

530 Proposal

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Much research has investigated perceptual learning, the process whereby listeners exposed to a novel speech pattern from an unfamiliar speaker. A listener's perceptual system shifts rapidly; for instance, vowel perception can shift solely on the basis of the vowels in a preceding sentence (?). Boundaries between fricative categories can be changed by exposure to relatively small amount of ambiguous tokens, but they must be associated with a lexical item (?).

However, besides the categorical distinction separating words from nonwords, little is known about the factors that influence linking an shifted or ambiguous production of a sound with a category through a lexical item. Most studies looking at boundaries between fricative categories use lexical items ending with a fricative.