

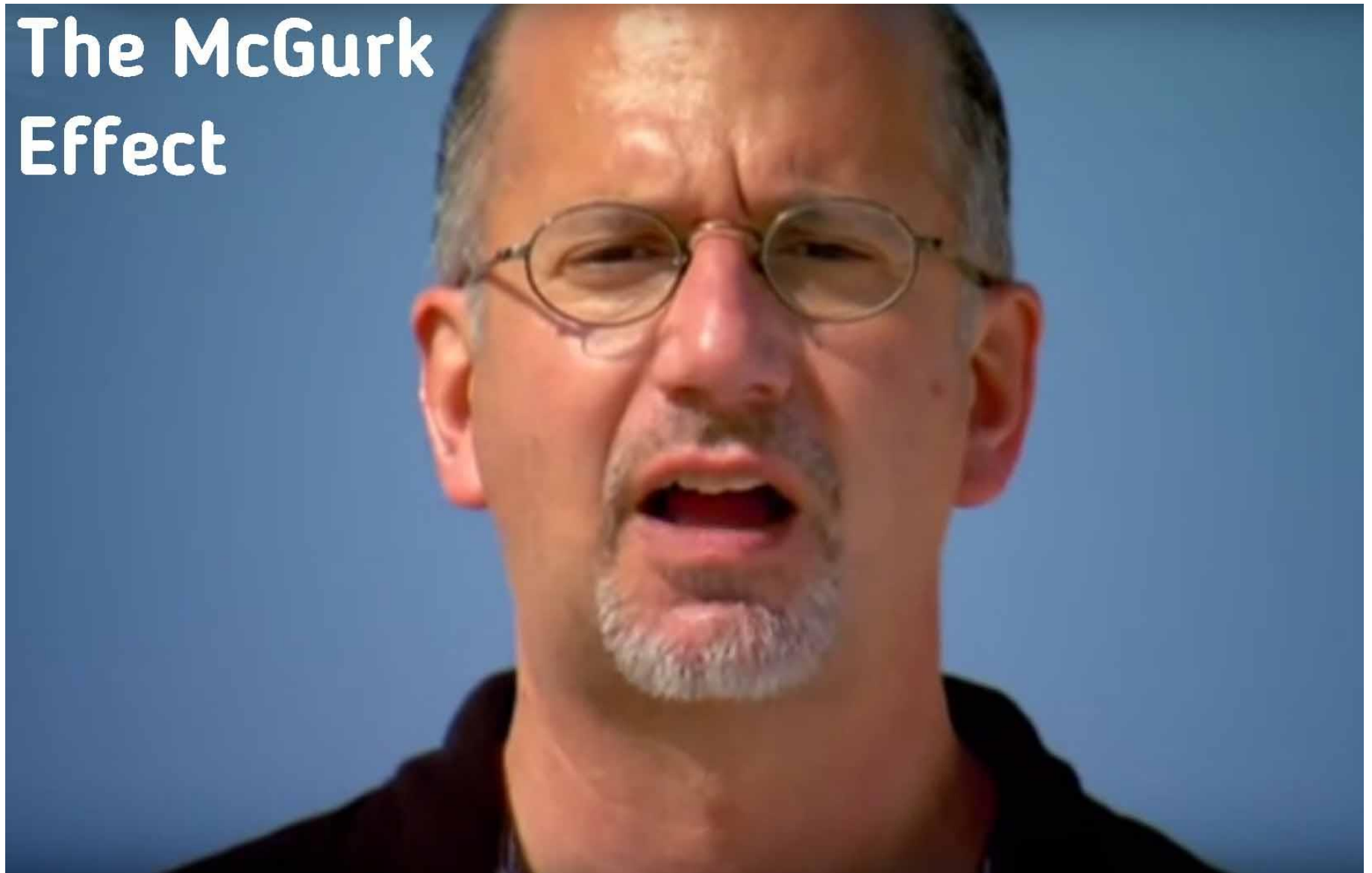
Listening as a Constructive Process

Annie McDonald

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The McGurk Effect



**Just let me
staple the
vicar**



Peter Kay

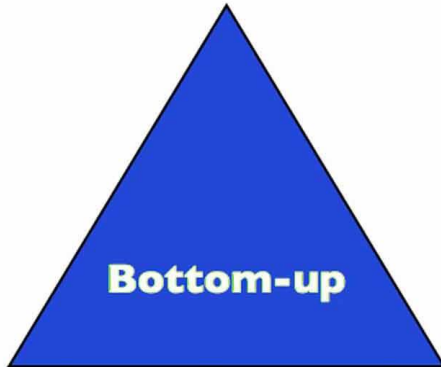
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UMYorpYNMKc>

The Expert Listener

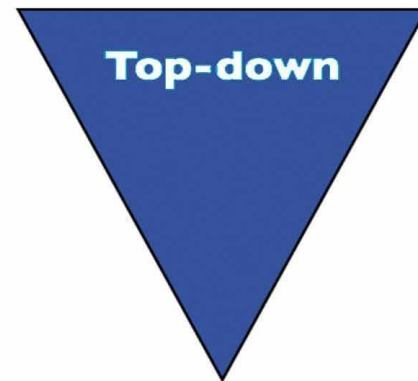
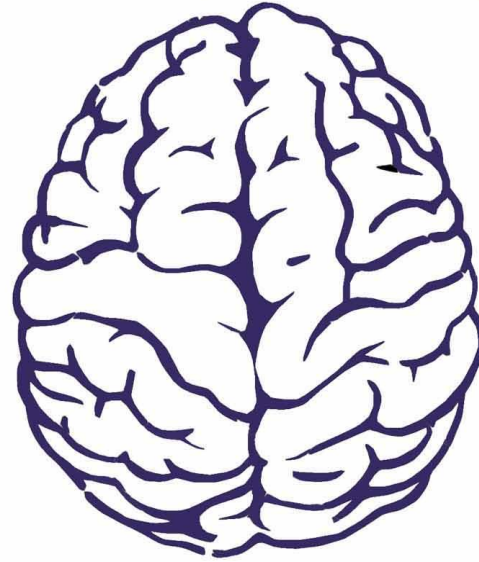
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decoding

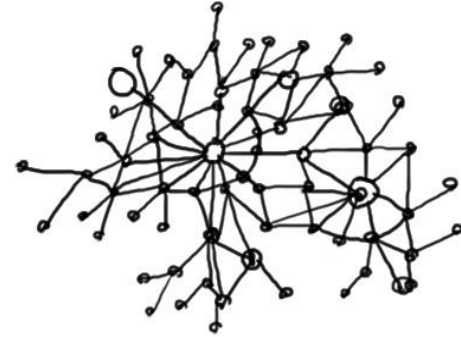


meaning-building



Bottom-up primacy - potential candidate words

You hear a word
beginning with
lo-
What images
may be activated?



Formidable range of mental tasks we carry out with astonishing speed and accuracy *

- We evaluate probabilities arising from the structure of the native vocabulary
- We track information to locate the boundaries between words
- We pay attention to the way that words are pronounced
- We assess prosodic information that spans sequences of sounds

* Cutler, Anne (2012) *Native Listening*, The MIT Press

The Characteristics of Spoken English

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Greenhouse



citation forms

Garden



connected speech

Jungle



spontaneous speech

tidy ← → *messy*

Richard Cauldwell

Cauldwell, R. (2018) *A Syllabus for Listening - Decoding*

- Squeezing together of words (eg the dropping of sounds, the lack of clarity around positive and negative etc) = mush
- The expert listener's ability to understand meanings deafens them to the realities/true nature of spontaneous speech



budgie tear line

- we may come S
- rye near week
- pastures who were tight
- doze flight sitter can
- the neck's too weak
- we make a mess
- RyanAir we
- passengers who were entitled
- those flights that are can (celled)
- the next two weeks

“This is our mess up. When we **make a mess** at **RyanAir we** come out with our hands up, we try to explain why we made the mess, when we will pay compensation to those **passengers who are entitled** to compensation which will be those **flights that are cancelled over the next two weeks.**”

The challenges of understanding spoken English:

Expert or non-expert listener?

- 1 Spaghetti car banana
- 2 Products rip in plastic.
- 3 I was nice girl
- 4 There's a bathroom on the right.
- 5 We can't be **** to teach ..
- 6 planning pilot's holidays

Spaghetti carbonara
Products wrapped in plastic.
I was a night owl
There's a bad moon on the rise.
We can be asked to teach ...
a long holiday

The Non-expert Listener

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Cutler: Understanding speech in our native tongue seems natural and effortless ...

... But listening to speech in a **non-native language** is a **different experience**

- L2 vocabulary is smaller than the average L1 listener
- The L2 listener has to try to create a new lexical entry
- The L2 listener has less competition than an L1 listener
- The problem of non-words = a napple
- The problem of resyllabification = went in – when tin ...
etc etc
- Lack of clarity around positive / negative

This is hour ... When message me Ryanair we can hang out. We try to explained why we did the message. When ... will pay compensation to the passage compensation with we'll be the fligh to cancelled over the next two weeks.

This is our mess up. When we make a mess at RyanAir we come out with our hands up, we try to explain why we made the mess, when we will pay compensation to those passengers who are entitled to compensation which will be those flights that are cancelled over the next two weeks.

Some L2 mishearings

- a long holiday = **on holiday**
- cancel flights = **cancelled fly**
- the errors = **the area**
- pilot's holidays = **on holiday**
- we made the mess = **mensagem me**
- why we made the mess = **did the message**
- those passengers who are entitled = **the passage ...**
- will be those flights = **we'll be the fli**
- that, in short, is what = **that, insure it's was**
- we're not short of = **when not sort of**
- weather disruptions = **weather instructions**

Some L2 problems ...

- Not recognising a sound (consonants, vowels – short / sort; we'll be / will be)
- Not separating sounds into words (word boundaries - a napple ..)
- Confusing similar-sounding structures/words (we'll be / will be; hour/our)
- Not remembering the meaning of a word quickly enough
- Not knowing the word (mess)
- Not hearing unstressed function words
- Not hearing final consonants (I won't go / I want to go)
- Not recognising a variation of a known word

Improving perceptual processing *

- L2 comprehension is affected by L1 language features, so use your knowledge of the learner's L1 and the audio-script to identify potential problem areas for L2 listeners (eg. possible minimal pairs, initial and final consonants clusters, etc) and devise pre-listening activities which focus on these areas
- Use variations on dictation activities to help learners develop sound/word recognition
- Set time for learners to compare their understanding with the text (audio-script) and discover reasons for listening difficulties, making listening accessible to inspection **

* *Discovery listening – improving perceptual processing*, Wilson, M., ELTJournal, Vol 57/4, October 2003

** *Lexical segmentation in L2 Listening*, Field, J., ELTJournal, Vol 57/4, October 2003

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**Thank
you!**

