

Bi-modal pause distributions in spontaneous EFL speech

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The present paper involves a psycholinguistic experiment aimed at the analysis of pauses in spontaneous speech of speakers of English as a foreign language (EFL). 15 EFL speakers (further referred to as 'participants') were recruited at Stockholm University, Sweden. Their respective controls (N = 15) were speakers of English as their first language (L1) from Perth, Western Australia. The participants and their respective controls were asked to produce a spontaneous narrative in English involving their favourite day. Spontaneous narratives were recorded and analysed in PRAAT and in MatLab respectively. Data analysis revealed two bi-modal distributions of pauses in the participants' and the controls' speech. Results of the present experiment supported previous findings (Kirsner et al., 2005; Rosen et al., 2003) which indicated that natural speech in the English language was characterized by bi-modal pause distributions. The analysis of pause and speech duration distributions suggested that cognitive mechanisms involved in spontaneous speech production in EFL were not different from those involved in speech production in English L1.

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- Rosen, K., Kent, R., & Duffy, J. (2003). Lognormal distribution of pause length in ataxic dysarthria. *Clinical Linguistics and Phonetics*, 17, 6, 469-86.