

The Science of Talking

Speech is Variable

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Clear and casual speech styles

Work in pairs for this task. Using the speech software Praat, record the following sentence in two speaking styles:

“the young children loved the beach”

How to record the sentences in Praat

In the Object window, go to New > Record mono sound

Press Record, say the sentence *normally as if talking to a friend*, press Stop. Give file a meaningful name and click Save to list.

Press Record again, say the sentence *as if talking to someone who is hearing impaired*, press Stop. Name file and press Save to list & close.

You will have 2 objects in the object list. Save both files by going to Write > Write to wav file.

Interpretation

Listen to the two sentences and make notes of any auditory differences between the two styles:

Make a spectrogram of the two files (highlight each file and click Edit; if a spectrogram doesn't appear, click on Spectrum > Show spectrogram). Compare the two speaking styles:

Do the sentences differ in overall duration?

Do individual words differ in duration? e.g. *children*, *beach*

Does the pitch sound more variable in casual compared to clear or vice versa?

Do the vowels sound hyper-articulated in the clear speech compared to the casual? If yes, does this happen for all vowels or only in some words?

Make notes of any other differences you observe between the two speech styles.
