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Title of presentation: PhoN: Phonology of Flapping in Non-Words

Abstract

English speakers often pronounce a /t/ or /d/ between vowels as a flap—a sound characterized by a quick tap to the palate. One resulting issue is that the word "waiting" sounds exactly like "wading" because of the flap. When these flap homophones are spoken out of context, English speakers choose meaning based on each word's frequency. This bias influences participants to perceive "waiting" over "wading" because the former is more frequent. Farris-Trimble & Reid (2018) found that of two equally frequent words, participants perceived the word that contained /t/ more often than /d/. So, which of /t/ or /d/ is perceived when there is no frequency information? Since made-up words have no frequency, the current study has participants spell them. A word like [bɪrəl] is heard, and one of "bittle" or "biddle" are expected responses. Preliminary data suggest a /d/ bias, contradicting Farris-Trimble & Reid's (2018) findings.