

Student performance when taught in a noisy environment

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After complaints by students stating that they find it difficult to follow lessons in class a study was performed to identify and analyze the problem. The first problem investigated was to identify the relation between the home language of the lecturer and student and the lecturing language. The second problem investigated was the relation between speech intelligibility and noise levels in class. As speech intelligibility is of utmost importance in learning activities this was used as the measure for the experiments. Two experiments were set up and a representative group of students and lecturers used. The results obtained found that firstly there was a good relation between speech intelligibility and home language. More fundamental was cultural background bias and accent of the speaker vs. that of the class. The most profound influence was found to be the environmental noise on speech intelligibility. The results were presented to management and some steps implemented to address issues such as reverberance and air conditioner related noise.