Phonetics Colloquium at Saarland University

Winter Semester 2021/22

All talks in this semester will be organised as distance talks via Zoom. An invitation to the respective Zoom meeting will be send to all members of the department of "Language Science and Technology". External visitors should send an e-mail to <trouvain@lst.uni-saarland.de> to get the access code.

Wednesday, 8 Dec 2021, at 2:15 PM.

Omnia Ibrahim (UdS)

The effect of predictability on German stop voicing is phonologically selective

Cross-linguistic evidence suggests that syllables in predictable contexts have shorter duration than in unpredictable contexts. However, it is not clear if predictability uniformly affects phonetic cues of a phonological feature in a segment. The current study investigated the effect of predictability on the durational correlates of the phonological stop voicing contrast in German, viz. \( VOT \) and closure duration (CD). The target stop consonants /b, p, d, k/ occurred in stressed CV syllables in polysyllabic words embedded in a sentence, with either voiced or voiceless preceding contexts. The syllable occurred in either a low or a high predictable condition, which was based on a syllable-level trigram language model. We measured VOT and CD of the target consonants (voiced vs. \( VOT \) and closure duration (CD)). Our results showed an interaction effect of predictability and target consonants on VOT, but a uniform effect on closure duration. This interaction effect on a primary cue like VOT indicates a selective effect of predictability on VOT, but not on CD. This suggests that the effect of predictability is sensitive to phonological relevance of a language-specific phonetic cue.