

Linguistic effects of accented speech: the highs and the lows

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The task of comprehending spoken language is notoriously challenging, because spoken language is highly variable. The sources of this variation are manifold and range from regional and non-native accents to the presence of incomplete utterances and variants that deviate in grammar from written sentences. Psycholinguists attempt to understand how listeners deal with such variation in everyday communication, how they represent and store variants, and under what circumstances processing of variants may be enhanced or disrupted. In this talk, I will present a series of studies from diverse populations that examine the extent to which accented input affects performance on tasks assessing speech comprehension, evaluation, and production.