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4pSC1. Using hyperarticulation to quantify interaction between discourse functions. Valerie Freeman (Dept. of Linguist., Univ. of Washington, C-104 Padelford Hall, Box 354360, Seattle, WA 98195, valerief@uw.edu)

Social factors are known to affect speech production, but in discourse and conversation analytic branches of sociolinguistics, quantitative measures are not as common as qualitative observations. This study uses acoustic measures of hyperarticulation to quantify the effects of two interacting discourse functions: new-information signaling and stance expression. For each of five speakers in an hour-long political talk show, content analysis was performed on all phrases repeated three or more times or more than one neutral from stance-expressing tokens and new from given repetitions of those tokens. Word, syllable, and vowel duration were measured from spectrograms; formant (LPC) and pitch (autocorrelation) values were measured at onset, 20%, 50%, 80%, and offset of stressed vowels. Preliminary results from repeated measures analysis of variance suggest that stance is indeed a significant predictor of hyperarticulation which interacts with newness for at least some speakers. This work shows one way that acoustic measures of hyperarticulation can be combined with parsing for newness to identify stance expression in natural speech or produce it in synthesized speech.

4pSC2. Use of linguistic knowledge in the recognition of reduced words: Effects of age and high-frequency hearing loss. Esther Janse (Max Planck Inst. of Psycholinguistics, P.O. Box 310, 6500 AH Nijmegen, The Netherlands, Esther.Janse@mpi.nl) and Mirjam Ernestus (Radboud Univ. Nijmegen, Nijmegen, The Netherlands)

Older adults have more language experience than young adults and may therefore rely more strongly on transitional probabilities between words for spoken word recognition. We investigated recognition of acoustically reduced words (such as “promised”) that were followed by a word with which it either formed a fixed expression (“promised land”) or not (“promised lamp”). Our research questions were (a) whether older adults show a greater following-word context effect on target word recognition than young adults; (b) whether low-pass filtering the stimuli would bring about a stronger reliance on following context in young adults; and (c) whether there are any interactions with the morphological complexity of the target word (e.g., “promised” versus “fat”), because complex and longer words can be more reduced. Data analysis (recognition accuracy and RTs) showed that words were better recognized when part of a fixed expression, and that older adults benefited more in RT than young adults (equal benefit in accuracy), but only for the morphologically complex target words. The young adults with simulated hearing loss, however, benefited less than the other two groups (both in accuracy and RT). These results suggest that signal degradation does not immediately lead to greater reliance on following-word context.

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