# THE PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF G AND C<sub>50</sub> IN CLASSROOMS

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#### 1. Abstract

Reverberation time remains the primary indicator of room acoustic response. However, previous work has shown that reverberation time alone can be insufficient to describe the acoustic conditions, particularly in non-diffuse environments such as classrooms where the majority of absorption is typically on one surface.

Alternative parameters have been proposed to evaluate the acoustic response of such rooms: Strength, G, and Speech Clarity,  $C_{50}$ . These correlate better with loudness and speech intelligibility, in the absence of background noise. This paper investigates the practical use of G and  $G_{50}$  to describe the acoustic response of classrooms. Measurements and modelling are used to investigate the spatial variation with frequency, source position, measurement distance, and room size. Correlation between modelled and measured values is investigated.

Guidance on source and receiver positions is proposed to achieve consistent results, so that the results may describe the room rather than one particular measurement set up.

#### 2. Introduction

Reverberation time is an enduring and intuitive descriptor of the room acoustic response. It is used not only as a criterion for room conditions, but also to infer the speech intelligibility and the relationship between sound pressure and sound power level in a room. In rooms that respond approximately in accordance with classical Sabine theory, the reverberation time has deserved its provenance.

However, the acoustic configuration of typical classrooms, with the majority of the absorption concentrated on one surface, do not have an acoustic response that is well described by the reverberation time. Reverberation time is convenient, but not necessarily accurate for determining the purpose for which the acoustic response is sought. The main purposes for determining the acoustic response in classrooms are speech intelligibility and loudness. As speech intelligibility is a function of background noise as well as room response, it is more convenient to separate these aspects of acoustic performance, to use separate descriptors for room acoustic response and for background noise.

The parameters Speech Clarity,  $C_{50}$  and Strength, G, have been proposed as measures of the quality of the acoustic response with which we are concerned in classrooms. These are defined in ISO 3382-1<sup>1</sup>; however, as the purpose of ISO 3382-1 is for the measurement of parameters for performance spaces, the descriptions are not well suited or defined for measurements in ordinary rooms used for speech. This paper seeks to determine how these parameters may be used in ordinary rooms such as classrooms.

## 3. Background

Sabine's relationship for reverberation time was developed empirically in the 1890s, relating the rate of decay of sound to the amount of absorption within a space and the volume. It is implicit in the concept that the decay of sound is exponential, or linear when the sound level is plotted in decibels. Schroeder's reverse integration technique<sup>2</sup> made measurements simpler to undertake. Reverberation time is defined in ISO 3382-1 as the:

Duration required for the space-averaged sound energy density in an enclosure to decrease by 60 dB after the source emission has stopped

It is more commonly measured over a 20 or 30 dB range, denoted  $T_{20}$  and  $T_{30}$  respectively, starting from 5 dB below the initial level and extrapolated to the time for the decay over the 60 dB range. The  $T_{20}$  value is generally preferred <sup>16</sup>, as it relates more closely to the earlier portion of the decay, but it is noted <sup>1</sup> that the rate of the first 10 dB of the decay is more closely related to perceived reverberance.

Many eminent researchers<sup>3, 4, 5</sup> have proposed modifications to the Sabine relationship, and Standards have been developed<sup>6</sup>, in an attempt to calculate the reverberation time in rooms with uneven distribution of absorption, in more highly damped rooms, or in larger rooms intended as performance spaces<sup>7</sup>. Similarly, parameters to describe the degree of non-linearity of a decay curve have been proposed. Attempts to describe the effect of diffusing elements such as furnishings on the measured reverberation time have illustrated the incongruous relationship between the sound pressure and sound power levels<sup>10</sup>.

However, rather than more accurately predict a measure of acoustic response which does not correlate with those aspects with which we are concerned - loudness and speech intelligibility - the present work seeks to determine if G and  $C_{50}$  may be more usefully and practically employed. This has become a practical possibility through the availability of both hardware and software to undertake the measurements and modelling.

# 4. Interpretation of room acoustic response

When considering an impulse response, the integration of the total energy received at a given location is proportional to the Strength, G, whereas Speech Clarity,  $C_{50}$  is controlled by the ratio of the energy arriving in the first 50 ms to the remaining energy. To some extent, the tail of the decay curve is used to determine the reverberation time,  $T_{20}$ , and does not correlate with perceptions of reverberance, compared to the decay in the early part of the decay – EDT is more closely related to perceptions of reverberance<sup>1</sup>. This may not be surprising, given that the  $T_{20}$  is the measure of the decay when the sound level is between 5 and 25 dB below the initial level; we are more concerned with that part of the sound that has a higher signal level.

#### 4.1 Definition

G is defined<sup>1</sup> as the integration of the total energy received at a given receiver position from a given source location, for an omni-directional source as required for precision measurements, divided by the received energy at 10 m in a free field. Although it may be derived from an impulse response measurement, it is generally more convenient to measure static sound levels; either way a calibrated source is required.

The value of G varies between source and receiver position combinations, but may also be averaged for a number of source positions and receiver positions. While reverberation times are averaged arithmetically, the natural expectation may be for logarithmic averaging of sound levels. Averaging is discussed in section 9. An average of some type is desirable, as there may always be anomalies at particular source and receiver locations. In Annex A of ISO 3382-1, the definition of G is derived for static levels as:

$$G = L_p - L_w + 31 (1)$$

Where G is the Strength,  $L_p$  is the sound pressure level, and  $L_w$  is the sound power level of the source. G is defined in ISO 3382-1 as the arithmetic mean of the values in the 500 Hz and 1 kHz octave bands, but the concept may be extended to other frequency bands.

To aid comparison with conventional perception and reverberation time, this quantity may be compared with the terms of classical diffuse field theory, where the sound level in a diffuse field (away from direct sound) may be described as:

$$L_p = L_w + 10.\log\left(\frac{4}{Rc}\right) \tag{2}$$

Where  $L_p$  and  $L_w$  are as above,  $R_c$  is the room constant. Comparing Eq. 1 and Eq. 2, Strength G is related to Room constant,  $R_c$ , as:

$$G = 37 - 10.\log(Rc)$$
 (3)

Hence where the room constant may be considered as the effect of the room in reducing the sound pressure level from a given source, the Strength is the direct opposite, where a higher value represents a higher sound pressure level for a given source sound power. A common simplification for the room constant under diffuse field conditions is to the absorption area:

$$Rc \approx S.a = A$$
 (4)

And where, according to the Sabine relation:

$$A = 0.16 \left(\frac{V}{\pi}\right) \tag{5}$$

This relationship established by Sabine is utilised in many Standards for determining noise levels in rooms. Under diffuse field theory, the room constant is a simple function of reverberation time and room volume, and hence, by substituting Eq. 5 and 4 into Eq. 3, so is G, denoted G'diffuse to avoid confusion:

$$G'_{diffuse} = 45 + 10.\log\left(\frac{T}{V}\right)$$
 (6)

However, although this relation may be an adequate model in rooms where the diffuse field theory is a good model, it has been demonstrated that this relation is far from true for many types of rooms. It has been suggested<sup>8</sup> that in concert halls these parameters may be adequately predicted, statistically, from the reverberation time, volume, and source-receiver distance, based on Barron's revised theory<sup>7</sup> but on the basis of the following discussion this is not pursued further.

#### 4.2 Just noticeable difference

The just noticeable difference (JND) indicated<sup>1</sup> for auditoria is 1 dB for both G and  $C_{50}$ ; the JND in classrooms is not known. This sets the desirable level of accuracy required in determining the values of these parameters to be better than 1 dB.

#### 4.3 Conditions in a classroom

Nilsson has presented measurements in 17 classrooms<sup>11</sup> in three different conditions, including classrooms with suspended absorbent ceilings with and without and furniture, and classrooms without suspended absorbent ceilings or furniture. These measurements indicate that the

measured value of G may be approximately 5 dB below the value that would be predicted assuming diffuse field theory from the measured reverberation time (G'<sub>diffuse</sub>), and in some cases more than 10 dB, in classrooms with suspended ceilings but not furniture.

This effect has been investigated previously, notably by Nilsson et al<sup>12, 13</sup>. These authors describe the sound field in a simple room with an absorbent ceiling as being composed of a grazing component (sound in the horizontal plane), and a non-grazing component (in the vertical direction). Nilsson has proposed two-system SEA model<sup>14</sup> to represent the grazing and non-grazing sound fields, with redistribution of power between each field controlled by the quantity of diffusing elements or surfaces. During the sound decay, high frequency energy in the non-grazing field is more quickly reduced by the highly absorbent ceiling, while sound in the grazing field is less efficiently absorbed by the ceiling. Different ceiling types (e.g. mineral wool ceiling tiles or perforated plasterboard) are demonstrated to have different efficiencies in absorbing grazing sound at different frequencies. Nilsson has demonstrated<sup>12</sup> how the non-grazing field may dominate overall sound levels due to a constant excitation of the room.

The explanation for the change in slope of a sound decay is due to the transition from non-grazing field to grazing field control. Thus the initial decay is controlled by the non-grazing field, which dominates steady state sound levels, but this is more quickly exhausted by the higher levels of absorption at normal incidence. The reverberation time measured between -5 and -25 dB for the  $T_{20}$  may be substantially controlled by the grazing field, which persists for longer in the absence the same level of absorption. Thus the reverberation time does not reflect the rate of absorption of sound energy during the initial part of the decay, nor under steady state excitation of the room, which is effectively the condition at the point at which the sound decay starts. This is a convincing argument to explain the discrepancy between the measured Strength in a room, G, and  $G'_{diffuse}$  based on the measured reverberation time, in non-diffuse rooms.

#### 4.4 Spatial variation with distance and source position

Although it is intuitive that sound levels decay with distance from a source, in a Sabine space with a diffuse sound field this is not a significant effect, with sound levels dominated by the reverberant field not the direct sound. In more heavily damped rooms, however, it is observed that sound levels do decay significantly from the source. This has been noted by many observers, and calculation models proposed by Barron<sup>7</sup> based on raising the room constant to a power of the ratio of source to receiver distance and mean free path (mfp). Luykx<sup>8</sup> has proposed measuring at a distance of the mfp to evaluate G in sports halls.

The aim of this investigation is to determine if there is a single value that may be associated with a classroom type room, rather than a particular pair of source and receiver locations. If the parameter may be used in specifications and evaluation of room response, a consistent method for determining the values is required. The spatial variation with distance from the source and variation with source location are considered in this paper.

#### 5. Method

The purpose of this investigation is to determine how G and  $C_{50}$  may be described and measured in real rooms to obtain reliable and repeatable results. This is achieved with detailed measurements in four classroom type rooms and one sports hall, with acoustic modelling of those rooms in CATT. With the modelling corroborating the measured results, further investigations are undertaken in the software. Mathematical models for the expected values of G and  $C_{50}$  based on the architectural features are not proposed; rather, values are determined directly from modelling.

Impulse response and static sound levels have been measured in two pairs of typical class rooms, with receiver locations at measured distances from the source. The rooms are illustrated in Figure

1 to Figure 4 below. Strength and reverberation time have also been measured in a sports hall, before and after remedial absorbent treatment to reduce the reverberation.

A dodecahedron loudspeaker was used with ARTA software to measure room impulse response. Static sound levels were used to measure G. Measurements were made with the speaker at the approximate position of a teacher in front of the class, and measurements were made at measured distances towards the rear of the class. The speaker was always more than 1 m from any wall, and measurements were made starting 1 m from the speaker, and then at 0.5 m intervals, and not less than 1 m from any wall, at a height of 1.2 m above the floor. The room characteristics are summarised in Table 1 below, and illustrated in the Figures that follow.

Room ref	Floor area / m	Mean soffit height / m	mfp	Notes	
Α	66	3.5	3.6	Absorbent rafts, wall panels;	
В	60	3.5	3.6	furnished	
С	36	2.65	2.4	Absorbent ceiling (some tiles missing);	
D	36	2.65	2.4	partial furnishing	
Е	262	6.6	6.6	Sports hall before & after treatment; empty	

Table 1: room characteristics



Figure 1: Room A, absorbent rafts with wall panels, furnished for normal use.



Figure 2: Room B, absorbent rafts with wall panels, furnished for normal use.



Figure 3: Room C, absorbent suspended ceiling, empty of furniture



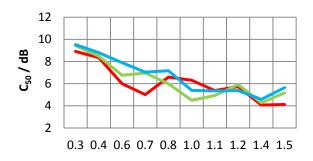
Figure 4: Room D, absorbent suspended ceiling, empty of furniture

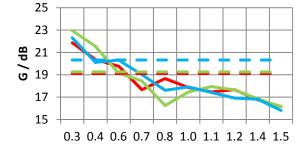
The results are presented together for ease of comparison below.

## 6. Measured spatial variation

Results are presented for the frequencies most important for speech, the 500 Hz, 1 kHz and 2 kHz octave bands. Although octave bands were measured from 63 Hz - 8 kHz, the results in other octave bands are more variable than the results in the frequencies presented, and being less relevant are omitted for brevity and clarity. The distance is non-dimensionalised by dividing by the mean free path (mfp) for each room. All graphs are plotted with a 10 dB range on the y-axis, so the results may be compared visually. The critical distance based on the measured mid-frequency reverberation time is around 0.3 mfp, such that all measurements are at greater distance from the source. The dotted lines represent the value of G'diffuse, calculated according to Eq. 6 above, for the measured (spatially averaged) reverberation time.

The colours used are: Red: 500 Hz; Green: 1 kHz; Blue: 2 kHz.





#### Distance from source / mfp

Figure 5: C<sub>50</sub>, Room A

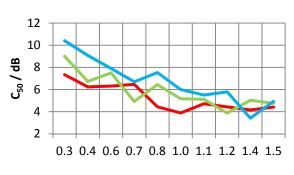
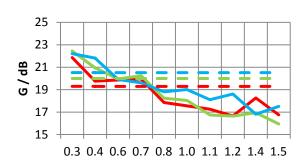


Figure 6: G, Room A

Distance from source / mfp



#### Distance from source / mfp

Figure 7: C<sub>50</sub>, Room B

Distance from source / mfp

Figure 8: G, Room B

#### 6.1 Discussion

The results in Rooms A & B show an initial decay in G of around 10 dB / mfp, up to a distance of around 0.7 or 0.8.mfp; at greater distances, the decay with distance appears to be lower, and sometimes inconsistent.  $C_{50}$  also decreases with distance from the source, but at a slightly lower rate. The decay exhibited in Rooms C & D follows approximately the same pattern, shown overleaf.

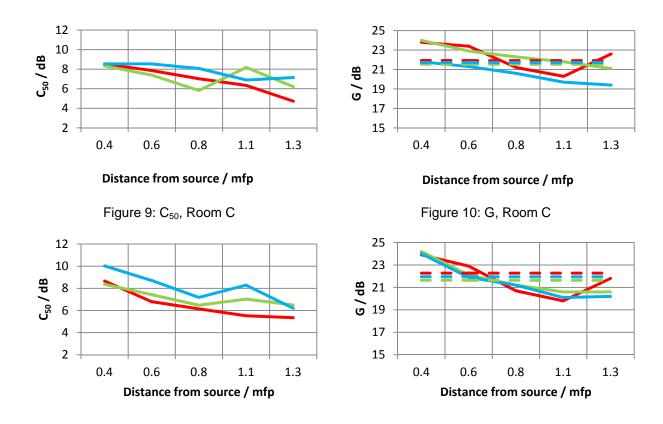
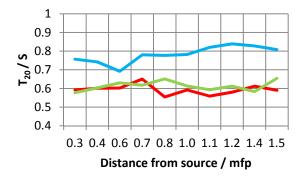


Figure 11: C<sub>50</sub>, Room D

Figure 12: G, Room D

For comparison, the spatial variation of the measured reverberation time in Room A is presented in Figure 13. There is little variation of reverberation time over the same distance range as for the other parameters presented in the preceding Figures. Figure 14 illustrates the effective value of  $G'_{\text{diffuse}}$ , i.e. the variation in the quantity of  $10*\log(T)$ , in effect the value in dB of the variation in reverberation time in seconds when considering the effect on loudness, or G. This is presented so that the calculated effect of the changes in reverberation time may be quantified for comparison with G.

The results for the reverberation time are included to demonstrate how well behaved the reverberation time is, and how the independence of receiver location holds true in this room. The standard deviation of  $G'_{\text{diffuse}}$  is between 0.18 and 0.25 dB over the spatial variation measured; there are similar patterns in other rooms, not presented here. These results illustrate the spatial variation of acoustic response of the room which cannot described by the reverberation time alone, or with the effect of reverberation time and distance.



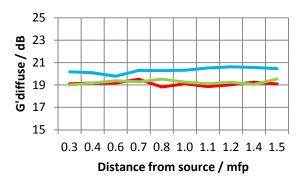


Figure 13: T<sub>20</sub>, Room A, spatial variation

Figure 14: G'diffuse, Room A, spatial variation

## 6.2 Spatial variation in sports hall

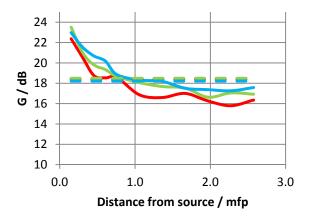
Measurements were carried out in a sports hall before and after retrofitting with absorbent panels to control excessive reverberation, as shown in Figure 15 and Figure 16. The spatial variation in the sports hall also shows a clear change in slope at a distance of around 0.7 to 0.8 mfp from the source in Figure 17 prior to treatment, but this change of slope is not so evident in the decay following treatment, Figure 18, where the G continues to decrease more significantly with distance. The critical distance prior to treatment, based on the measured mid-frequency reverberation time, is 0.18 mfp, and 0.28 mfp following treatment.



Figure 15: Room E prior to absorbent treatment



Figure 16: Room E with wall panels



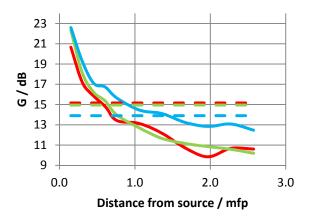


Figure 17: G, Room E,  $T_{mf} = 3.7 \text{ s}$ 

Figure 18: G, Room E,  $T_{mf} = 1.6$ 

## 6.3 Summary of measurements

On the basis of reviewing the three relevant octave band levels for speech presented in the measured levels above, it is suggested that the arithmetic mean value of these may be combined for brevity and efficiency. This is justified theoretically according to Barron<sup>14</sup>. The arithmetic mean values are presented in the next section and compared against modelled values.

## 7. Modelling of measured levels

Modelling of Rooms A, B, C, and D is carried out using CATT Acoustic. Standard values are used for scattering and absorption coefficients – the models are not optimised to reproduce the measured values more precisely. The arithmetic mean of the 500 Hz, 1 kHz and 2 kHz octave bands is presented.

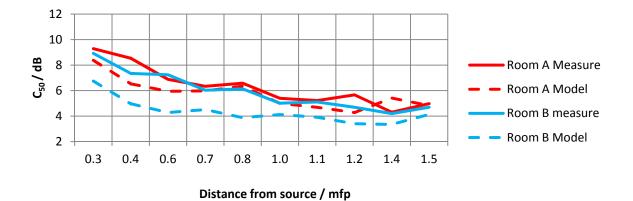


Figure 19: Rooms A (p = 0.05) and B (p = 0.00), spatial variation of  $C_{50 \text{ mf}}$ 

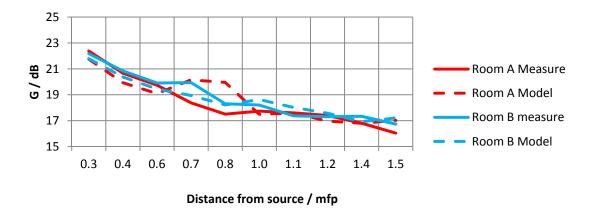


Figure 20: Rooms A (p = 0.50) and B (p = 0.57), spatial variation of  $G_{mf}$ 

The Figures above indicate that the modelling of G appears reasonably accurate in both rooms, particularly beyond the distance of the mfp from the source. The modelling of  $C_{50}$  appears similarly accurate in room A, but systematically different in Room B. Figure 21 indicates that  $C_{50}$  is reasonably well represented by the modelling, whereas Figure 22 indicates that G is less well correlated.

A paired t-test analysis is also used to assess the accuracy of the modelled results; the p-values are indicated in the figures. The statistical results correlate with the visual impression of the results in the graphs, where in some cases there appear to be systematic differences between the parameters. A p-value of more than 0.05 indicates that the difference between the measured and modelled values is not statistically significant. When subject to the same t-test,  $T_{20}$  differs significantly between measured and modelled results in more rooms than the other parameters.

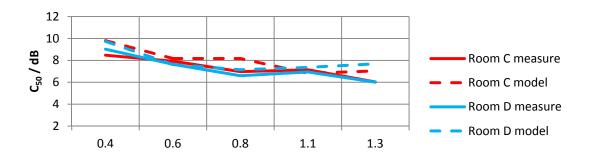


Figure 21: Rooms C (p = 0.09) and D (p = 0.08), spatial variation of  $C_{50\,mf}$ 

Distance from source / mfp

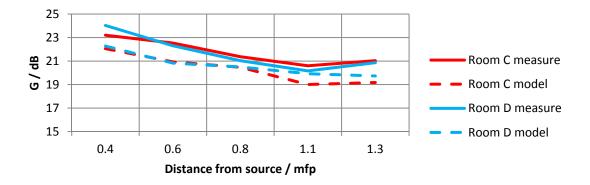


Figure 22: Rooms C (p = 0.00) and D (p = 0.02), spatial variation of  $G_{mf}$ 

## 8. Variation of source position

The variation of source position is investigated using the modelled rooms, and comparing the modelled results for two distinctly different source positions – in the middle of one side, and towards the corner. Results are compared for measurement positions beyond the mfp from the source. Source and measurement positions are illustrated below.

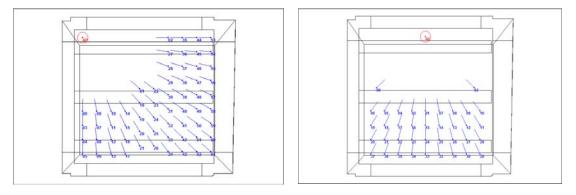


Figure 23: Room A varying source (red circle), and receiver positions (blue streak)

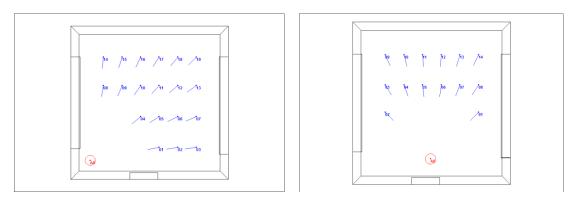


Figure 24: Room C varying source (red circle), and receiver positions (blue streak)

An independent value t-test is performed to identify the significance of differences in results when source position varies. The results are shown in Table 2 below:

Room	Parameter	Source position	Mean / dB	SD / dB	p-value
		Corner	4.8	0.9	0.15
	C <sub>50</sub>	Mid-side	4.5	0.7	
A		Corner	16.8	0.7	0.08
	G	Mid-side	16.6	0.5	
	_	Corner	0.6	0.0	0.70
	T <sub>20</sub>	Mid-side	0.6	0.0	
	-	Corner	4.3	0.7	0.76
	C <sub>50</sub>	Mid-side	4.3	0.8	
В	G	Corner	17.7	0.5	0.19
R		Mid-side	17.5	0.5	
	T <sub>20</sub>	Corner	0.6	0.0	0.58
		Mid-side	0.6	0.0	
	C <sub>50</sub>	Corner	7.55	0.80	0.25
		Mid-side	7.27	0.53	
С	G	Corner	19.41	0.64	1.00
	G	Mid-side	19.41	0.44	
	т	Corner	0.43	0.01	0.70
	T <sub>20</sub>	Mid-side	0.43	0.01	
	C <sub>50</sub>	Corner	6.93	0.74	0.16
		Mid-side	6.80	0.50	
D	G	Corner	19.32	0.63	0.06
	<u> </u>	Mid-side	19.69	0.44	
	T <sub>20</sub>	Corner	0.46	0.01	0.70
		Mid-side	0.46	0.02	

Table 2: Significance of difference between two source positions

In all rooms the criteria for statistical significance of difference has not been met for all three parameters, and the null hypothesis is accepted. This means that the difference between levels for different source positions tested is not statistically significant, although of course there may be significant differences for other source position variations.

# 9. Anticipated spatial variation

The spatial variation associated with G may be expected to be the same as for static sound levels within a room. This is described by equation 4.5 of the Nordtest report<sup>16</sup>, for frequencies above the Schroeder frequency and a point sound source, as:

$$\varepsilon^{2}(p^{2}) = \frac{1}{1 + 0.145 \cdot B \cdot T} + \frac{1}{160^{2} \cdot n} \cdot (\sqrt{A} \cdot \frac{S}{V})^{3}$$
(7)

In the octave bands considered here, Eq. 7 suggests that the expected spatial variation of sound levels in rooms A and B is marginally less than 2 dB, and in rooms C and D a little more than 2 dB.

The modelled results for G, at a distance greater than the mfp, however, have spatial standard deviations between 0.5 and 0.9 dB for both speaker positions in both rooms, as shown in Table 2.

It is therefore suggested that the same quantity of spatial measurements as for a field sound insulation test<sup>17</sup> would be appropriate – i.e. a minimum of two source positions and five measurement positions at each. Further statistical investigation of this is required to determine the uncertainty of measurement in various room types.

The type of spatial averaging that is appropriate for a parameter should suit its intended purpose and use. Barron has discussed the averaging of parameters in concert halls, and concludes that while averaging values across octaves may be theoretically valid, spatial averaging can obscure the information for which the parameters were sought. As G describes the loudness between a given source and receiver position, multiple receiver positions represent the range of values that may be experienced by people in the room. If we limit the usefulness of this parameter to the experience of sources and receivers separated by at least the mfp in classrooms, then spatial arithmetic averaging is considered appropriate, such that the range of values are given equivalent weighting in decibels. Although energy or logarithmic averaging of sound levels is appropriate for the purposes of evaluating the energy in a room, that is not the purpose for this parameter.

 $C_{50}$  describes the shape or relative proportions of the decay curve, and hence the spatial variation describes how these proportions vary with distance from the source. In view of the spatial decay of loudness, it may be considered that direct sound and early reflections are much more significant than later reflections, and the diffuse sound field is less dominant than classical theory would suggest. The non-grazing field may be more responsible for early sound closer to the source than at greater distances.

A theoretical assessment of the anticipated spatial variation in  $C_{50}$  is not known. In the rooms tested,  $C_{50}$  follows a similar spatial pattern to G, and hence may be similarly controlled by the room features and distance from the source. Although the measured and modelled standard deviation of  $C_{50}$  is marginally higher than that for G, it is still suggested that the arithmetic mean of a minimum of five receiver positions at each of two source locations may be sufficient for repeatable results.

#### 10. Source calibration

Discussion of the accuracy of calibration for G has been carried out by Hak et al<sup>19</sup>; the uncertainty of the calibration can be a significant part of the overall uncertainty. For these measurements, the sound source was calibrated in a reverberant room with the use of equation A.5, ISO 3382-1, as more formal means were not available. The average difference in the results in Rooms A & B between those measured and modelled for G are -0.2 and +0.1 dB respectively, and hence are not indicative of a systematic error that could occur through calibration. The average difference of results in Rooms C and D are +1.4 and +1.0 dB. These variations are significant in terms of the JND, and may not be adequate for reliable use. Further work is required to qualify the uncertainty associated with the field calibration of the source, which is one of the major constraints in the use of G.

# 11. Other implications

#### 11.1 Furnished and unfurnished rooms

Further modelling of the difference between values in a typical 60 m<sup>2</sup> classroom with a ceiling at 3 m, furnished and unfurnished, have been carried out. Taking the arithmetic mean of measurements at a distance greater than the mfp for a single source position leads to the results in Table 3 below:

Room	Parameter	Room state	Mean / dB	SD / dB	p-value	
	C <sub>50</sub>	Furnished	6.20	0.77	0.00	
		Unfurnished	5.54	0.58		
F	G	Furnished	15.57	0.52	0.00	
Г		Unfurnished	15.98	0.53	0.00	
	<b>-</b>	Furnished	0.62	0.03	0.00	
	T <sub>20</sub>	Unfurnished	0.58	0.02	0.00	

Table 3: Mean, standard deviation and significance between furnished and un-furnished states

These results indicate that although the difference is statistically significant, the value of the difference is less than the JND. These results do not correlate with experience that has much greater differences for reverberation times between the furnished and unfurnished states. This suggests that the modelling, using standard values for scattering and absorption coefficients, may be failing to capture measured effects on the reverberation time. Measured results of differences presented in the literature<sup>11</sup> are suggestive, from the graphical presentation of those results, of greater differences than those modelled here. Further investigations correlating modelled and measured results in classrooms are required; until the values can be calculated reliably, it is difficult to use the parameters for design purposes.

#### 11.2 Sound insulation measurements

When conducting a sound insulation test<sup>17</sup>, the measured reverberation time<sup>18</sup> is used to standardise the receiver room levels. If the reverberation time does not accurately describe the relationship between the sound energy transmitted into the receiving room and the resulting sound pressure level, the adjustment for room conditions will be incorrect. Thus the apparent sound insulation measured and calculated in this way will not be consistent with perceived conditions. The discrepancy between G and G'<sub>diffuse</sub> is illustrated to vary by between 1 and 3 dB in the rooms measured, although this effect is anticipated to be greater in empty rooms greater than 3 m in height with simple absorbent ceilings. Measurements presented in the literature indicate greater differences between G and G'<sub>diffuse</sub> as discussed previously; this issue has also been investigated in previous work<sup>20</sup>.

### 12. Conclusion

It has been demonstrated that reverberation time,  $T_{20}$ , by virtue of its definition, does not describe the acoustic response of classrooms in which we are interested - primarily loudness and speech clarity. Sound strength, G, and speech clarity,  $C_{50}$ , represent these types of acoustic response, but vary significantly with distance from the source. It is suggested that the arithmetic mean of measurements at a distance from the source greater than the mean free path may provide a suitable definition. It is suggested that a minimum of two source locations and five receiver positions at each is likely to represent sufficient spatial averaging to achieve repeatable results. Receiver locations should represent potentially occupied positions only. Further work is required to determine appropriate design values for these parameters and modelling techniques to design rooms appropriately.

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