

Influence of pitch and speaker gender on identification of creaky voice in Australian English

Creaky voice is a non-modal voice quality generally described as sounding pulse-like and low in pitch. While empirical studies have produced mixed results when it comes to creak prevalence by speaker gender, creaky voice is stereotypically associated with women's speech in English. Past research has investigated whether listeners are facilitated in their identification of creaky voice through the degree of pitch differences between modal and creaky voice or by social biases associating creak with women's speech. Results, however, have been relatively inconclusive (Davidson, 2019). In this talk, I present results from a perception study of Australian English that aimed to address this question using highly controlled stimuli. 258 listeners were asked to identify whether they heard creak or not when presented with stimuli manipulated for f_0 and creaky voice produced by a male and a female speaker of Australian English. Accuracy data and response times will both be discussed. Findings suggest that speakers of Australian English rely less on social biases when identifying creaky voice and instead make decisions based on pitch, modulated by experience-based expectations about typical pitch ranges according to speaker gender.