Effects of talker experience on perceived clarity and acoustic features of clear versus conversational speech. Sarah Hargus Ferguson, Taylor Denise Widener, and Tanner Mackey (Dept. of Communication Sciences and Disorders, Univ. of Utah, 390 South 1530 East, Room 1201, Salt Lake City, UT, 84112, sarah.ferguson@hsc.utah.edu)

Studies of the 41-talker Ferguson Clear Speech Database (Ferguson, 2004) have found no relationship between talkers’ self-reported experience communicating with individuals with hearing loss and the magnitude of the clear speech effect for vowels presented in noise. That is, talkers with no experience talking to people with hearing loss showed just as much clear speech vowel intelligibility benefit as talkers with extensive experience. The present study explored whether talker experience effects might emerge with more meaningful materials. Clear and conversational sentences produced by 8 talkers (4 with extensive experience and 4 with no experience) were presented in quiet to young listeners with normal hearing, who rated the clarity of each sentence on a 7-point scale. Several acoustic measures were also performed on these sentences. While the average size of the clarity difference between clear and conversational speech was similar for the two groups, talker experience effects were found for some of the acoustic measures. However, considerable variability was observed among the talkers, particularly within the "no experience" group. Relationships between acoustic measures, clarity ratings, and talker experience will be discussed. The present data will also be compared to those from an earlier study using a different set of 8 talkers.

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