

BENEFIT OF UNILATERAL AND BILATERAL EDULINK FITTINGS ON SPEECH PERCEPTION IN NOISE IN YOUNG ADULTS

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This study was conducted to measure the benefit of EduLink fitting on speech perception in noise, as well as to determine the correlation between ear advantage with benefit of EduLink. Twenty-four normal hearing young adults between the ages 20 and 30 years old participated in this study. The Malay Hearing in Noise Test (myHINT) was used to obtain the reception threshold for sentences (RTS), which was defined as the signal-to-noise ratio (SNR) in which 50% of sentences were correctly repeated. Each subject was tested in four different conditions; without EduLink, with unilateral right EduLink, unilateral left EduLink and bilateral EduLink fitting. EduLink's benefit was defined as the improvement in RTS with EduLink compared to without EduLink usage. Subjects also underwent Double Dichotic Test (DDDT) to measure the ear advantage scores. In general, RTS with EduLink fitting was significantly lower than RTS without EduLink fitting [$F(3,69) = 63.38, p < 0.05$]. Comparison between the benefits of bilateral and unilateral EduLink fitting and unilateral left and right EduLink fitting yielded no significant difference [$F(2,46) = 1.72, p > 0.05$]. Pearson correlation also revealed no significant difference between ear advantage scores with any of the EduLink fitting options. These findings suggest that EduLink can help young adults improve the SNR in noisy environment. However, the fitting options would be best decided upon trial since there was no significant difference in the mean benefits of unilateral and bilateral fittings.

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