

**2pPP6. On the possible role of MOC efferents in speech reception in noise.** Oded Ghitza (Sensimetrics Corp., 48 Grove St., Somerville, MA 02144, oded@sens.com)

The hypothesis explored in this study is that the MOC efferent system plays an important role in speech reception in the presence of sustained background noise. This talk describes efforts to assess this hypothesis using a test of initial consonant reception (the Diagnostic Rhyme Test) performed by subjects with normal hearing. Activation of selected parts of the efferent system was attempted by presenting speech and noise in various configurations (gated/continuous, monaural/binaural). Initial results of these experiments show a gated/continuous difference analogous to the "masking overshoot" in tone detection. These results are interpreted to support the hypothesis of a significant efferent contribution to initial phone discrimination in noise. [Work supported by AFOSR.]