, a key issue is how to decide which features of pronunciation to focus on in giving feedback. Native speaker raters assessed the comprehensibility of recorded utterances, pinpointed areas of difficulty and then rated for nativeness the same utterances, but after segmental information had been filtered out. For most of us, speaking in a non-native language involves deviating to some extent from native pronunciation norms. However, the detailed basis for foreign accent FA remains elusive, in part due to methodological challenges in isolating segmental from suprasegmental factors. The current study examines the role of segmental features in conveying FA through the use of a generative approach in which accent is localised to single consonantal segments. Three techniques are evaluated: All techniques were capable of generating accented words, but to differing degrees. Naturally-produced speech led to the strongest FA ratings and synthetic speech the weakest, which we interpret as the outcome of over-smoothing. Nevertheless, the flexibility offered by synthesising localised accent encourages further development of the method. Foreign accent, speech synthesis, splicing 1. Listeners also indicated which aspects of accent were most noticeable. Interestingly, these open responses indicated segmental errors as the phonetic cues most strongly reflecting FA. Foreign accents in synthetic speech: Interspeech , " This paper addresses the generation and evaluation of foreign-accented speech in concatenative text-to-speech TTS synthesis. We describe three possible methods of building a Spanish-accented English voice, and evaluate and compare them with respect to preference, intelligibility, and smoothness. Effects of speaking rate and content are also examined. It is found that although using an unmodified Spanish voice to read English text is possible, the result is not highly intelligible. With some modifications to the linguistic model, a relatively high level of comprehensibility and smoothness can be achieved, not differing widely from ratings given to a native voice at a comparable stage of development. Listeners in perceptual experiments were very consistent in their preference rankings of the three voices, showing that differences in voicebuilding method are both detectable and contribute to synthesis quality. Schmid and Yeni-Komshian propose a number of explanations for this phenomenon, including that listeners subconsciously alter their threshold of acceptability, and that while the non-native speech ma

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MURRAY J. MUNRO

Chapter 6 : Table of Contents: Phonology and second language acquisition

The results are discussed in terms of the "costs" of speaking with a foreign accent, and the relevance of such factors as accent and comprehensibility to second language teaching. Keywords foreign accent, intelligibility, Mandarin, second language acquisition, speech processing.

Foreign accent, comprehensibility, and intelligibility in the speech of second language learners. The magazine publisher is the copyright holder of this article and it is reproduced with permission. Further reproduction of this article in violation of the copyright is prohibited. As early as , Abercrombie argued that most "language learners need no more than a comfortably intelligible pronunciation" p. Although this view has been echoed by Gilbert , Pennington and Richards , Crawford , and Morley , there is intolerance for foreign accents in some circles, particularly employers Sato, This discrimination appears to have acted as a catalyst for the rise of accent reduction programs, which aim to reduce or eliminate foreign accents altogether. These programs inherently suggest that an accent is, in itself, a bad thing, and is subject to treatment, intervention, or even eradication in much the same way as a language pathology. The popularity of accent reduction programs may be supported by a general bias against foreign accentedness in speech. Numerous studies have shown that native-speaker NS listeners tend to downgrade nonnative speakers NNSs simply because of foreign accent e. Thus, second language instructors, curriculum designers, and writers of textbooks may feel obliged to focus attention on accent reduction, without regard to specific features that may interfere with intelligibility, because any accentedness is seen as a problem. This assumption is manifested in tests of spoken performance that equate accentedness with a lack of intelligibility e. However, there is as yet no indication that reduction of accent necessarily entails increased intelligibility. The effects of nonnative-like pronunciations on intelligibility are far from clear. Gynan , for instance, found that listeners judged that the phonology of Spanish NNSs of English interfered with comprehension to a greater extent than grammatical errors did. Ensz , on the other hand, found grammar was more important than pronunciation for comprehensibility when American NNSs were judged by NSs of French. In a study of English-accented German, Politzer found that vocabulary errors affected listening comprehension most significantly, followed by grammar and then by pronunciation. Nonetheless, Fayer and Krasinski observed that nonnative patterns in pronunciation and hesitation were very strong contributors to listener distraction and annoyance. In their own study, Albrechtsen et al. The apparent contradictions in all of these studies may be at least partially explained by the differences in the target languages under study, as well as by differences in methodology cf. The effects of second language accent on intelligibility remain unresolved.

Chapter 7 : Dr. Murray Munro - Department of Linguistics - Simon Fraser University

a strong foreign accent does not necessarily interfere with intelligibility, although NSs may require extra processing time to understand NNS speech, which may lead to lower perceived comprehensibility ratings (Munro & Derwing, b).

Chapter 8 : Bibliography on accent perception / L2 speech research

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Chapter 9 : CiteSeerX " Citation Query Accent, intelligibility, and comprehensibility: Evidence from four L

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