

Speech Perception by Monolingual and Bilingual Dravidian Speakers under Adverse Listening Conditions

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Abstract : The precise perception of spoken language is influenced by several variables, including the listeners' native language, distance between speaker and listener, reverberation and background noise. When noise is present in an acoustic environment, it masks the speech signal resulting in reduction in the redundancy of the acoustic and linguistic cues of speech. There is strong evidence that bilinguals face difficulty in speech perception for their second language compared with monolingual speakers under adverse listening conditions such as presence of background noise. This difficulty persists even for speakers who are highly proficient in their second language and is greater in those who have learned the second language later in life. The present study aimed to assess the performance of monolingual (Telugu speaking) and bilingual (Tamil as first language and Telugu as second language) speakers on Telugu speech perception task under quiet and noisy environments. The results indicated that both the groups performed similar in both quiet and noisy environments. The findings of the present study are not in accordance with the findings of previous studies which strongly report poorer speech perception in adverse listening conditions such as noise with bilingual speakers for their second language compared with monolinguals.

Keywords : monolingual, bilingual, second language, speech perception, quiet, noise

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