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EFFECTS OF SPEED OF TALKING ON  
LISTENER'S COMPREHENSION AND  
PERCEPTION OF THE SPEAKER

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A Thesis

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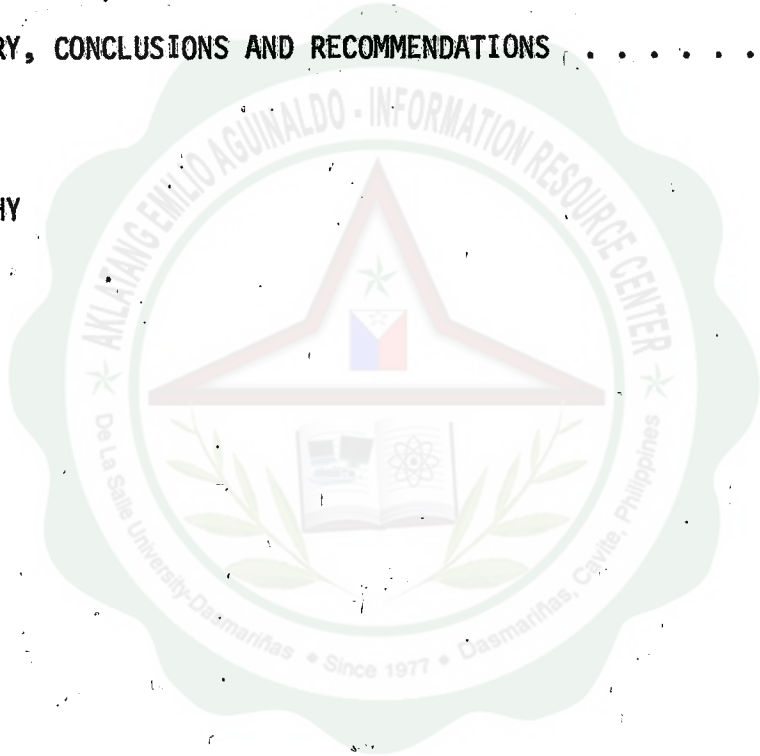


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## ABSTRACT

Previous research have investigated the relationship between speed of talking and listener's comprehension and perception of the speaker. In this experiment, 176 subjects, divided into three groups, listened to a tape-recorded, 1,742-word lecture of either a male or female speaker at one of the three speeds of talking — fast, 174 wpm; normal, 134 wpm; and slow, 102 wpm. Results from the 20 multiple choice item listening comprehension test taken from the Brown-Carlson Listening Comprehension Test, Part E, revealed that listening comprehension is not significantly affected by the rate at which the experimental material is presented. Similarly, using a 3-way analysis of variance, the listener's perception of the speaker, as measured by a specially-constructed semantics differential scale, was found to be significantly different for each of the three speeds of talking. Fast talkers were judged more favorably than the speakers at the normal and slow rates of talking. Hence, the faster the speed of talking, the more positively the speaker is perceived by his audience.

These results are consistent with some earlier findings that differences in listening comprehension is slightly significant, if at all affected by changes in word rate below the 275 wpm upper limit. Findings on the positive relationship between speed of talking and perception of the speaker were also supported. It was concluded that what is important in comprehension of time-compressed speech is that the upper limit necessary for processing speed input is not exceeded, and



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that the speed at which one talks does affect how one is perceived.

