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Acoustique canadienne est publié quatre fois par an, en mars, juin, septembre et décembre. Cette revue trimestrielle est envoyée gratuitement aux membres individuels de l'Association canadienne d'acoustique (ACA) et aux abonnés institutionnels. L'Acoustique canadienne publie des articles arbitrés et des rubriques sur tous les aspects de l'acoustique et des vibrations. Ceci comprend la recherche, les recensions des travaux, les nouvelles, les offres d'emploi, les nouveaux produits, les activités, etc. Les articles concernant les résultats inédits ou les applications de l'acoustique ainsi que les articles de synthèse, les tutoriels et les exposées techniques, en français ou en anglais, sont les bienvenus. L'Association canadienne d'acoustique a sélectionné Paypal comme solution pratique pour le paiement en ligne de vos frais d'abonnement. Paypal prend en charge un large éventail de méthodes de paiement (Visa, Mastercard, Amex, compte bancaire, etc) et ne nécessite pas que vous ayez déjà un compte avec eux. Si vous désirez procéder à un paiement par chèque de votre abonnement, merci d'utiliser le formulaire d'adhésion du site de l'ACA et de retourner ce dernier avec votre chèque ou mandat au secrétaire de l'association (voir adresse ci-dessus). - Canadian Acoustical Association/ Association Canadienne d'Acoustique P.B. 74068 Ottawa, Ontario K1M 2H9 Canada - - - secretary@caa-aca.ca - Dr. Roberto Racca

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Appel à l'action... encore! Call for action... again!

Ce numéro de mars sera le dernier, avant décembre, contenant des articles de fond, puisque le numéro de juin sera consacré à un numéro spécial consacré à l'acoustique dans la grande région de Toronto tandis que celui de septembre contiendra les actes de notre conférence, la Semaine canadienne de l'acoustique.

Nous avons également corrigé une erreur de script dans l'annuaire des membres qui faisait en sorte qu'aucun des membres dont le champ affiliation était vide n'apparaissait. Nous sommes désolés pour cette erreur et nous vous invitons à vérifier que vos coordonnées, soient bien à jour. Ainsi que vous le réalisez, nous sommes une association de bénévoles et nous comptons maintenant beaucoup sur nos membres pour visiter notre site web à <http://jcaa.caa-aca.ca>, certainement pour y lire leur journal sous forme électronique ou y consulter chacun des articles paru durant les 41 dernières années, mais aussi pour maintenir leurs coordonnées à jour!

Jérémie Voix
Rédacteur-en-chef

This March issue will be the last one, before December, that will include peer-reviewed articles, as the upcoming June issue will be a special one dedicated to acoustics in the greater Toronto area and as the September issue will be used for the proceedings of our Acoustics Week in Canada conference.

We fixed a database script glitch in the membership directory that prevented members with an empty affiliation field to show up. We are sorry for that mistake and we now invite you to make sure that your contact information is up-to-date. As you know, we are a volunteer-based association and we now count on our members to visit the journal's website, at <http://jcaa.caa-aca.ca> to read their electronic journal issues (or access one of any articles published over the last 41 years), but also to maintain their contact information up-to-date!

Jérémie Voix
Editor

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President's Message Message du Président



Special thanks to last year's conference organizing team led by Sean Pecknold, Michael Kieffe and Steve Aiken. The meeting, held in downtown Halifax, featured two and a half days of engaging plenaries, technical papers, and exhibitor showcases, as well as memorable social events at the Halifax Central Library and Pier 21. Hearty congratulations to our student presentation award winners: Fabien Bonnet, Graham Warner, and Jessica McKellar.

This year, the Acoustics Week in Canada will travel west to Vancouver. Kathy Pichora-Fuller and Clair Wakefield are serving as co-conveners. The abstract deadline is June 15th and the actual meeting will take place Sep 21-23. More information is available at <http://awc.caa-aca.ca>. Please note that these dates are slightly out of step with our usual timeframe. This change reflects our intention to allow AWC to dovetail with the World Congress of Audiology (WCA), which is also taking place in Vancouver (Sep 18-21). Information about WCA is available here: <http://www.wca2016.ca>

One other important meeting taking place this year is the International Congress of Acoustics. The triennial meeting will be held in Buenos Aires (Sep 5-9). Go to <http://ica2016.org.ar/> for more information. The abstract deadline is March 1st, 2016.

At the last general meeting, we voted to maintain a slate of 12 directors in total (including the 4 officers). Karen Turner (Protec Hearing) did not seek re-election. All prior members of the board were acclaimed, as was our new director Joana Rocha from Carleton's Department of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering.

Frank A. Russo, CAA President

Un grand merci à l'équipe organisatrice de la conférence de l'an dernier, dirigée par Sean Pecknold, Michael Kieffe et Steve Aiken. La rencontre, qui s'est tenue au centre ville d'Halifax, comportait deux journées et demi de séances plénières, d'articles techniques, de présentations d'exposants, ainsi que de mémorables événements sociaux à la Bibliothèque centrale d'Halifax et au Pier 21. Nous présentons nos sincères félicitations aux lauréats des prix des meilleurs présentations étudiantes: Fabien Bonnet, Graham Warner, et Jessica McKellar.

Cette année, la Semaine canadienne de l'acoustique voyage vers l'ouest jusqu'à Vancouver. Kathy Pichora-Fuller et Clair Wakefield seront les coorganisateur. La date limite de soumission pour les résumés est le 15 juin. La rencontre aura lieu du 21 au 23 septembre. De plus amples informations sont disponibles sur <http://awc.caa-aca.ca>. Vous remarquerez que ces dates sont légèrement décalées par rapport à notre calendrier habituel. Notre intention est de suivre le Congrès mondial d'audiologie qui a lieu à Vancouver du 18 au 21 septembre. Vous pourrez trouver plus d'information sur leur site internet : <http://www.wca2016.ca>.

La réunion triennale du Congrès international de l'acoustique se tiendra à Buenos Aires (5-9 sept.). Pour plus d'information veuillez visiter <http://ica2016.org.ar/>. La date limite pour envoyer un résumé est le 1^{er} mars 2016.

À la dernière assemblée générale, nous avons voté et décidé de maintenir un conseil de 12 administrateurs (dont 4 officiers). Karen Turner (Protec Hearing) n'a pas posé sa candidature pour la réélection. Tous les autres membres du conseils ont été réélus par acclamation, incluant le nouvel administrateur Joana Rocha, du Département de génie mécanique et aérospatial de Carleton.

Frank A. Russo, Président de l'ACA



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THE NEW CSA Z94.2 STANDARD: HEARING PROTECTION DEVICES — PERFORMANCE, SELECTION, CARE, AND USE IS NOW PUBLISHED

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Abstract

One of the most widely referenced acoustical standards in Canada is CSA Standard Z94.2, “Hearing Protection Devices – Performance, Selection, Care, and Use”. CSA issued the 7th edition in 2015 and there have been significant changes. The standard still has the ABC system but adds significant discussion on NRR and SNR (SF84) including the appropriate methods and derating needed in estimating actual noise exposure from these descriptors. It also discusses “Field Attenuation Estimation Systems (FAES)”, which allow performance measurement on actual users. It also meshes with the new standard Z1007, Management of Hearing Loss Prevention Programs, which should be out in 2016.

1 Introduction

After 12 years there is now a new version of CSA Standard Z94.2, “Hearing Protection Devices – Performance, Selection, Care, and Use”. Here is how CSA describes the new standard:

“This is the seventh edition of CSA Z94.2, Hearing Protection Devices - Performance, Selection, Care, and Use. It supersedes previous editions published in 2002, 1994, 1984, 1979, 1974, and 1965.

This edition expands on performance requirements and the rating schemes that might help the user select hearing protection devices. It now includes the widely used noise reduction rating (NRR) and an applicable derating scheme.

This edition no longer includes physical performance and related testing requirements (such performance is no longer sought by Canadian users). It addresses acoustical performance measurements and includes revisions in the packaging marking requirements to clarify the use of the various ratings.

Clauses 8 to 12 regarding the selection, care, and use of hearing protection devices (HPDs) have been expanded to include issues related to style and functions of hearing protectors not mentioned in previous editions, as well as the potential use of field attenuation estimation systems (FAES). Table 4, which specifies the selection of HPDs based on noise exposure levels, now requires octave-band noise measurements at exposures greater than 105 dBA.

Although users of hearing protection devices are required to follow the criteria in Clauses 8 to 12 in order

projection obtained in the field. However, they have to be kept for different reasons: the NRR is very popular and, as requested by the EPA in the USA, every protector has to have it written in the package. As for the Class, it is mandated in the legislation of some provinces in Canada.

Data obtained using ANSI S12.6-1997, Method B are used to compute a new estimate, called the Single Number Rating (Subject Fit 84th Percentile), abbreviated SNR (SF84). SNR (SF84) is the protection provided at a nominal 84% confidence interval. For instance, a protector with SNR

(SF84) = 20, will provide 20 dB or more attenuation to 84% of the users in a well-run hearing conservation program. Calculations of the sound level of the protected ear using SNR (SF84) yields results much closer to what is obtained in the real world.

Procedures for the calculation of the three indices: Class, NRR and SNR (SF84) are included in the Standard.

Probably the most important sections for the user is Section 9 “Selection of Hearing Protection Devices” that provides guidance to persons using or preparing Hearing Protection Programs for a workplace. It gets into details of the different types of hearing protectors, their characteristics and applications. It touches subjects such as sound attenuation, attenuation at frequency extremes, double protection, overprotection, etc.

Section 9 deals also with the touchy issue of NRR and its derating. Derating is the procedure to obtain more realistic attenuation value of the protector. It is well known that NRR over-estimates real protection. Table 2 in the Standard provides directions on how to derate it, when using single and also double protection. In summary, the derating scheme is as follows:

For ear plugs - 50% of the nominal NRR

For ear muffs - 70% of the nominal NRR

For double protection (plug and muff) - 65% of the sum of the NRR that has the higher NRR +5 dB

Also, if the measurement of the environmental noise is performed in dBA, there is an additional 3 dB penalty (not the 7 dB as per NIOSH) based on updated typical industrial spectra.

Numerical examples are included to illustrate the procedure.

Section 10 “Specialized hearing protection devices” expands greatly the information provided in the previous standard and now covers devices using active noise control, flat frequency response, etc. to comply with this standard, reference should also be made to applicable local occupational health and safety regulations, which can require additional or superior performance.

The CSA Subcommittee on Hearing Protection recognizes that significant variations in performance (as great as ± 20 dB attenuation) can occur depending on how an HPD is used. This Standard emphasizes the importance of a comprehensive hearing loss prevention program, including hazard assessment and instruction on the careful selection, proper wearing, and high-quality maintenance of hearing protection devices. It is the opinion of the Subcommittee that wearing HPDs without proper selection, care, and use can result in significantly lower attenuation for the user than that obtained from the tests specified in this Standard.

This Standard should be used in conjunction with CSA Z1007, Management of Hearing Loss Prevention Programs, which is currently under development. CSA Z1007 covers all aspects of the creation and management of hearing loss prevention programs.”

2 The New Standard

Following are brief descriptions of some of the highlights of the standard:

“Test Procedures” requires tests to be performed following the procedures in any of the ANSI standards S3.19-1974 or S12.6-1997, Method B. The first of them was already required in the previous edition. It is included again, since it is needed for the calculation of the Class and the NRR of the protectors. Both descriptors usually overestimate considerably the

A brand new issue is treated in Section 13 “Field Attenuation Estimation Systems (FAES)”. NRR, Class and SNR (SF84) are obtained by calculations from results of test on many subjects and shouldn’t be applied to individuals. E.g., NRR = 20 doesn’t mean that every user will get 20 dB attenuation from using that particular protector. FAES, instead, is used to estimate the attenuation provided to an actual user of the protector. The result applies to that particular user at the time of the measurement.

FAES are becoming popular because of the speed and ease of their use and also because they can be useful for

training. For instance, a worker can be retested after the technician has explained the proper way of fitting the protector. At this time, most FAES are for ear plugs only. However, there are works in progress to extend their use for muffs too.

3 Certification

The issue of how to certify that a given hearing protector device meets the requirement of the Z94.2 standard is a very important one. However, CSA does not have at the present a process for certification of hearing protectors. In this present standard, certification is not a requirement. However, user may request from the manufacturer a document to ascertain that the results quoted, are obtained at a certified laboratory using standard procedures. Appendix C gives an example of how laboratory test results should be presented. The standard is written in a way to make it easy to include such a certification requirement in a future edition. Such a requirement would only be included if regulators, users and suppliers agree that there is a need for it.

4 Relation to Other Standards

Presently, CSA is involved in the writing of an all-encompassing standard, Z1007 - Hearing Loss Prevention Program Management. Hearing protection devices are an important part of this standard. Every effort was made to ensure that, although the emphasis of both standards is different, the technical content would still be the same.

5 In Summary

This new version of the standard provides more guidance to health and safety professionals by offering reliable, up-to-date information on hearing protection. The working group is hopeful that the new version will soon be mandated in provincial regulations, as the last version has been.

DESIGN AND VALIDATION OF A BONE CONDUCTION MUSIC PLAYBACK FOR BIKE HELMET

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Abstract

This paper presents a proof of concept to develop a system of bone transducers that would equip a bike helmet and provide music directly to the cochlea by bone conduction. The purpose of this design is to allow the ears of the wearer to remain unobstructed to ensure a comfortable music listening while maintaining auditory awareness and localisation capabilities. A review of the scientific literature about bone conduction shows that of all possible skull locations, the condyle of the jaw presents the lowest threshold level of auditory perception when excited. This determined the choice for the final mounting system and the process for the audiometric measurements. The main result is a digital filter obtained with the output magnitude of the transducers and designed to provide comfortable and unobstructed music listening.

Keywords: Product design, bone conduction, sound reproduction, vibrator, consumer product, hearing threshold

Résumé

Cet article présente une preuve de concept liée au développement d'un nouveau produit, un système d'ostéovibrateurs équipés sur un casque de vélo permettant de fournir directement une écoute musicale à la cochlée par conduction osseuse. L'objectif de ce design de produit est d'obtenir une écoute musicale confortable et sécuritaire en maintenant les oreilles de l'utilisateur non-obstruées et en garantissant que ses capacités de vigilance et de localisation auditives restent intactes. Une revue de la littérature scientifique et technique au sujet de la conduction osseuse montre que parmi toutes les localisations crâniennes possibles, les condyles au niveau du haut des mâchoires possèdent le plus bas seuil de perception auditive lors-qu'excités. Cela détermine le choix de système de fixation et la procédure à suivre pour les mesures audiométriques. Le résultat principal est un filtre obtenu en mesurant l'amplitude en sortie des transducteurs et conçu pour fournir une écoute musicale confortable et sécuritaire.

Mots-clés: Design de produit, conduction osseuse, reproduction sonore, vibrateurs, produit de consommation, seuils auditifs

1 Introduction

Accidents involving people wearing headphones while biking are frequent [1]. To resolve this safety issue and still permit bicyclists to listen to music, a music playback device that allows for the external ear to be unobstructed can be designed [2]. Bone conducting headphones are a viable type of system that could resolve this issue [3].

This work aims to ensure comfortable and safe music listening while bicycling. In order to choose the most reliable device to equip a bicycle helmet, research of different types of bone transducers adapted to music listening was required.

One aspect of the product design consisted in characterizing the bone transducers in terms of frequency response. The objective of this modeling is to see if the filter obtained could be used for the equalization of the sound emitted by the transducers.

Another aspect of particular interest is the skull behavior for this kind of excitation in the context of finding the ideal location where to affix the bone transducers within the helmet.

Issues that will be addressed in this study:

- How will the bone transducers be attached to the bicycle helmet once the ideal bone conduction location on the skull has been identified?
- How to bypass the fact that the instrumentation used for the measurements will probably not be calibrated for the studied bone transducers?
- Will the filter obtained after the measures be usable for the equalization of the sound emitted by the transducers?

After enunciating the main issue, the bibliographic studies pertaining to bone conduction will now be reviewed. Research includes documents dealing with the vibro-acoustic sensitivities of the skull and with the concept of headphones using a bone transducer.

This article begins with a background summary of the theory causing the bone conduction then the methodology and methods implemented during the feasibility study. This feasibility study determines on the one hand if the desired osteo-vibratory level is accessible by verifying those generated by different types of bone transducers. On the other hand the modeling of the selected bone transducers shows their characteristics such as the input voltage required and the vibratory output pressure applied on the skull together with the intracranial frequency response. This step is crucial for

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choosing the most appropriate location to place the bone transducers before subsequent measurements are taken.

In the concluding section this article presents the project results and an analysis dealing with the interpretation of these results and the validation of the concept.

2 Background

Bone conduction is a phenomenon in which sound propagates from an extra-cranial point to the cochlea through the skull.

Bone conduction is one of the reasons why someone's voice seems different for him or her when it is recorded and reproduced. Because the sound leaving the vocal chords (especially low frequencies) is also transmitted via skull bones to the inner ear, people perceive their own voice lower and deeper than others.

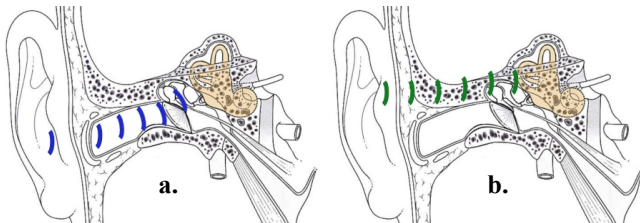


Figure 1: Air vs. bone conduction (adapted from Descouens [9])

The sound propagation of classical headphones (Figure 1.a.) is created by the vibrations of the molecules in the air and these vibrations are collected and concentrated by the pinna, which is the visible part of the ear. The waves then follow the ear canal and create vibrations in the eardrum. The middle ear ossicles amplify the signal and deliver it to the cochlea whose role is to analyse the sound wave before transmitting the relative information to the brain.

In the case of bone conduction headphones (Figure 1.b.), bone conduction transducers are placed onto the skull. The waves then propagate from the skull bones to the cochlea, which processes the sound signal.

Thus the major difference between bone conduction and the traditional headphone system is that the music and ambient sounds do not follow the same path. With bone conduction it is possible for the inner ear to perceive both sound sources almost simultaneously:

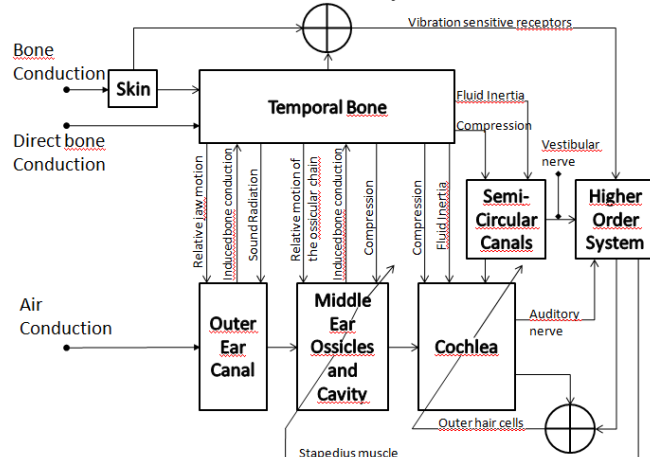
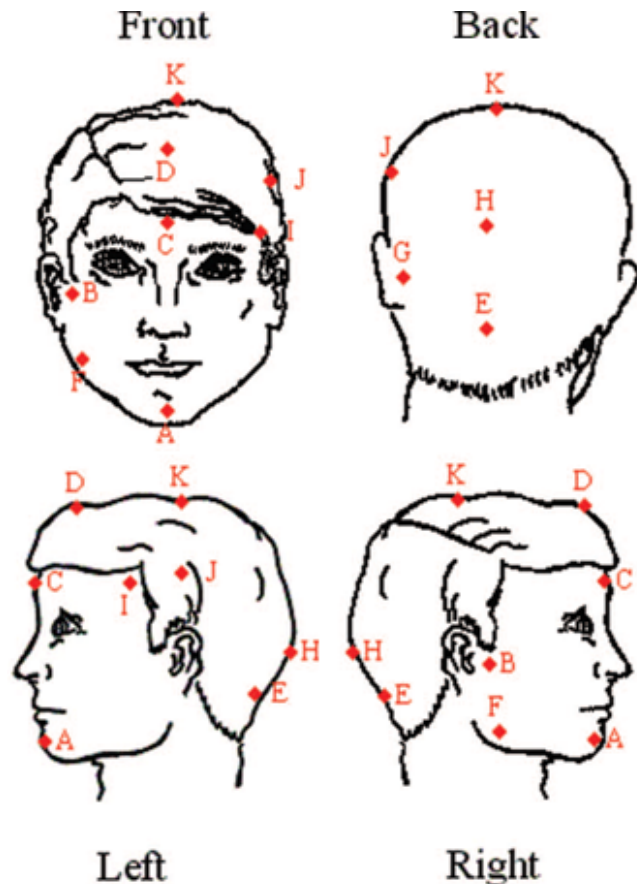


Figure 2: Modeling of the sound paths including bone and air conduction (adapted from Stenfelt [5])

3 Materials & Methods

3.1 Human skull susceptibility to vibrations

Past studies have demonstrated that the human skull has different frequency responses depending on where the vibratory force is applied [6] [7]. To see where this frequency response is the least attenuated, it was necessary to compare the values of threshold levels in the results of these studies for each application point. The cartography showing these different application points is displayed in Figure 3:



Key	
A	Chin
B	Condyle
C	FPz
D	Fz
E	Inion
F	Jaw Angle
G	Mastoid
H	Pz
I	Temple
J	T3
K	Vertex

Figure 3: Cartography of application points studied on a human skull (adapted from McBride [6])

Four of these application points were selected and compared:

- The condyle (B)
- The mastoid (G)
- The temple (I)
- The vertex (K)

These four application points present the lowest threshold levels according to the two consulted studies. The jaw angle (location F) point also has a suitable threshold level but as it is located in the lower jaw as chin (location A) point, it is subject to a greater standard deviation than the other locations and was not retained because of the unpredictable micro-deviations of the temporomandibular joint.

These results are crucial for knowing exactly where the mounting system for the transducers is to be placed on the bicycle helmet, so that it also stays in contact with the condyles.

3.2 Measurement of the auditory thresholds with the proposed transducers

After the bone transducer was selected, measurements of the auditory hearing thresholds were taken for 23 third octave band frequencies on fifteen normal hearing subjects aged 25 years on average (age range : 20 to 33 years of age). These subjects were self-reported as not suffering from any hearing impairments and can be therefore considered representative of the typical end-user of the developed technology. Yet the measurements were performed with a functional prototype of headphones staging the bone transducers exciting the condyles. The equipment used includes an audiometric booth (ECKEL Model C-27 S) and a clinical audiometer (Interacoustics Model AC 40).

As the audiometer used was calibrated for a clinical audiometric bone vibrator very different from the one used in this study, the hearing levels values acquired by the audiometer in dB HL could not be used directly nor could be adjusted for the proposed transducer, as such calibration curve did not yet exist. Instead, a more straightforward direct voltage measurement was performed as detailed in Section 3.3.

3.3 Measurement of the bone transducers frequency response

As the hearing thresholds were established using the proposed transducer for normal hearing test-subjects, it was assumed that the average response would correspond to a 0 dB HL level. It was then possible to measure with a true-RMS multimeter (AMPROBE Model 34XR-A) connected to the bone transducers, the RMS voltage that was generated by the audiometer when generating that average 0 dB HL stimuli across all third octave-band center frequencies. These voltage values could then be paired with the values of the auditory threshold levels measured earlier in order to assess the proposed bone transducer frequency response.

3.4 Design of an equalizing filter

To equalize the output level of the transducers following the frequency response established previously, a digital filter was set using the magnitude of the input voltage curve established in Section 3.3. The coefficients of the impulse response of the digital filter are obtained using a filter design and identification toolbox available within MATLAB computing software.

4 Results

4.1 Bone conducting hearing thresholds as a function of the application points

Human skull behaviour for the four chosen application points is illustrated on Figure 4 for each octave frequency band from 125 Hz to 8 kHz. The values were extracted from tables in the results sections of the previous cited articles [6] [7]:

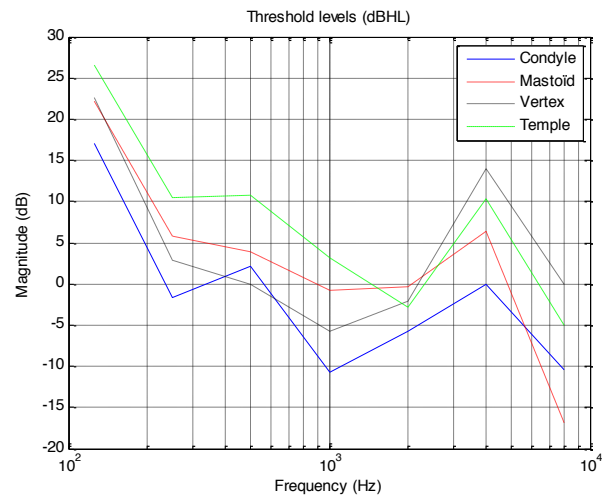


Figure 4: Hearing threshold levels at different locations on the human skull

Using these curves, it is possible to rank the application points from the lowest to the highest threshold level in order to find the most sensitive location for the bone transducers placement:

Table 1: Relative sensitivity of the chosen application points

F (Hz)	[125 ; 500]	[500 ; 2k]	[2k ; 8k]
Condyle	#1	#1	#1
Mastoid	#3	#3	#2
Vertex	#2	#2	#4
Temple	#4	#4	#3

4.2 Mechanical modeling of the proposed transducers and its fastening system

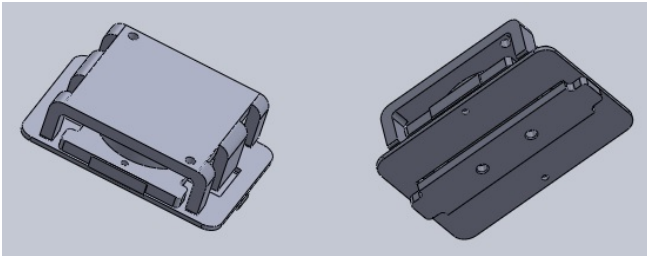


Figure 5: Bone transducers selected for the proposed application

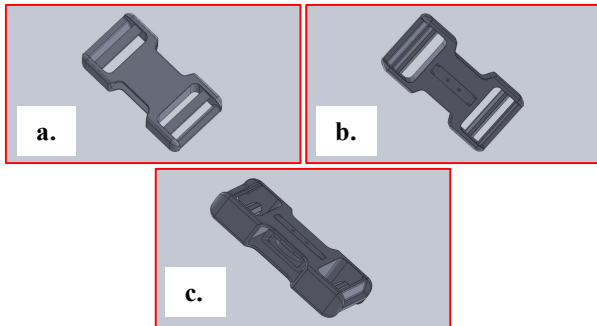


Figure 6: 3D model of the proposed fastening system a) back, b) front, c) sideways

The fastening system proposed for encapsulating the bone transducers modeled in Figure 5 is shown in Figure 6. The shape of this fastening system has been adapted to fit with the bicycle helmet straps. So it can be adjusted along the straps to ensure the contact with the condyles of any user.

4.3 Experimental validation of the proposed transducers design

Hearing threshold levels:

Figure 7 is an illustration of the result of the subjective measures of hearing threshold levels that were measured on fifteen normal hearing subjects. These measures were performed on each condyle for each third-octave band frequency from 125 Hz to 8 kHz:

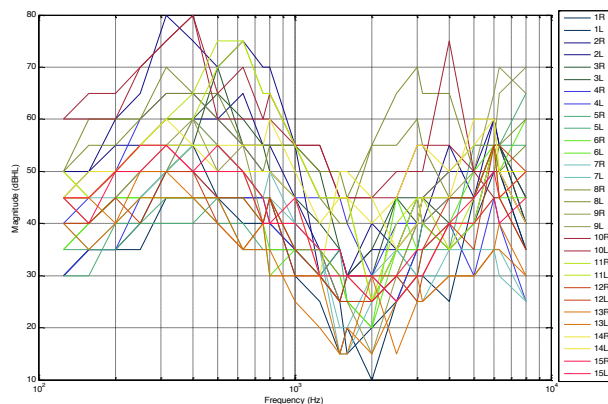


Figure 7: Individual audiometric levels measured on the 15 normal hearing subjects

The group average response curve presented in Figure 8 is an intermediate result that will be used to access the "zero" for the calibration of each bone transducer on the audiometric equipment. It is also a way to verify that the left and right bone transducers do indeed have the same frequency response:

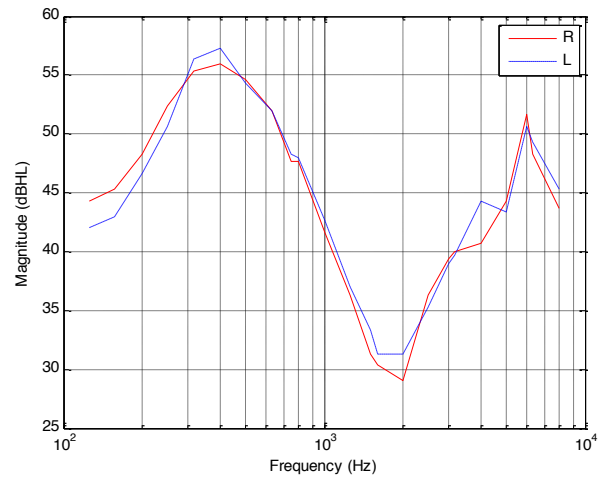


Figure 8: Audiometric levels – Left transducer in blue and right transducer in red

Average audiometric threshold levels for the left and right transducers are shown on Figure 9 as well as the statistical standard deviation of the hearing threshold measurements per third-octave band frequencies on the group subjects:

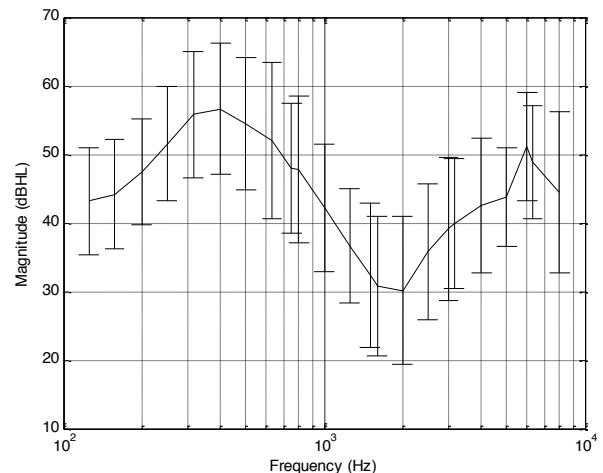


Figure 9: Audiometric threshold levels – Group mean and standard deviation per third-octave band frequencies

Input voltage:

The left and right input voltage of the bone transducers when generating a "flat" uniform stimulation are shown on Figure 10, reusing the response curves obtained in Figure 8:

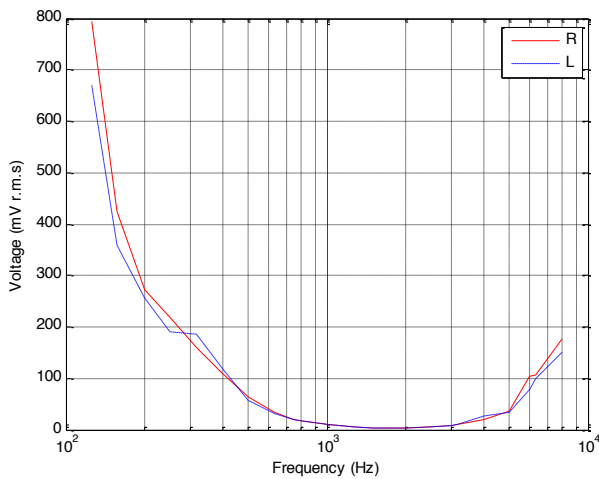


Figure 10: Bone transducers input voltage for a "flat" uniform bone stimulation – Left transducer in blue and right transducer in red

As can be seen on Figure 10, to generate a "flat" uniform stimulation much more electrical power is needed in the low-frequencies than in the medium frequencies because of the low efficiency of the transducers in low frequencies.

The magnitude of these values at each third-octave band frequency represents the frequency response of the transducers and can be used to design a filter model.

Design of an equalizing digital filter:

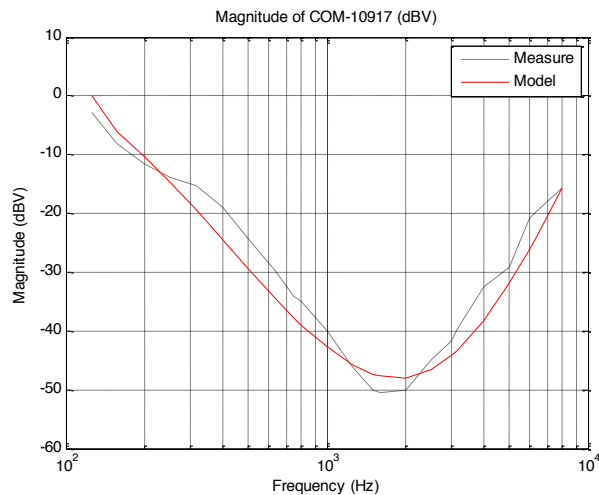


Figure 11: Magnitude of the bone transducers frequency response (in black) and of the fitted digital filter (in red)

The magnitude of the average response from Figure 9 and of a corresponding theoretical transfer function modeled under MATLAB Filter Design Toolbox is illustrated on Figure 11.

This model is an order 3 notch filter defined with two cut-off frequencies:

- A low cut-off frequency of 125 Hz.
- A band frequency equal to 2.4 kHz.

With the defined model, it is possible to calculate the coefficients of a digital filter and plot its impulse frequency response. The coefficients were calculated with a reverse Z-

transform starting from the equation of the model curve (red line in Figure 11). This equation is the reason for creating a model before calculating the coefficients, because it is not possible to obtain the filter directly with the results of the measures.

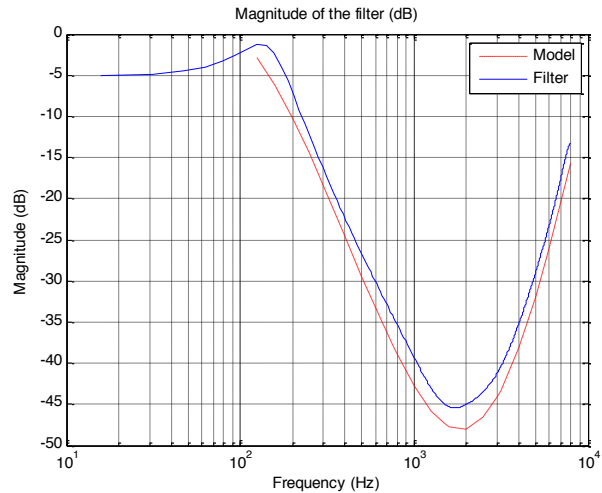


Figure 12: Frequency response of the filter (in blue)

Validation of the filter:

To verify that the digital filter actually improves the quality of the sound signal, a subjective comparison was conducted using an excerpt of a test song. First, the excerpt was played non-filtered, then filtered. The criteria of comparison included the relative sound level, restitution of low, medium and high frequencies and comprehension of the lyrics.

The comparison between the not filtered and the filtered song excerpts has shown that the sound quality was often preferred when the signal was not filtered. Indeed, it appears that the equalization that was conducted at threshold levels do not correspond to an equal loudness perception at higher levels.

For illustration, the ear is less sensitive to low-frequencies at low level, but this sensitivity increases as the level of the music playback increases. As a consequence, an equalizing filter that would flatten the response at 0 dB HL would sound way too “boomy” when listened to at higher levels.

Since this higher level playback of the music is highly variable among individuals, it is not possible to fix the loudness correction that is to be applied to the equalizing filter. To address that issue, one last development was conducted, where the user can adjust the loudness correction manually using the graphical equalizer illustrated in Figure 13.

This graphical equalizer is equipped with a popup menu containing the settings relative to most of the musical styles and also with a custom mode allowing users to adjust by himself or herself the preferred playback sound level. In doing so, simply manipulate the sliders representing each frequency (displayed here per octave bands from 31.25 Hz to 16 kHz) in order to modify the corresponding sound level by providing it a variation between -12 and +12 dB.

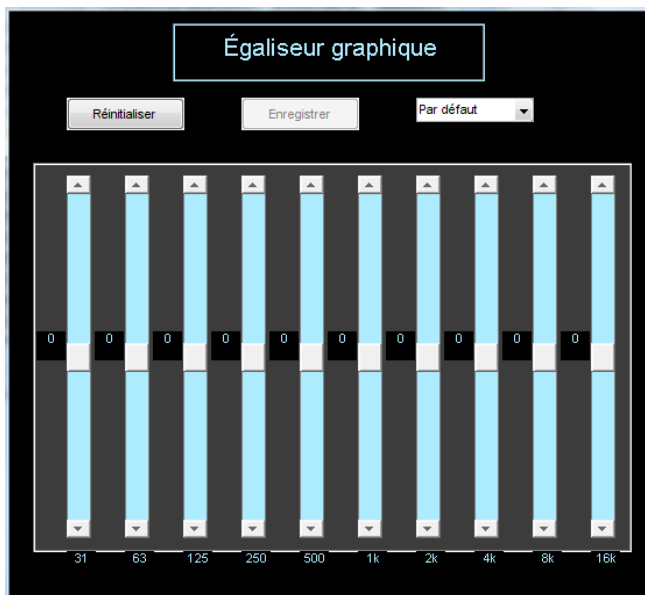


Figure 13: Graphical equalizer interface for the required loudness correction

5 Analysis and Discussion

The proposed mounting system displayed in Figure 6 stages a simple way to encapsulate the bone transducers. The system can be glided along the front helmet webbing, which proves a simple way of adjusting its position against the skull. Another benefit of the proposed design is that it can be retrofitted on any existing helmet.

The standard deviation of the curves displayed in Figure 7 and which is shown on Figure 9 may appear to be large but was not felt to be a concern as the aim of the audiometric measurements was to obtain the general shape of the equalizing filter, knowing that individuals may indeed have a different hearing sensitivity that would be anyway later on adjusted through the loudness correction mechanism described in Section 4.d.

Finally, one can foresee that the loudness correction required on top of the equalization filter could be implemented on a portable music player as most of these devices now support “apps”. It would even be feasible to have the app adjusting automatically the loudness correction as a function of the actual music playback level, as the frequency response of the proposed transducer has been properly identified and that loudness correction models are easily programmable in modern digital signal processors.

6 Conclusions

This project's objective was to develop a system of bone transducers that would equip a bike helmet and able to excite the skull via bone conduction. This technological development would ensure comfortable music listening, while enabling the ears to remain unobstructed so that the wearer may retain awareness and localisation capabilities.

The main result of this project is a functional bicycle helmet prototype validated in laboratory staging two

components mounted onto the helmet straps and containing the bone transducers.

Future research needs are to validate the proposed bike helmet prototype on a larger number of test-subjects, as inter-individual differences in perceived audio quality can be significant [8]. Future developments should be conducted to encode the equalization filter as well as the loudness correction into an “app” that could be running on the portable music player. Wired connections could be also replaced with wireless link such as a Bluetooth protocol, as more and more cell-phones and music players feature that music streaming capability.



Figure 14: Final prototype

Acknowledgments

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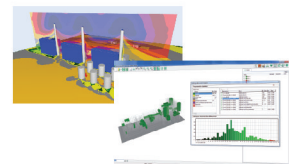
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EFFECTS OF MOUTHING AND INTERLOCUTOR PRESENCE ON MOVEMENTS OF VISIBLE VS. NON-VISIBLE ARTICULATORS

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Résumé

Les locuteurs prennent en compte l'information qu'un partenaire de conversation nécessite pour mieux comprendre une expression. Malgré l'évidence grandissante que les mouvements d'articulateurs visibles (comme les lèvres) sont augmentés dans l'articulation silencieuse par rapport à l'articulation vocalisée, peu d'études ont comparé cet effet dans les articulateurs visibles contre les articulateurs non visibles. De plus, aucune étude n'a examiné si l'engagement de l'interlocuteur changera ces résultats. En élaborant un conception d'expérience présent/non présent, nous avons testé si la présence d'information audible et/ou d'un interlocuteur affecte les mouvements des lèvres et de la langue. Les participants ont parlé trois syllabes, avec et sans production audible, dans chacune des conditions interlocuteur-présent et interlocuteur-non présent. Les mouvements des lèvres et de la langue étaient enregistrés avec la vidéo et l'échographie. Nos résultats montrent que la protubérance des lèvres était plus grande dans les conditions non audibles par rapport à ceux audibles et que les mouvements de la langue étaient atténués (/wa/) ou non affectés (/ri/, /ra/) par ces mêmes conditions, indiquant les effets différents pour les articulateurs visibles et non-visibles dans l'absence d'un signal auditif. Une interaction significative entre les conditions d'engagement sociale et d'audibilité de vocalisation avec référence à la fermeture orale a montré que les participants ont produit des fermetures plus étroites dans les conditions de vocalisation audible, interlocuteur-non présent (par rapport à la condition interlocuteur-présent). Cependant, les mesures de protubérance des lèvres n'étaient pas affectées par condition d'engagement sociale. Nous concluons que les locuteurs utilisent à la fois les modalités auditives et visuelles dans la présence d'un interlocuteur, et lorsque l'information acoustique n'est pas disponible, les augmentations compensatoires sont réalisés dans le domaine visuel. Nos résultats soulignent encore le caractère multimodal de discours, et posent des nouvelles questions au sujet des adaptations différentielles faites par les articulateurs visibles et non visibles dans les différentes conditions de parole.

Mots clefs: production de la parole, effets interlocuteur, parole silencieuse, feedback auditif et visuel, échographie

Abstract

Speakers take into account what information a conversation partner requires in a given context in order to best understand an utterance. Despite growing evidence showing that movements of visible articulators such as the lips are augmented in mouthed speech relative to vocalized speech, little to date has been done comparing this effect in visible vs. non-visible articulators. In addition, no studies have examined whether interlocutor engagement differentially impacts these. Building on a basic present/not-present design, we investigated whether presence of audible speech information and/or an interlocutor affect the movements of the lips and the tongue. Participants were asked to a) speak or b) mouth three target syllables in interlocutor-present and interlocutor-not-present conditions, while lip and tongue movements were recorded using video and ultrasound imaging. Results show that lip protrusion was greater in mouthed conditions compared to vocalized ones and tongue movements were either attenuated (/wa/) or unaffected (/ri/, /ra/) by these same conditions, indicating differential effects for the visible and non-visible articulators in the absence of an auditory signal. A significant interaction between the social engagement and vocalizing conditions in reference to lip aperture showed that participants produced smaller lip apertures when vocalizing alone, as compared to when in the presence of an interlocutor. However, measures of lip protrusion failed to find an effect of social engagement. We conclude that speakers make use of both auditory and visual modalities in the presence of an interlocutor, and that when acoustic information is unavailable, compensatory increases are made in the visual domain. Our findings shed new light on the multimodal nature of speech, and pose new questions about differential adaptations made by visible and non-visible articulators in different speech conditions.

Keywords: speech production, interlocutor effects, mouthed speech, auditory and visual feedback, ultrasound imaging

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1 Introduction

This study examines how the motion of visible articulators (e.g. the lips) and non-visible articulators (e.g. the tongue) are affected by two factors: (1) the presence of proprioceptive auditory feedback and (2) the presence or absence of an interlocutor. A large body of literature now points to the importance of the visual modality in speech perception [3, 8, 14, 15, 16, 21, 22, 24]. Perceptual accuracy generally increases when the perceiver can both hear and see a speaker. In light of such results, we ask whether an articulator's visibility (i.e. visible or less visible) will affect its magnitude of movement when information from the visual modality becomes more important.

Because of the non-trivial contribution of vision to speech perception, it is perhaps not surprising that speakers tend to increase facial movements in environments where the auditory signal is degraded [5, 6, 10]. Hazan & Kim [10] found that speakers visually enhanced their articulation of /æ/, /i/ and /e/ (indicated by an increase in inter-lip area) when they were required to carry out a communicative task in noise. Increases in visible articulator movement could be interpreted as a mechanical side-effect of the increased effort required to speak louder in noisy settings. This increase in speech effort, usually referred to as Lombard Speech, was first noted by Lombard [13], who found an immediate and involuntary vocal increase as a response to noise. Interestingly, Herff, Janke, Wand & Schultz [11] found increased facial movement in noisy conditions in silent as well as vocalized articulation. These findings suggest that visible articulator movements increase in order to compensate for a degraded or absent auditory signal, even in the case of the relatively unnatural condition of silent speech. Furthermore, Ménard, Leclerc, Brisebois, Aubin & Brasseur's [17] study comparing blind and sighted speech found that in the production of French vowels, blind speakers demonstrated less difference in upper lip protrusion than sighted speakers and Cvejic, Kim & Davis [4] found that speakers made auditory cues (e.g. to prosody) more salient when it was known that visual cue information was unavailable to their conversation partner. Together, such findings imply that speakers take into account what type of information an interlocutor will require to best understand a given utterance in a given context. In the present study, rather than using noise to effect signal degradation, we include mouthed and vocalized utterances in order to examine how the *absence* or *presence* of an auditory signal affects the visible and non-visible articulators, respectively. Similar to previous work, we hypothesized that the movement of visible articulators would increase while mouthing, that is, when the auditory signal is absent.

While previous work has illustrated that the movement of visible articulators tends to increase when the visual modality is more important, such as when auditory information is degraded or absent, very little attention has been paid to the role of non-visible articulators (tongue). Though some work has been done examining the impact of visibility on articulator movement, samples have

been small (i.e. a single participant in [7]). It has been suggested based on this data that tongue movements that are less visible do not increase in magnitude in noise, and that lip movements are not more enhanced in noise when interlocutors can see each other. However, these results should be seen as suggestive rather than conclusion due to the study's small sample size, a problem we attempt to rectify. A relatively clear prediction for the movement of articulators carrying less visual information may be formulated, namely that the movements of less visible articulators such as the tongue should be significantly less affected by changes in the environment which require increased attention to visual information. An alternative hypothesis would maintain that, as speech in noise is augmented in a variety of ways not exclusively visual [23], the augmentation should not be sufficiently sensitive to the modality-specific needs of an interlocutor, and should extend equally to both visible and non-visible articulators. To test our hypotheses, we employ simultaneous ultrasound and video imaging to capture the behaviour of the lips and tongue.

Considering visible and non-visible articulators also mandates consideration of social context, as previous studies indicate that visible articulator movements increase in saliency in the presence of an interlocutor [6, 10]. For example, Hazan & Kim's [10] study found that the size of lip gestures increased in magnitude when participants could see each other. The effect can also be found in hand gestures, which are larger when an interlocutor is present [1, 18]. The present study includes a social engagement condition where either an interlocutor is present and engaging with the participant, or the participant is alone. We hypothesized that while the movements of visible articulators would increase (interpreted as greater lip protrusion and smaller lip aperture) in the presence of an interlocutor, the movements of non-visible articulators should not be so affected.

Our experimental design involves simultaneous ultrasound imaging of the tongue and video imaging of the lips, capturing their behaviour in the presence of auditory information (vocalized condition), absence of auditory information (mouthed condition) and in the presence and absence of an interlocutor. We predict that: 1) tongue movements will be unaffected by speech condition (mouthed/vocalized) and the presence/absence of an interlocutor; 2) lip movements will increase in magnitude in mouthed conditions; 3) lip movements will increase in magnitude with the presence of an interlocutor.

2. Methods

2.1. Participants

22 students at the University of British Columbia participated in the study. All were native speakers of a North American variety of English. All participants self-reported normal or corrected-to-normal vision and hearing. All participants were paid for their services at a rate of \$10 per hour.

Data from male participants with beards were excluded due to the effects of hair growth on ultrasound image quality. Since these exclusions significantly reduced the number of male participants compared to female participants, all males were ultimately excluded. Ultrasound image quality was also the major factor for excluding data obtained from a number of other participants: despite our efforts to keep subjects in a stable position, some subjects still moved away from the ultrasound probe, which resulted in poor image quality. Ultimately, 12 of 22 participants had to be excluded on these grounds. The final analysis was performed on the data obtained from 10 female participants (age range 18-24; $M = 20$; $SD = 1.70$).

2.2. Procedure

Participants were tested individually in a sound-attenuated booth. Seated in a dentist's chair, participants positioned their heads on a headrest to minimize head movement. An Aloka SSD-5000 Doppler Ultrasound Equipment with a UST-9118 endo-vaginal 180 degree electronic curved array probe on a microphone arm was positioned under a participant's chin. The ultrasound machine was connected to an iMac computer via a firewire port which displayed and recorded the video within the iMovie program. A small table with a computer screen was placed approximately 0.5m in front of the participant. A JVC GZ-E300AU camcorder was set up approximately 1.25m in front of the participant and adjusted to capture the entire face and head area. A 5mm x 5mm sticker was positioned on the zygomatic bone immediately anterior of the left ear in order to serve as a stable starting point from which to measure lip protrusion. An 18 x 21cm mirror was positioned at a 45 degree angle to the participant's face so that a side view of her lips was visible in the viewer of the camcorder. A Blue® Yeti USB Microphone (Model 1950) was placed inside the sound booth in omnidirectional mode. This was connected to a speaker outside the sound booth so that the experimenter could hear the participant's speech and the sound cue that signalled the end of a block. Participants were seated facing the door of the sound booth. This guaranteed the participants' awareness of the experimenter's presence inside the booth.

The experiment elicited both mouthed and vocalized utterances across a 4-stage continuum of interlocutor engagement (Social Engagement). In the first stage, there was no interlocutor present (Not Present); in the second, the interlocutor (a role performed by the experimenter, who was male) was present in the sound booth but did not engage with the participant (Not Engaged); in the third, the interlocutor was present in the sound booth and asked the participant some questions regarding the comfort of the equipment (Present and Engaged); in the fourth, the interlocutor was present and responded to each utterance with a matching hand gesture (Present and Gesturing). Each of the four stages constituted a Social Engagement condition. There were two conditions for speech production (Speech Production): vocalized and mouthed. This yielded a total of 8 conditions. A pilot study with 7 participants was run to test our experimental setup and conditions. An informal

evaluation of that pilot data failed to yield promising results for Not Engaged and Present and Engaged. This was confirmed based on preliminary analysis of the first two experimental participants. In the resulting design, these two intermediate points were retained as fillers, and only the two endpoints of the interlocutor enhancement continuum (Not Present and Present and Gesturing) were included in the final analysis, yielding only 4 conditions.

We focused on three Target Syllables: /wa/, /ɪa/ and /iɪ/. The consonants /w/ and /ɪ/ were chosen as they are known to vary in their degree of lip and tongue constriction depending on their position in the syllable, exhibiting the greatest degree of constriction in onset position [2, 9]. /w/ was selected to induce lip aperture constriction (rounding) and tongue-dorsal movement while /ɪa/ and /iɪ/ were selected to induce lip protrusion and tongue-blade (for /ɪa/) and tongue-dorsal (for /iɪ/) movements. The reason for two /ɪ/ initial syllables was to avoid coarticulatory effects between the consonant and following vowel. In /iɪ/ the tongue anterior gesture of /ɪ/ is largely blended with that of the following high front vowel, while in /ɪa/ a similar blending occurs with the tongue root [20]. Analysis of each syllable was therefore focused on the position of the tongue less affected by vowel coarticulation.

Prior to the beginning of the experiment, participants were instructed to "read the item aloud in your normal speaking voice" for the vocalized conditions and "mouth the items without making a sound" for the mouthed conditions. Each block was initiated by the experimenter offering the participant a sip of water. Test items were presented using Psychtoolbox (version 3.0.11) (<http://psychtoolbox.org>) for MATLAB with a 1 second minimum presentation of each item. The order of the tokens with each block was pseudo-randomized. Participants controlled the transition between items with the space bar on a keyboard. Each run was comprised of 24 test blocks (3 for each of the 8 conditions) with 5 utterances per token per trial. This resulted in 15 tokens per utterance per condition. After the recording portion of the experiment, subjects completed a questionnaire on the experience of participating in the study. Participants rated the friendliness of the experimenter ($M = 6.80$, $SD = 0.42$), as well as the naturalness of their speech production for both mouthing ($M = 4.3$, $SD = 1.06$) and vocalizing conditions ($M = 5.00$, $SD = 1.05$), on a 7-point Likert scale.

2.3. Analysis

Analysis of the lips

Using Final Cut Pro 10.1.1 (<http://www.apple.com/final-cut-pro>), one frame per token was extracted from the video at the most constricted closure point of /w/ for /wa/ tokens (as determined visually using the front view of the participant) and the most protruded point of /ɪ/ for /iɪ/ and /ɪa/ tokens (as determined visually using the side-view of the participant). Analysis proceeded in ImageJ 1.48 (<http://imagej.nih.gov/ij/index.html>). For each frame, the red channel was filtered out and "Default"

or “Percentile” threshold settings applied to produce a bi-tone black and white image.

Lip protrusion and lip aperture were measured with the straight line tool. Lip protrusion was measured by drawing a line (on the side mirror image) from the sticker on the side of the participant’s face to the most protruded point (taken to be the most rightward pixel) on a participant’s upper lip. When the most protruded point spanned more than one pixel, the most protruded pixel closest to the mouth opening was selected. Lip aperture was measured by drawing a 90 degree line in approximately the centre of the lip opening as seen in the front view image. As ImageJ measures in pixels, the measurements were then converted to centimetres. A scale was possible by comparing the width (in pixels) of the ultrasound probe tip in the image to its known physical width of two centimetres.

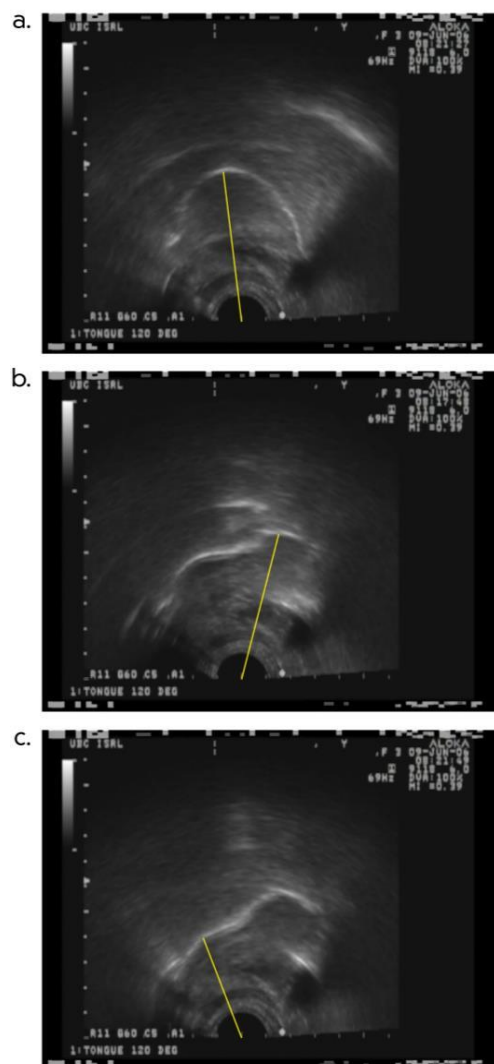


Figure 1: Tongue measurement points: (a) tongue dorsum for /wa/; (b) tongue tip/blade for /ja/; (c) tongue root for /ji/.

Analysis of the tongue

Tongue frames were extracted from the ultrasound video

using Final Cut Pro. For each token, the extracted frame represented the point of most extreme constriction within the consonant prior to the transition into the vowel. For /wa/, this was the frame in which the tongue dorsum was highest relative to the middle of the transducer arc; for /ja/, this was the frame where the tongue blade was highest relative to the transducer arc; and for /ji/, where the visible portion of the tongue root was in its most posterior position relative to the same point on the transducer arc (see section 2.2). Analysis proceeded in ImageJ. Using the straight line tool, the distance from the transducer arc to the relevant point in each token was measured (see Figure 1). As with measurements for the lips, values were then scaled to centimetres.

3. Results

In order to investigate the validity of our hypotheses regarding the effects of Speech Production type, degree of Social Engagement and Target Syllable, three separate 2x2x3 repeated measures ANOVAs were conducted with normalized values (Student’s t-statistic for each participant) for tongue height, lip protrusion and aperture as the dependent variables respectively. The statistical analyses were primarily conducted utilizing the GLM syntax in SPSS (<http://www-01.ibm.com/software/analytics/spss/>), with minor further investigations employing the affix package in R (<http://www.r-project.org>). Mauchly’s test for Sphericity was employed and where sphericity was violated the Greenhouse-Geisser method was utilized to correct degrees of freedom. Additionally, simple main-effects analysis with a Bonferroni correction (significance at $p < 0.05$), was employed to further investigate any significant effects found in the repeated measures ANOVAs.

Tongue Height

Mauchly’s test for sphericity regarding the 2x2x3 ANOVA for tongue height indicated a violation. A 2x2x3 repeated measures ANOVA yielded statistically significant differences between the means of Target Syllables, $F(1.12, 10.04) = 55.41, p = 0.0001, \eta^2_G = 0.84$, as well as significant interaction between the Target Syllables and the Speech Production method, $F(1.43, 12.91) = 7.51, p = 0.01, \eta^2_G = 0.03$. As illustrated in Figure 2, simple main effects post-hoc tests (Bonferroni corrected) on the estimated marginal means revealed significant mean differences ($p < 0.05$) in both vocalized ($p < 0.001, < 0.001, M=1.919, 2.034, SE = 0.172, 0.164, 95\% \text{ CIs } [1.415, 2.423], [1.553, 2.516]$) and mouthed ($p < 0.001, < 0.001, M=1.757, 1.729, SE = 0.174, 0.121, 95\% \text{ CIs } [1.247, 2.267], [1.375, 2.083]$) syllables of /ja/ and /wa/ compared to /ji/ respectively. Additionally, post-hoc tests indicated that the mean difference between vocalized and mouthed conditions only proved statistically significant for /wa/ ($p = 0.004, M=0.159, SE = 0.042, 95\% \text{ CI } [0.064, 2.53]$) as displayed in Figure 2 (error bars in the graphs correspond to the standard error of the mean in all figures). These results suggest that participants exhibited an attenuation in tongue height during mouthing versus vocalized conditions in /wa/ utterances. However, the current measurement of participant tongue height appeared to be statistically unaffected by the Social Engagement

conditions, in line with the initial hypothesis. These results appear to indicate that tongue height attenuation during mouthed compared to vocalized speech is observed for certain syllables, and is unaffected for others.

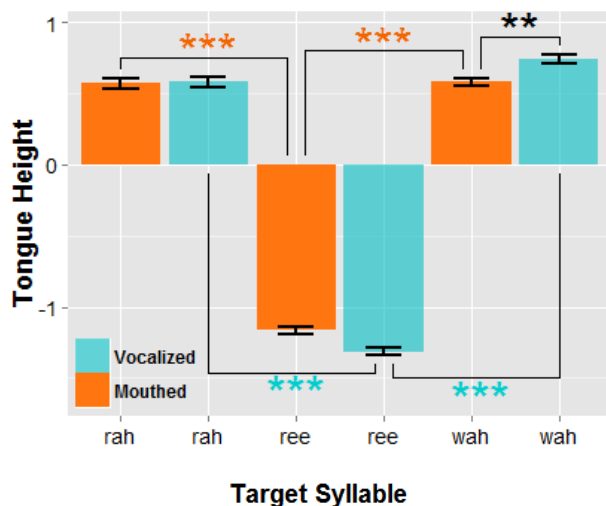


Figure 2: Post-hoc pairwise comparison regarding the interaction between Target Syllable and Speech Production method yielded significant mean differences in both vocalized ($p < 0.001$, < 0.001) and mouthed ($p < 0.001$, < 0.001) conditions. Note the significance values pertain to comparisons indicated by the brackets and are colour coded by Speech Production method. $p < 0.05^*$, 0.01^{**} , 0.001^{***} .

Lip Protrusion

Similar to the results for Tongue Height, Mauchly's test for sphericity indicated that the Greenhouse-Geisser correction should be employed. As per the analysis of tongue height, a $2 \times 2 \times 3$ repeated measures ANOVA regarding lip protrusion was conducted. Critically only the main effects of the method of Speech Production, $F(1, 9) = 10.85$, $p = 0.009$, $\eta^2_G = 0.10$, as well as Target Syllable, $F(1.27, 11.39) = 17.20$, $p = 0.0009$, $\eta^2_G = 0.19$, proved statistically significant. Bonferroni adjusted pair-wise post-hoc comparisons (see Figure 3) indicated an increase in lip protrusion for mouthed compared to vocalized utterances ($p = 0.009$, $M=0.308$, $SE = 0.093$, 95% CI [0.096, 0.519]), as well as for /wa/ compared against /ɪa/ and /iɪ/ ($p = 0.009$, 0.001 , $M=0.5$, 0.456 , $SE = 0.125$, 0.081 , 95% CIs [0.133, 0.866], [0.219, 0.694]) respectively.

Participants appeared to exhibit more lip protrusion during mouthed compared to vocalized utterances. The differences in lip protrusion between the syllables appear to pattern in a related, but inverse manner to the tongue height data. Specifically, /wa/ exhibited an increased degree of lip protrusion comparative to /ɪa/ and /iɪ/, as shown in Figure 4. However, lip protrusion measures in participants appear to be inert to the Social Engagement conditions, contra to our hypotheses.

While providing merits in isolation, measurements of lip protrusion only provide a single metric of assessing the external regions of the vocal tract, hence, the results of this data should be considered in correspondence with those of

lip aperture.

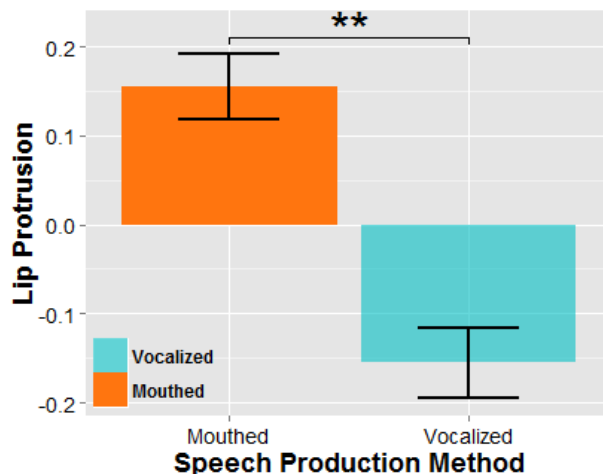


Figure 3: Post-hoc pairwise comparison regarding the main effect of Speech Production method. Lip protrusion increased significantly for mouthed compared to vocalized utterances ($p = 0.009$). $p < 0.05^*$, 0.01^{**} , 0.001^{***}

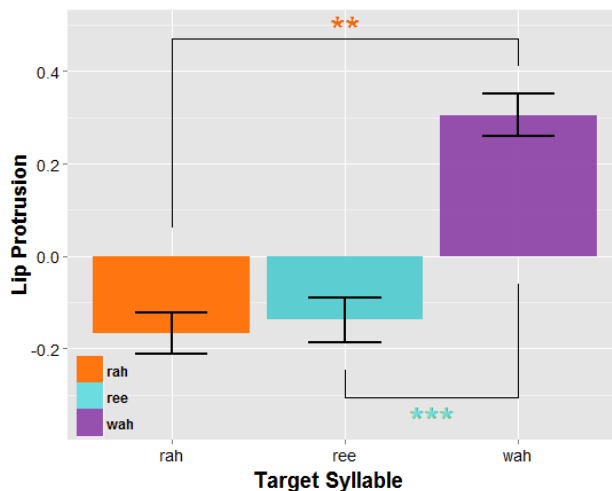


Figure 4: Post-hoc pairwise comparison regarding the main effect of Target Syllable. Lip protrusion was significantly different for /wa/ compared against /ɪa/ and /iɪ/ ($p = 0.009$, 0.001) respectively. Note the significance values pertain to comparisons indicated by the brackets and are colour coded to indicate the comparative difference in means regarding /wa/. $p < 0.05^*$, 0.01^{**} , 0.001^{***} .

Lip Aperture

Results from the $2 \times 2 \times 3$ repeated measures ANOVA regarding standardized measurements of lip aperture indicated statistically significant results for the main effect of Target Syllable, $F(1.65, 14.85) = 5.02$, $p = 0.03$, $\eta^2_G = 0.21$, as well as a significant interaction between whether participants were vocalizing or mouthing and the Social Engagement condition, $F(1, 9) = 6.62$, $p = 0.03$, $\eta^2_G = 0.01$. Bonferroni corrected post-hoc pairwise comparisons regarding the Target Syllables yielded non-significant results for all pairwise comparisons. Similar applications of the post-hoc procedure to the interaction yield a singular statistically significant mean difference between Social

Engagement conditions when participants were vocalizing. Specifically, participants exhibited smaller lip apertures during vocalization in the Not Present condition compared to when an interlocutor was Present and Gesturing ($p = 0.025$, $M=0.187$, $SE = 0.069$, 95% CI [0.030, 0.344]) as displayed in Figure 5. Interpretation of these results may benefit from disclosure that a visual inspection of this data indicated a greater degree of participant variability compared to the tongue height and lip protrusion metrics. For instance, the standard error regarding the difference between the means of participants mouthing in the Not Present condition and those obtained from participants when vocalizing in the Present and Gesturing condition are approximately three times greater than those of the statistically significant comparison despite visually similar disparities in magnitude (see Figure 5).

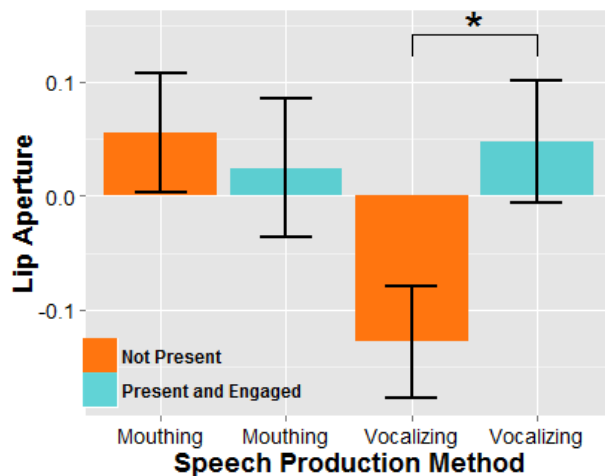


Figure 5: Post-hoc pairwise comparison regarding the interaction between Speech Production method and Social Engagement conditions. Participants exhibited smaller lip apertures during vocalization alone compared to when an interlocutor was present ($p = 0.025$). $p < 0.05^*$, 0.01^{**} , 0.001^{***} .

4. Discussion

This study examined the effects of mouthing vs. vocalizing and interlocutor presence vs. absence on the movements of visible and non-visible articulators. Previous studies on speech in noise [6, 10] found increased movement in the visible articulators during speech in noisy environments. Ménard's [17] study on blind speech supports the notion that visible articulators are used by sighted speakers to convey speech information. In this context, our study was designed to shed more light on the possible differential uses of visible and non-visible articulators by sighted speakers in the absence of noise. We will discuss our findings in relation to our hypotheses provided in the introduction and will conclude with some elaborations that go beyond these hypotheses.

Firstly, we predicted that tongue movement would be unaffected by Speech Production method (mouthed/vocalized) and Social Engagement condition (presence/absence of an interlocutor). Considering /wa/, this was not the case with regard to Speech Production method.

Mouthed speech showed significantly less articulatory movement as compared to vocalized speech. This finding may be explained by the fact that in the absence of an acoustic signal, it is not necessary for the tongue to hit an articulatory target. For the remaining two syllables, however, our hypothesis was confirmed: tongue height was unaffected by the changes in speech condition. Further, none of the Target Syllables were significantly affected by the Social Engagement conditions. Hence, we interpret these results as a partial validation of our initial hypothesis. The major differences in tongue height between the individual syllables /ɪa/, /wa/ and /ii/ can probably be ascribed to articulation differences due to the following vowel. One reason why /wa/ stands out as the only syllable showing a significant effect might be that the lips are perceptually more prominent during the articulation of /w/ versus /ɪ/. We can therefore not rule out that the tongue height findings are associated with the differences in lip movement. The finding that tongue height is statistically unaffected by the Social Engagement conditions does not come as a surprise since non-visible articulators are not expected to be affected by the presence of an interlocutor.

Secondly, we predicted that lip movements would increase in magnitude in mouthed conditions. In line with this prediction, results indicated that participants increased lip protrusion during mouthed utterances compared to vocalized utterances. The individual differences for the Target Syllables resemble the pattern that emerged for the tongue height data. Specifically, /wa/ exhibited a significantly increased degree of lip protrusion compared to /ɪa/ and /ii/. This implies a trade-off between tongue position and lip protrusion in /wa/. A similar trade-off has been previously observed between the tongue body and lip rounding for the vowel /u/ [19]. The measurements in lip aperture, however, did not produce any valuable insight for the distinction between mouthing and vocalizing.

Thirdly, we predicted that lip movements would increase in magnitude with the presence of an interlocutor. We therefore expected participants to produce articulations with greater protrusion and smaller aperture when an interlocutor was present. The findings for lip protrusion were not affected by Social Engagement condition. However, lip aperture showed a significant effect of Social Engagement, albeit in the direction opposite to what we predicted. During vocalized speech, participants produced smaller lip apertures when they were vocalizing alone, compared with when an interlocutor was Present and Gesturing. This was a surprising finding considering our prediction, but the relatively smaller aperture in the Not Present condition may be related to the lack of a communicative partner. Under this condition, because there is no communicative reason to make visual cues salient, participants may produce less dynamic articulations in general, maintaining a relatively more closed mouth across the entire utterance. In contrast, the presence of an interlocutor introduces a situation under which visual cues are useful and participants therefore respond more dynamically.

Though participants behaved in a way that contradicted our

third prediction, the data can still be interpreted as demonstrating the sensitivity of visible articulators to the Social Engagement conditions in a way that supports a multimodal view of speech. Specifically, the observed interaction for lip aperture may only arise as the visual domain becomes relevant for communicative purposes. Lesser lip protrusion in blind participants compared to sighted [17] as well as the increase of lip protrusion under the effects of noise [5, 6, 10, 12] would appear to support these observations. However, under this interpretation it is unclear why no effect is observed in the mouthing condition when an interlocutor is present.

It is worth noting the limitations of our methodology. The measurement techniques we employed measured the maximal point of constriction of the Target Syllables. However, this measurement is static rather than dynamic, we were therefore unable to capture the amount of overall movement in each articulation. A more dynamic method of measurement which is able to capture movement could potentially be beneficial in obtaining data which more accurately depicts levels of movement/activation in speech gestures under these different speech conditions. Regarding the third hypothesis, a suggestion from an editor of this paper was that the perceived friendliness of the interlocutor could have influenced participant tendencies to display positive affect using the visible articulators (i.e. via smiling), and that this impacted lip aperture values. While we did look at naturalness and friendliness to ensure reliability and validity of our experimental conditions, our study was not designed to examine naturalness or friendliness as statistical factors. However, these would be interesting directions for future study.

Our findings suggest that speakers make use of both the auditory and visual speech signals and are aware of the information available to their interlocutor. To aid in communication, compensations are made when information from one of these signals is unavailable. Potential future research should investigate how the various visible and non-visible articulators respond dynamically under social engagement conditions.

Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

Author and Contributors

Authorship has been separated into two tiers, each ordered alphabetically (excluding the last author). Contributions within each tier were approximately equal.

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Résumé

Les capacités du système auditif humain sont phénoménales. La plage dynamique qu'il supporte, la plage de fréquences qu'il couvre, et également, sa capacité à détecter et identifier la parole en présence de bruits parasites sont étonnantes. Dans la vie quotidienne, on utilise ces capacités de différentes façons: la communication orale, les alertes et les alarmes, l'analyse des appareils et des machines comme les ordinateurs et les voitures. Par exemple, "Est-ce que mon appareil est en marche ?", "Est-ce qu'il semble fonctionner normalement ou est-ce que quelque chose ne va pas?". De plus, nous utilisons aussi notre système auditif pour diverses formes de divertissement. Le revers de la médaille de ses capacités magnifiques est qu'elles posent des difficultés par exemple lors de la conception des bâtiments, des machines et d'appareils électroniques comme les téléphones mobiles, les ordinateurs, les écouteurs, les microphones, etc. Et bien que nous ayons cette capacité phénoménale à comprendre la parole dans les situations difficiles, on a souvent du mal à entendre ou du mal à comprendre. De plus, le système auditif humain s'abîme facilement. Ce document présente d'anciens et de nouveaux résultats de recherches liés aux capacités du système auditif et quelques-uns des challenges posés par ce dernier. Le contenu de cet article a été présenté lors de la Semaine canadienne de l'acoustique 2014 (Acoustics Week in Canada 2014) lors de l'une des trois présentations plénières invitées.

Mots clefs: système auditif, plage dynamique, plage de fréquences, parole dans le bruit, perte auditive

Abstract

The capability of the human auditory system is phenomenal. The dynamic range it can handle, the frequency range it covers, and, not the least, its ability to detect and identify speech in the presence of interfering sounds is astonishing. In daily life we use this capability in many ways. We use it for speech communication as well as for alerts and alarms. We use it for analysis of devices and machines, e.g. our computers and cars. Is it on? Does it sound normal, or is something wrong? We also use it for various forms of entertainment. However, there's a flip side to the great capability. From an engineering point of view it poses challenges when designing buildings, machines, and devices such as phones, computers, headphones, microphones, etc. And although we have a phenomenal ability to understand speech in challenging situations, we often mishear or misunderstand. Human hearing is also quite easily damaged. This paper presents old and new results related to the capability of our hearing, and some of the challenges related to the same. The content of this article was presented at the Acoustics Week in Canada 2014 as one of three invited keynote presentations.

Keywords: auditory system, dynamic range, frequency range, speech in noise, misheard lyrics, hearing loss

1 Our Hearing is Remarkable

The international space station orbits the earth at an altitude of about 400 km [1]. Let's assume that it sends out a 1 W signal from an omnidirectional antenna. By the time the signal reaches our planet the 1 W signal is spread out across a sphere having an area of two million square kilometers. Assuming no losses or reflections along the way the intensity would at that point be approximately 0.5×10^{-12} W/m². A sound wave of that intensity is audible for many people if presented as a pure tone around 3.5 kHz in a perfectly quiet room.

The shape of the human ear canal is quite complicated and varies significantly between individuals. But let's assume an ear canal having a diameter of 7 mm and a length of 26 mm. Let's also assume it has a perfectly cylindrical

shape, rigid walls, and a rigid eardrum. An intensity of 10^{-12} W/m² equates to a sound pressure of 2×10^{-5} Pa which is defined as 0 dB, and can be perceived under perfect circumstances. An insert type headphone with a speaker diaphragm covering the entire cross-section of the ear canal, would only have to move about 10 pm, i.e. 10^{-11} m, peak-to-peak, to generate this sound pressure, at which point the movement of the eardrum is in the order of 1 pm, or 10^{-12} m [2]. To produce a sound pressure level of 120 dB the diaphragm would still only have to move 0.01 mm. The required displacement of the diaphragm, and the movement of the eardrum, may be compared to the radii of atoms, ranging between 30 and 300 pm [3].

In short, the human ear is sensorially sensitive. At the same time even some of the more stringent safety regulations around the world, such as the Swedish Work Environment Act [4], allow workers to be exposed to levels up to 115 dB(A) - although the permitted daily noise exposure will be reached within half a minute.

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A dynamic range of 115 dB equals a ratio of 0.56×10^6 , i.e. the sound pressure at 115 dB is almost one million times higher than that of 0 dB. Expressed in terms of intensity, a sound wave at 115 dB carries almost one trillion times more energy per second than one at 0 dB. The dynamic range covered by our hearing is truly amazing.

The frequency range covered by the human hearing spans over 3 decades, or 10 octaves. As a comparison, a microwave antenna advertised as an “ultra-wideband microwave antenna” may cover significantly less than one octave. Some motorcycle engines may rev up to 12,000 rpm, at which point each piston completes 200 cycles every second - propelled by 100 explosions every second - typically generating 10 kilowatts per cylinder, or more. An even higher rpm would mean even more frequent explosions, and thus more power. But the inertia of the pistons, valves, fuel mixture, and exhaust fumes, makes it an enormous challenge to increase the revs without losing efficiency. To perceive 20,000 Hz our eardrums need to complete 20,000 cycles every second, propelled only by the sound pressure, having intensities in the order of magnitude of nanowattsⁱ per square meter. This must be considered a remarkable achievement.

Another remarkable achievement of our hearing ability is signal and speech recognition. In a situation where the signal-to-noise-ratio (SNR) is only 10 dB a person with normal hearing will still be able to understand most of what is said [5], regardless of the type of speech material being used. In a study [6] using military call signs it was shown that, in white noise, test subjects were able to correctly perceive 65,88% of the call signs at an SNR of -18 dB. To compare the RMS levels of two very different types of signals can be problematic. An SNR of -18 dB implies that the amplitude of the noise is 8 times higher than that of the speech. However, speech is an irregular signal with pauses, and will have bursts that are significantly louder than the average RMS level. Nonetheless, as can be seen in Figure 1, at an SNR of -18 dB the speech signal is completely masked by the noise. Even so, a trained person still has the capacity to correctly perceive almost two out of three call signs. This would not be possible if the speech material consisted of totally random words selected from an infinitely long list. Further, white noise is primarily a high frequency type of noiseⁱⁱ, and the auditory masking will therefore be less severe than if the noise had been a low frequency type of noise, with a spectrum more similar to that of speech. The test participants in [5] were also well motivated, and situated in a lab environment without distractions. But the achievement is still astonishing.

In a recently developed test [7] aimed to investigate the impact hearing protectors have on the perception of speech in noise, it was shown that in a low frequency type of noise test normal hearing test participants were able to correctly

identify more than 50% of the words presented at an SNR of -17 dB.

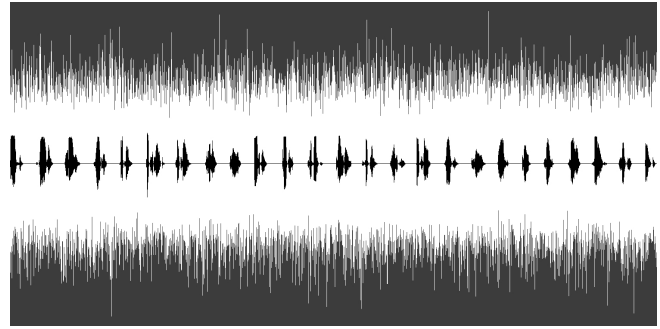


Figure 1: Time signals of words (black signal) and white noise (white signal) at an SNR of -18 dB.

This was again under perfect circumstances, but the result supports the Blue-Terry & Letowskistudy [6]. In fact, in the more recent study [7], which had a more challenging low frequency type of noise, test subjects quite frequently managed to correctly identify four consecutive words in an SNR of less than -20 dB. This could happen by chance, given the limited number of words used in the test, but it would (almost) literally be a one-in-a-million chance. It’s safe to say that the capability of the human auditory system is remarkable.

2 Challenges and Risks

The great capability of our hearing is valuable in our daily life, but also poses challenges. Being exposed to undesirable sounds affects our quality of life, and even our health. The sensitivity of our hearing, and the fact that it never sleeps, complicates the planning of cities, roads, railroads, airports, industries, etc. For many people one of the biggest financial investments of their lives will be buying a house or a car. Because of our sensitive hearing, the design of houses have to be more complex due to the need for soundproofing and they thus become more expensive to build. In a modern car, where reducing weight is critical for reducing the fuel consumption, soundproofing may account for up to 25% of the total weight [8a, 8b]. Even if it’s just half of that it will still add more weight to a normal car than does the engine and transmission. There’s no doubt that acoustics has a major impact on our society, and on our lives.

The high dynamic range adds further complications. We use decibels, which is a logarithmic scale. But most people cannot intuitively interpret a scale where $80+90=90$, or 92, depending on whether we are adding intensities or sound pressures. And because the sensitivity of our hearing is level- as well as frequency dependent- we need different weighting schemes, such as dB(A) and dB(C). In spite of great effort there are still no perfect measures neither to predict perceived loudness, nor to accurately predict the risk of acquiring a hearing damage. There are several measures available, but they all have shortcomings. The capability and complexity of our hearing is simply too great to allow it to be explained by simple metrics. Consequently, one can often see the wrong unit of measure being used, and the right one being misinterpreted.

ⁱ One nanowatt per square meter equals 30 dB.

ⁱⁱ A source producing white noise will, on average, produce the same power at all frequencies. However, per frequency band the power will increase by 3dB/octave which is why it’s perceived as a quite sharp, high pitched, type of noise.

Music is an important part of most societies. It's a major industry, and plays a major role in many people's lives. When it comes to loudspeakers and headphones the hunt for perfect fidelity or for the perfect sound - which may not necessarily be the same as perfect fidelity - is still on. Manufacturers of microphones are still trying to match the frequency range as well as the dynamic range of our hearing. It's still is a major challenge to match the capability of our hearing.

While the lower end of the dynamic range is challenging from an engineering point of view, the opposite end of the range is problematic from a quite different point of view. It's fairly easy to produce high sound levels. All you need is a hammer and a hard surface to produce peak levels that are hazardous. But the short duration of the peaks make us underestimate the level [10]. Most modern movie theaters are capable of producing sound levels that are damaging, not to mention the levels produced at many music events. An intense light is unpleasant, and we will automatically look aside or close our eyes. Our hearing, on the other hand, can tolerate harmful levels without necessarily causing us any pain or discomfort; when listening to music, it may even provide great pleasure. The sound of roaring engines may also be perceived as immensely enjoyable, while inflicting permanent damage to the hearing of the listener. Unfortunately the annoyance (or perceived pleasure) generated by loud sounds, does not correlate with their potential to cause hearing damage. And even if we would like to, we can neither close our ears nor 'look away' from sound.

There was a time when reproducing music at high sound levels required some effort. Powerful amplifiers were heavy and expensive, and had to be combined with big, bulky, loudspeakers. Today we just have to buy an mp3 player and a pair of headphones to produce extreme levels. As previously mentioned, it's easy to produce high sound levels in a small enclosure such as an ear canal. This has been recognized in Europe, where there's a directive requiring compliance to a standard stating the maximum permissible output voltage of music players, as well as the maximum sensitivity of headphones [11]. The combination of the two ensures that the average level does not exceed 100 dB(A). However, for workers there's a European directive [12] stating an exposure limit equivalent to 87 dB(A) for eight hours, and many countries have enforced a more strict limit equivalent to 85 dB(A) for eight hours. With a music player producing 100 dB(A) a dose equivalent to 85 dB(A) for eight hours will be reached within 15 minutes. To reach the 87 dB(A) limit will take an additional 10 minutes.

For some reason we seem to accept damage to our hearing when listening to music, or attending motor shows and other venues with high sound levels. But it's not acceptable at our workplace, and we would most likely not accept damage to our eyes when watching a movie or when attending concerts and other events.

When our hearing is damaged it will often result in a shift of our hearing threshold, which can be measured. But again, our hearing cannot be described by simple metrics.

Hearing damage may result in many other types of complications, such as tinnitus, reduced dynamic range, reduced frequency resolution, reduced temporal resolution, and hyperacusis (abnormal sensitivity and pain caused by even relatively quiet sounds). As a result, the performance and capability of our hearing may be greatly reduced also in ways that are more difficult to quantify, and for which a hearing aid cannot compensate. A common complaint among people with a sensorineural hearing loss is that they have difficulties following a conversation in the presence of an interfering noise - especially if that noise is made up from other people's voices, i.e. babble or cocktail noise. When our amazing ability to understand speech in noise is reduced it may greatly affect our professional, as well as social, life. Hearing damage may also affect our ability to appreciate music and sounds of nature.

Communication is a vital part of our life. Today, phones are used more than ever for various forms of communication. When it comes to speech communication a mobile phone, or cell-phone, is quite an advanced piece of equipment. Again, our excellent hearing makes it a challenge to design the device. When comparing a modern phone to an old land-line phone the most striking difference is perhaps in the shape of the device. A traditional land-line telephone is typically designed so that the mouthpiece, i.e. the microphone, can be positioned close to the mouth. Further, the earpiece is typically designed so that it can cover most of the outer ear, thus creating a baffle for the loudspeaker (earpiece) and also allow ambient noise to be reduced by at least partially blocking the outer ear. The long distance between the loudspeaker and the microphone will also reduce the risk for acoustics feedback and echoes. A traditional land-line phone is thus well suited for its purpose, unlike a modern mobile phone.

Not only do size constraints on modern phones require small components, but the microphone is often positioned far away from the mouth of the talker, and relatively close to the earpiece. As a result, the microphone gain needs to be high, and the sound from the earpiece is easily picked up by the microphone. This sound will not only transmit via the surrounding air on the exterior side of the phone, but also via the interior of the phone, and it may be air-borne as well as structure-borne, or a combination of the two. In fact, at the microphone, the far end voice may be considerably louder than that of the person talking into the microphone. This calls for several actions. Without active echo cancellation in the near end phone, the far end talker would hear her or his own voice as a clear, distinct, and loud echo. To cancel out the echo without affecting the desired signal is difficult - especially when using miniature speaker components pushed to the limit, providing a fair amount of distortion. A great distance between the mouth and the microphone makes the signal to noise ratio at the microphone poor if the phone is used in a noisy environment. To lessen this problem, phones use multi-microphone solutions for noise suppression. Further noise suppression may be applied by the near end phone, by the network, as well as by the far end phone. To reduce noise is not difficult. The challenge is to do so without affecting the quality of the speech signal. To

actually improve intelligibility is even more difficult because of our amazing ability to perceive speech in noise. When applying noise reduction, inevitably the speech signal will be affected to some extent, and this may instead have a negative effect on our ability to correctly perceive what is being said - even if the SNR is improved.

Our phones do not only reduce noise, they also intentionally add noise. To reduce the bandwidth required for a phone call every cell-phone has a voice detection system and will only transmit a signal when it detects a speech signal. At the receiving side, the far end, it may therefore become quiet when there's a pause in the speech at the near end. However, we constantly use our hearing as a tool to analyze what's going on around us, and we are likely to assume that a call has been terminated if it becomes perfectly quiet. On the receiving end the phone will therefore generate a noise similar to that of the background noise from the far end, and in every pause it will apply this artificial noise, called comfort noise. There is, of course, additional signal processing going on during a voice call. To further improve the perceived sound quality there's compression and equalization applied, not to mention all the coding, recoding, and decoding going on in the phones and networks. However, since our hearing is so well adapted for recognizing natural speech in noise it's again difficult to actually improve intelligibility. On the contrary, signal processing can easily reduce both the intelligibility and the perceived quality of a voice call.

Another, related, area is speech recognition and text-to-speech. Every smartphone has some form of text-to-speech engine installed or available for download. They can do an excellent job, and it's not always easy to tell the difference between a genuine human voice and an artificial one, at least not if there's a background noise adding some degree of masking. However, many words are spelled the same but pronounced differently, and have different meanings, i.e. heteronyms such as address, bow, row, wind, etc. These words will generally be used in some kind of context making it obvious to a human how to interpret, and pronounce, the words. This task is much more difficult for a phone or a computer. We use the very same ability when we interpret speech where homophones may be an issue, i.e. words pronounced the same way having different meanings.

If a speech signal contains homophones, is too soft to be clearly perceived, if there's an interfering sound masking a major part of the speech, or when a word is mispronounced, we use additional cues. The subject and context of the conversation, the situation and general circumstance, and, not the least, specific visual cues, may dramatically improve our ability to understand what's being said. This is why the speech recognition of our smartphones cannot compare to that of a real person. Our ability to recognize patterns, and to 'fill in the gaps' is quite remarkable. This is partly why we, under perfect circumstances, can correctly recognize words even when the signal to noise ratio is less than -20 dB. However, this ability may backfire. When we fill in the gaps we sometimes get it wrong. As a result we cannot trust our hearing. An obvious proof of this is all the internet sites posting

examples of misheard lyricsⁱⁱⁱ. On a more serious note, the fact that we quite frequently mishear can also cause or worsen disputes and conflicts.

3 Conclusion

In conclusion, the capability of human hearing is truly phenomenal. It has a great impact on our lives and our society, and still poses challenges for engineers. Unfortunately it's also very susceptible to damage, and we can't trust our intuition when assessing the risk related to a noise exposure. We need to recognize this fact, and make sure we protect our hearing if we don't want to lose our ability to enjoy music and sounds of nature, or lose our amazing ability to understand speech also in challenging environments. And finally, as much as we would like to, we cannot always trust our hearing.

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Editorial Note: This manuscript is published as an invited tutorial paper and meets peer-review criteria that are different than for regular research papers.

ⁱⁱⁱ Recommended phrases to use when searching for misheard lyrics: "my ears are aight", "misheard lyrics blinkbox music survey", and "commonly misheard lyrics".

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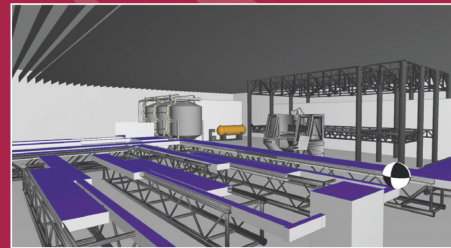
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Production Plants

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ACOUSTICS WEEK IN CANADA 2016

September 21-23, 2016, Vancouver, British Columbia

Conference Co-chairs: Kathy Pichora-Fuller, University of Toronto
Clair Wakefield, Wakefield Acoustics, Victoria, BC

Welcome to Vancouver!

Vancouver looks forward to welcoming delegates to the 2016 Acoustics Week in Canada. Acoustics researchers, professionals, educators, and students from across the country are welcomed to Canada's scenic West Coast for three days of plenary lectures and technical sessions. The Canadian Acoustical Association Annual General Meeting will be held in conjunction with the conference, along with the Acoustical Standards Committee Meeting and an exhibition of acoustical equipment and services. There will be an opening reception on Wednesday September 21st, at the end of the first day of the conference, and the Awards Banquet will be held the next evening, on Thursday September 22nd. The World Congress of Audiology is an associated event that will be held only a few blocks away earlier in the same week from September 18th-21st.

The Canadian Acoustical Association conference will be held at the Sutton Place Hotel, a short walk from the Robson Street shopping area and Stanley Park with its over 1000 acres of land where you can visit the Vancouver Aquarium or enjoy walks in the forest, on the beach or along over 20 km of the Seawall. Vancouver is "spectacular by nature". It is a truly unique and world-class city. It has a mild climate, is safe, clean and friendly. You will find a blend of cosmopolitan amenities, natural splendor and cultural attractions. There are stadiums, dining, shops, art galleries, museums and entertainment within walking distance or easily accessible by a public transportation system of "Sky Trains" and buses. Or you could rent a bicycle and use the network of specialized bike lanes to get around the city like a local. It is a great city to see with your family.

There are lots of exciting options if you have time to extend your travels in conjunction with the conference. Vancouver is 1.5 hours from Whistler and 3 hours from Seattle. If you want to go further, then it is a 1.5-hour sail on BC Ferries through the Gulf Islands to visit Victoria on Vancouver Island. Or you could take a cruise to Alaska from Vancouver before the close of the season in early October.

Plenary Lectures

Each day of the conference will begin with a plenary lecture by a leading expert.

Wednesday September 21st: **Judy R. Dubno** from the Medical University of South Carolina will talk about age-related hearing loss and how interdisciplinary teams can advance research and practice in acoustics.

Thursday September 22nd: **Thais Morata** from the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) and the Center for Disease Control (CDC) will talk about hearing loss prevention in 2016 and modern ways to communicate to the public about hearing health and noise.

Friday September 23rd: **Bryan Gick and Sid Fels** from the University of British Columbia will talk about interdisciplinary approaches for advancing articulatory speech theory and synthesis by combining linguistics with electrical and computer engineering.

Technical Sessions

Technical sessions will cover all major areas of acoustic interest, including Hearing Loss Prevention, Acoustical Standards, Architectural Acoustics, Noise Control, Shock and Vibration, Hearing and Speech Sciences, Musical Acoustics, Underwater Acoustics, Marine Bioacoustics. If you would like to propose and/or organize a special session on a specific topic **please contact Co-Chair Kathy Pichora-Fuller as soon as possible** (conference@caa-aca.ca).

Paper Submissions

The abstract deadline is June 15th, 2016.

Two-page summaries for publication in the proceedings of Canadian Acoustics are due by August 1st, 2016. Please see the conference website for further details.

Exhibition and Sponsorship

There will be an exhibition area for acoustical equipment, products, and services on September 22nd, 2016. If you or your company is interested in exhibiting, or if you would be interested in sponsoring a conference social event, technical session, coffee breaks, or student prizes, **please contact Co-Chair Clair Wakefield as soon as possible** (conference@caa-aca.ca). The conference offers an excellent opportunity to showcase your company and products or services.

Student Participation, Scholarships and Prizes

Students are enthusiastically encouraged to attend the conference and to submit papers. Students whose papers are accepted for presentation can apply for a student conference bursary that will cover one night of accommodation at the Sutton Place Hotel and free registration. Information about applying for a student conference bursary for the conference will be posted soon on the conference website. The deadline will be June 15th, 2016.

Student presenters are also eligible to win prizes for the best paper presentations (three prizes of \$500). See the website of the Canadian Acoustical Association for more details about the presentation prizes and other awards for students. Note that the deadline to apply for other CAA student awards is April 30th, 2016.

Hotel Information

The Sutton Place Hotel is located in the heart of downtown Vancouver on Burrard Street near Robson Street. It features a signature restaurant and wine merchant, and an elegance that few hotels can rival, with European charm and exceptional service. The basic room rate for the conference is \$199/night (single or double) plus taxes, including the following:

- **Complimentary Internet:** wireless/high speed internet in guestrooms and wireless internet in function rooms.
- **Health Club and Pool:** Access to the fitness facility and swimming pool complimentary to all overnight guests.
- **The Sutton Shopper Program:** The Sutton Shopper Program, exclusive to the Sutton Place Hotel, will be offered to every guest with the group. This program enables guests to receive discounts between 10% - 30% at over fifty shops and services along the Robson Street shopping corridor.
- **Pre/Post Rates:** The guestroom rates will be extended to our group 3 days prior and 3 days following the inclusive dates of your meeting, subject to availability at the time of booking.

Direct reservations must be made prior to Friday, August 18, 2016. To make reservations, please state that you are coming for the “**Canadian Acoustical Association 2016 Conference**”.

Telephone: **1-866-378-8866 (toll-free in Canada and Continental USA)**

Email: **res_vancouver@suttonplace.com**

On Line: **www.vancouver.suttonplace.com**

BOOKING GROUP CODE: VCSEP2016_CAA

Conference Registration

Details will be available shortly at the conference website.

CONFERENCE WEBSITE: <http://awc.caa-aca.ca>

Important Dates

Before Acoustics Week in Canada

April 30th: Deadline for student to apply for CAA awards to be presented at the Awards Banquet at the conference

June 15th: Deadline for submission of abstracts

June 15th: Deadline for student conference bursary applications

August 1st: Deadline for submission of two-page papers

August 18th: Cutoff date for group hotel reservations

September 18th-21st: World Congress of Audiology*

During Acoustics Week in Canada

September 21st: Plenary talk by Judy Dubno

September 21st: Opening reception

September 22nd: Plenary talk by Thais Morata

September 22nd: Exhibits

September 22nd: Annual General Meeting of CAA members

September 22nd: Awards Banquet

September 23rd: Plenary talk by Bryan Gick and Sid Fels

September 23rd: Announcement of Student Presentation Prizes at the closing lunch.

*World Congress of Audiology

For those who may be interested in attending two meetings while in Vancouver, the 33rd World Congress of Audiology (the meeting of the International Society of Audiology) will be held across the road at the Sheraton Wall Centre from September 18th to September 21st. Please see the WCA website for further information: <http://www.wca2016.ca>



Semaine canadienne d'acoustique 2016

21 au 23 septembre 2016, Vancouver, Colombie-Britannique

Coprésidents du congrès: Kathy Pichora-Fuller, University of Toronto
Clair Wakefield, Wakefield Acoustics, Victoria, BC

Bienvenue à Vancouver!

La ville de Vancouver est heureuse d'accueillir les délégués au congrès de la Semaine canadienne d'acoustique 2016. Les chercheurs et les professionnels en acoustique, de même que les éducateurs et les étudiants de partout au pays sont invités sur la côte pittoresque de l'Ouest canadien pour trois jours de séances plénières et scientifiques portant sur l'acoustique. L'assemblée générale annuelle de l'Association canadienne d'acoustique aura lieu pendant le congrès, ainsi que la rencontre du comité de normalisation en acoustique et une exposition d'équipements et de services. Il y aura une réception à l'ouverture du congrès dans la soirée du mercredi 21 septembre ainsi qu'un banquet de la remise des prix, en soirée du jeudi 22 septembre. Le Congrès mondial en audiologie prendra place dans la même semaine, soit du 18 au 21 septembre, et ce, seulement qu'à deux coins de rue du congrès de la Semaine canadienne d'acoustique

Le congrès de l' Association canadienne d'acoustique se tiendra à l'hôtel Sutton Place, situé à quelques pas des fameuses boutiques de la rue Robson, de même que du Parc Stanley où vous pouvez aussi visiter l'aquarium de Vancouver. Vous pourrez aussi aller faire de longues promenades en forêt, sur la plage ou encore sur le long des 20 km du Seawall et tout ça, à de très courtes distances de l'hôtel. En plus de sa nature mondialement reconnue, la ville de Vancouver jouit d'un climat bien tempéré. C'est une ville où l'on se sent en sécurité et entouré de gens sympathiques. Vancouver regorge d'attraits cosmopolites, tant sur le plan culturel que sur celui de ses richesses naturelles. On y trouve aussi un stade, des restaurants et cafés, des boutiques et galeries d'art, des musées de même que d'autres attraits et tous sont à des distances facilement faisables à la marche ou accessibles avec les transports publics, sans oublier le fameux «Sky Train». Il est aussi possible de louer un vélo et les multiples pistes cyclables de la ville vous permettront de vous promener en ville comme si vous étiez un résident permanent. Vancouver est aussi une ville merveilleuse à visiter en famille.

En plus des multiples attraits de Vancouver, il y aussi des endroits très intéressants à visiter à proximité de la ville. Par exemple, on peut se rendre à Whistler en 1 heure et demie, ou encore à Seattle (États-Unis) en trois heures. Il y a aussi les petites îles du golfe et même l'île de Vancouver où l'on peut se rendre en traversier, et ce à moins d'une heure et demie de la ville, sans oublier les croisières en Alaska qui sont fonction jusqu'au début du mois d'octobre.

Séances plénières et scientifiques

Chaque jour du congrès débutera avec une séance plénière prononcée par un expert.

Mercredi 21 septembre: **Judy R. Dubno** de la *Medical University of South Carolina* viendra parler sur la perte d'audition associée au vieillissement et comment les équipes interdisciplinaires peuvent faire avancer la recherche et les pratiques en acoustique.

Jeudi 22 septembre: **Thais Morata** de la *National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health* and et du *Center for Disease Control* viendra parler de la prévention de la perte auditive en 2016 et des méthodes modernes de parler en publique de la santé auditive et du bruit.

Vendredi 23 septembre: **Bryan Gick et Sid Fels** de l'*University of British Columbia* vont venir parler des approches interdisciplinaires pour l'avancement des théories articulatoires de la parole et de leur synthèse, en combinant les modèles linguistiques, électriques et de génie informatique.

Séances techniques

Il y aura des séances techniques portant sur l'ensemble des sujets en acoustique, soit la prévention de la perte auditive, les normes d'acoustiques, l'acoustique architecturale, le contrôle de bruit, les chocs et les vibrations, les sciences de l'audition et de la parole, l'acoustique en musique, l'acoustique sous-marine et la bioacoustique marine.

Si vous êtes intéressés à organiser ou à suggérer une séance spéciale sur un sujet précis, s'il-vous-plaît communiquez le plus rapidement possible avec la coprésidente du congrès, **Kathy Pichora-Fuller** à l'adresse suivante conference@caa-aca.ca.

Soumissions des propositions de communication

La date limite pour la soumission d'un résumé de présentation est le 15 juin 2016.

La date limite pour la soumission des articles résumés de 2 pages qui seront publiés dans les actes de congrès est le 1^{er} août 2016. Pour plus de détails, prière de consulter le site internet du congrès.

Exposition et commandites

Il y aura un espace d'exposition pour les équipements, les produits et les services en acoustique le 22 septembre 2016. Si vous, ou votre entreprise, êtes intéressés à exposer ou commanditer un événement social du congrès, une séance technique, une pause-café ou des prix d'étudiants, **prières de communiquer avec le coprésident du congrès Clair Wakefield le plus rapidement possible** au conference@caa-aca.ca. Le congrès offre une excellente occasion de présenter votre entreprise, vos produits ou vos services.

Participation des étudiants, bourses et prix

C'est avec enthousiasme que les étudiants sont invités à participer au congrès et d'y présenter leurs travaux de recherche. Les étudiants dont la proposition de présentation sera acceptée pourront faire une demande de bourse qui couvrira les frais pour une nuitée à l'hôtel Sutton Place, de même que les frais d'inscription au congrès. Les informations au sujet de la demande de cette bourse étudiante seront bientôt

affichées sur le site internet du congrès. La date limite pour soumettre une demande de bourse est le 15 juin 2016.

Les étudiants qui présenteront leurs travaux sont aussi éligibles aux prix des meilleures présentations (trois prix de \$500). Pour plus de détails au sujet des prix pour les présentations et autres reconnaissances pour les étudiants, prières de consulter le site internet de l'Association. Il est à noter que la date limite pour soumettre sa candidature au Prix étudiant de l'Association canadienne d'acoustique est 30 avril 2016.

Information sur l'hôtel du congrès

L'hôtel Sutton Place est située au centre-ville de Vancouver sur la rue Burrard, tout près de la rue Robson. En plus d'un restaurant signature et d'un marchand de vin, cet hôtel au charme européen et d'une élégance inégalée offre un service exceptionnel.

Le tarif de base pour une chambre pendant le congrès est de \$199/nuit (simple ou double) et les taxes sont en sus. Ce tarif inclut les services suivants:

- **Service internet gratuit:** l'internet sans fil et à haute vitesse est disponible dans toutes les chambres et les salles de réunion.
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Pour profiter des tarifs réduits, vous pouvez directement réserver une chambre en indiquant que vous êtes un délégués au congrès de la "**L'Association canadienne d'acoustique**".

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Inscription au congrès

Les détails seront bientôt affichés sur le site internet du congrès: **<http://awc.caa-aca.ca>**

Dates importantes

Avant la Semaine canadienne d'acoustique

30 avril: date limite pour soumettre une demande pour le Prix étudiant de l'Association de l'acoustique canadienne, qui sera remis lors du banquet.

15 juin: date limite pour la soumission des résumés de présentation

15 juin: date limite pour soumettre une demande de bourse étudiante

1^{er} août: date limite pour soumettre l'article résumé de deux pages à paraître dans les actes de congrès.

18 août: dernier jour pour profiter du tarif réduit pour le séjour à l'hôtel du congrès

18 au 21 septembre: Congrès mondial en audiologie*

Pendant la Semaine canadienne d'acoustique

21 septembre: Séance plénière de Judy Dubno

21 septembre: Cérémonie d'ouverture

22 septembre: Séance plénière de Thais Morata

22 septembre: Exposition

22 septembre: Assemblée générale annuelle pour les membres de l'Association de l'acoustique canadienne

22 septembre: Banquet de la remise des prix

23 septembre: Séance plénière de Bryan Gick et Sid Fels

23 septembre: Annonce du prix pour la meilleure présentation des étudiants au déjeuner de fermeture.

***Congrès mondial en audiologie**

Pour ceux qui souhaitent participer à deux congrès pendant leur séjour en Vancouver, sachez qu'il sera possible de le faire puisque le 33^e Congrès mondial en audiologie (organisé par la Société internationale d'audiologie) aura lieu juste de l'autre côté de la rue au *Sheraton Wall Centre* du 18 au 21 septembre. Pour plus de détails, consulter le site internet du congrès: <http://www.wca2016.ca>

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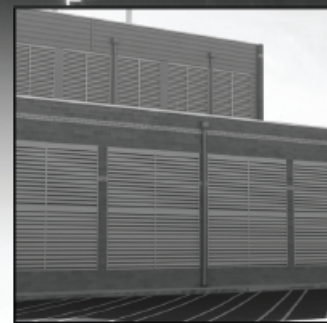
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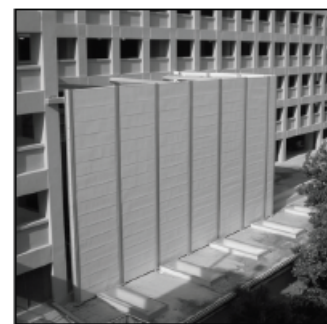
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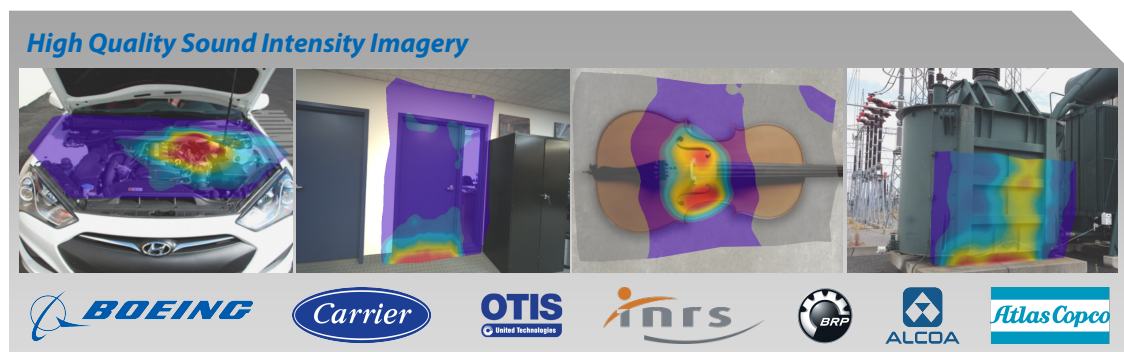
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Tri-Agency Open Access Policy on Publications

The good news? Publication and copyright policies of Canadian Acoustics journal are fully compliant with these new rules! That's another good reason for researchers to publish in Canadian Acoustics!

The Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC) and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) are federal granting agencies that promote and support research, research training and innovation within Canada. As publicly funded organizations, the Agencies have a fundamental interest in promoting the availability of findings that result from the research they fund, including research publications and data, to the widest possible audience, and at the earliest possible opportunity. Societal advancement is made possible through widespread and barrier-free access to cutting-edge research and knowledge, enabling researchers, scholars, clinicians, policymakers, private sector and not-for-profit organizations and the public to use and build on this knowledge. According to a new policy, all grant recipients that were funded in whole or in part by NSERC or SSHRC for grants awarded May 1, 2015 and onward (January 1, 2008 for CIHR) are required to ensure that any peer-reviewed journal publications arising from Agency-supported research are freely accessible within 12 months of publication.

May 28th 2015

Looking for a job in Acoustics?

There are many job offers listed on the website of the Canadian Acoustical Association!

You can see them online, under <http://www.caa-aca.ca/jobs/>

August 5th 2015

CAA is now social!

Canadian Acoustical Association is moving to the social media!

Find us on social media: Twitter: @CanAcoustical Facebook: [facebook.com/canadianacousticalassociation](https://www.facebook.com/canadianacousticalassociation)

December 14th 2015

ICA Early Career Award

Congratulations to Frank Russo for receiving the ICA Early Career Award!

The winner of the 2016 ICA Early Career award is Frank Russo. Professor Russo works in the Department of Psychology at Ryerson University in Toronto, Canada, and is the current President of the Canadian Acoustical Association.

February 8th 2016

InterNOISE 2016

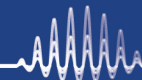
Internoise 2016 will be held in Hamburg, Germany, 21-24 August 2016.

Abstracts in any area of noise and vibration control are welcome. The abstract deadline is 10 March 2016, and final papers are due 17 May 2016. Abstracts can be submitted online at www.internoise2016.org.

February 16th 2016

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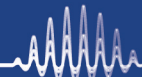
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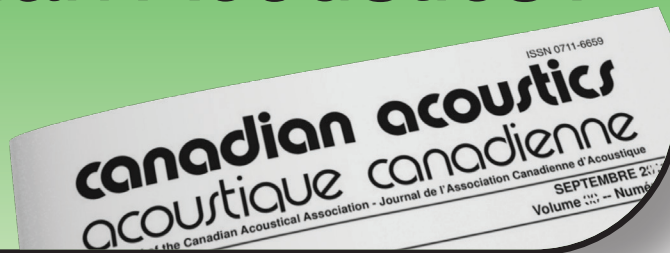
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