## ABSTRACT

## Trade-off between speech clarity and context in dysarthric productions

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This investigation compared changes in speech clarity as a function of speaking context. It is well documented that words produced in sentence contexts yield higher intelligibility than words in isolation for speakers with mild to moderate dysarthria. Top down listener variables and speaker clarity/coarticulation appear to be at play. To tease apart the relative contribution of speaker and listener variables, the current study aimed to quantify differences in word intelligibility by speaking task. Eighteen speakers with dysarthria produced a set of 25 words in isolation and within the context of a sentence. For each speaker, a group of listeners then transcribed a randomized sample of the isolated productions, single words extracted from the sentences, and the full unaltered sentences. Preliminary findings from 3 listeners indicated that accuracy for isolated words was highest, followed by words in context and finally extracted words. Speech clarity is of greater importance for isolated words since listeners will not have access to context. Yet the same word produced in a sentence allows listeners to employ top-down processing. This finding is consistent with Lindblom's H&H hypothesis. Data collection on the remaining listeners will shed light on the influence of dysarthria severity on this clarity-context trade off.