Test doc

On Doc Hawthorne:

English 200 with Dr. Hawthorne. It was one of the best classes, english or otherwise, that I have ever been a part of. The majority of this, I believe, was due to the teacher and her teaching style. Dr. Hawthorne is just really a motivating, passionate, and extremely relatable person. She pushed us to the very best of our ability, and my writing has much improved because of her. She also had a way of bringing together our entire class, even though we often had a breadth of differing viewpoints. Dr. H would make us delve down to the root issue, the core belief, and once we got there, the rest we could do on our own. During class discussions, for example, she'd pose a pivotal theme or question, and then allow us to figure it out ourselves without much interruption.  This also brings me to my next point: she believed in her students, and it showed. She explained new topics without condescension, offered advice but not a detailed roadmap, and gave us the independence that allowed us to mature not only as readers and writers, but as students.

I recently finished reading the papers, “Acoustic properties of naturally produced clear speech at normal speaking rates,” and, “Effect of Energy Equalization on the Intelligibility of Speech in Fluctuating Background Interference for Listeners with Hearing Impairment." I spent a good amount of time reading through the material, digging up more information through the cited references, researching current compression amplifications systems, etc.— I wanted to get a more in-depth understanding before talking with you again.

For the paper on clear speech at normal speed, I am most interested in the strategies that various talkers used to produce clear/normal speech. My understanding is that, while people typically use similar strategies for producing clear/slow speech which results in an more uniform acoustic signature, clear speech at normal speeds is more variable because of physical restraints of the speakers themselves. An imposed minimum speed on human speakers may, as written in the discussion portion, “hinder simultaneous expression of such a large number of acoustic properties as typically found in clear/slow speech.” Since this physiological limit is a human characteristic, that had me wondering: do you think it would be productive for someone to recreate this experiment using computer-generated or altered sentences? The speaking rate variable would hypothetically be further isolated. The results could also be compared to the original study to analyze the difference between naturally versus artificial produced speech both at normal rates, so the patterns of human speakers at one speaking rate can be further examined.

Even though I reached out to you specifically about clear vs conversational speech patterns, I got really absorbed into your research on energy equalization and its potential for application. I never knew that for people with normal hearing, a fluctuating noise background actually aids speech intelligibility. After learning this, though, it made intuitive sense to me that masking release is diminished for the hearing impaired, even with hearing aids.

I do have a couple questions that I was hoping you could expand a bit upon, centered around the interpretation of results. In the calculation for normalized masking release, it’s necessary to discount situations where MR rises due to a decrease in performance in continuous noise backgrounds. I understand that without this "factoring out" process, NMR would not be very useful since it would then be based on two different variables, without indication of which variable changed. Since one of the benefits of EEQ is that performance in continuous noise is not negatively affected, would it be useful to have a graph comparing the various processing types solely in continuous noise using a metric other than NMR?